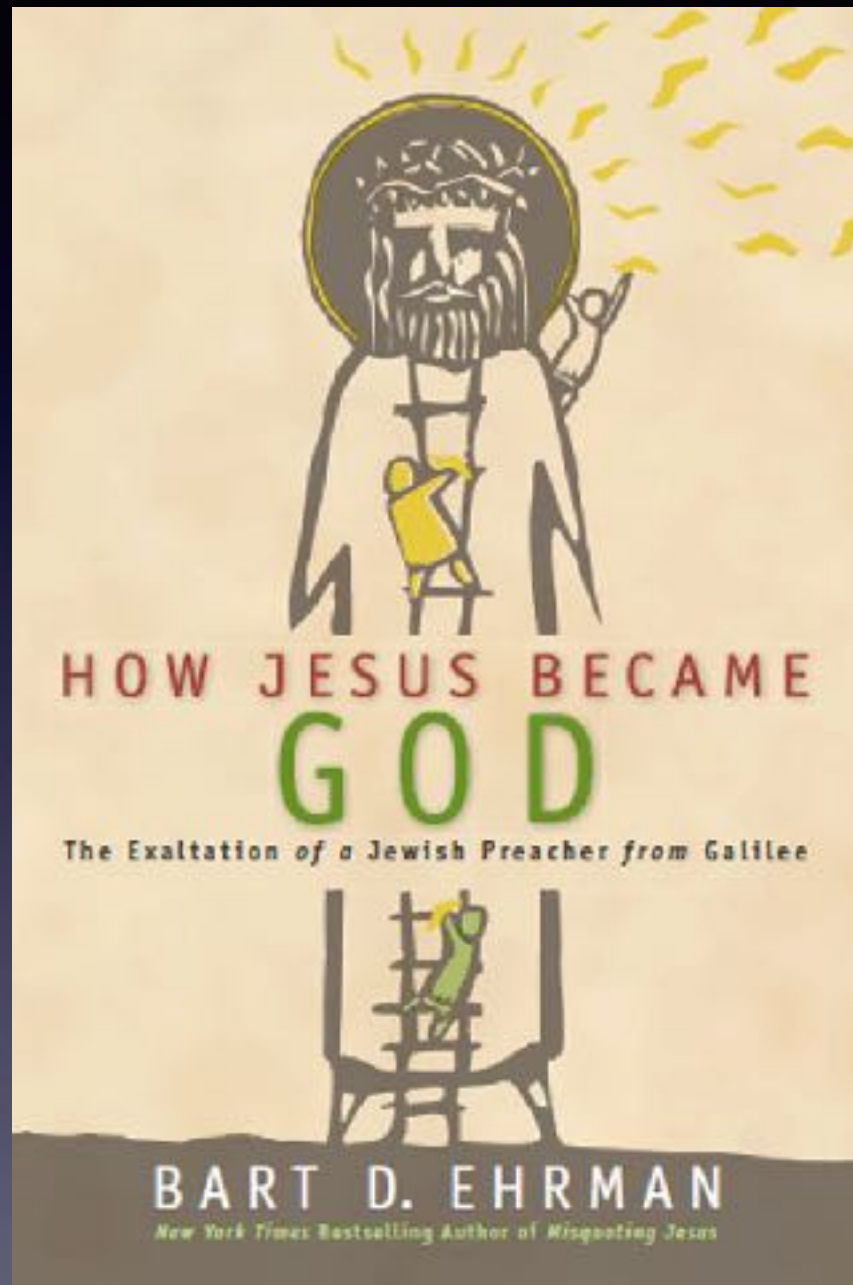


How Jesus Became God

ACTS

Winter 2017

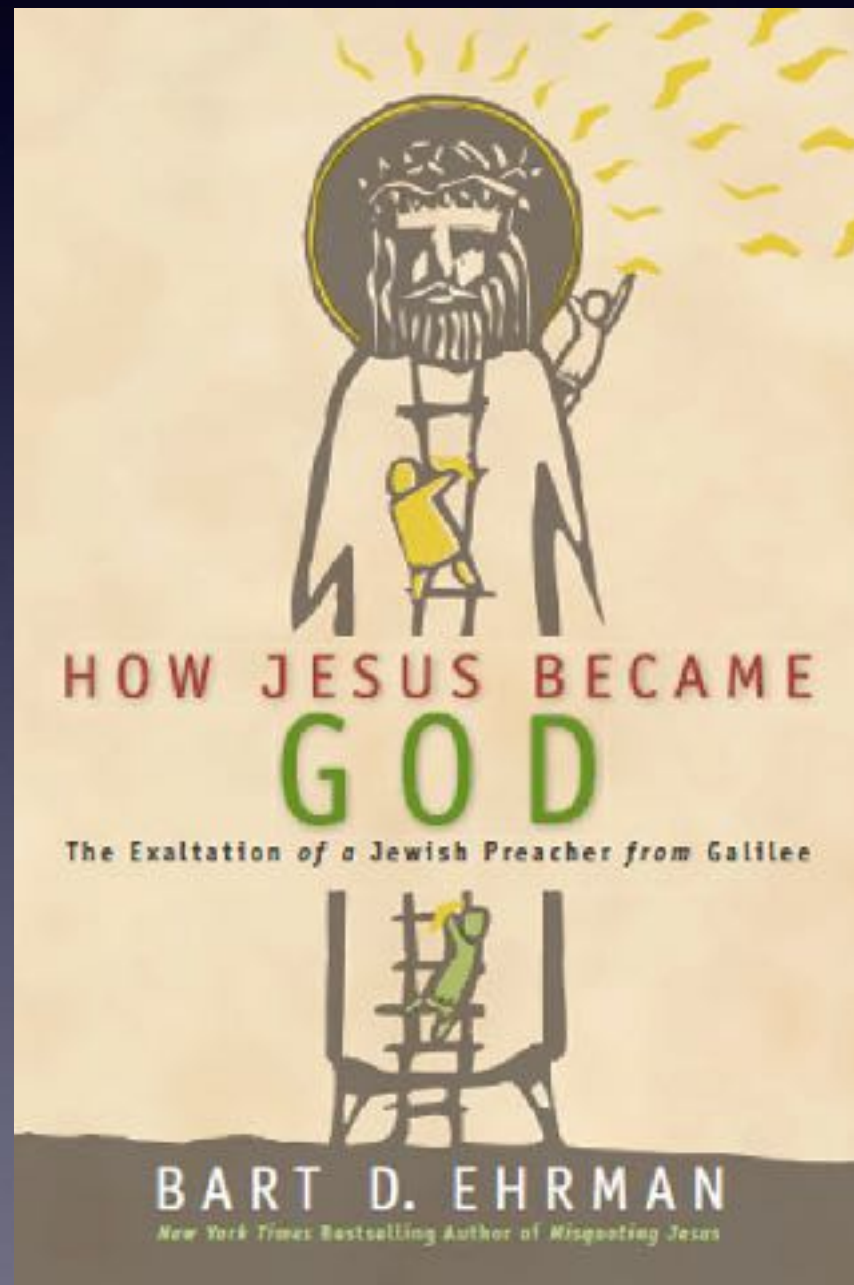
St David's United Church
Calgary



How Jesus Became God

Chapter 1

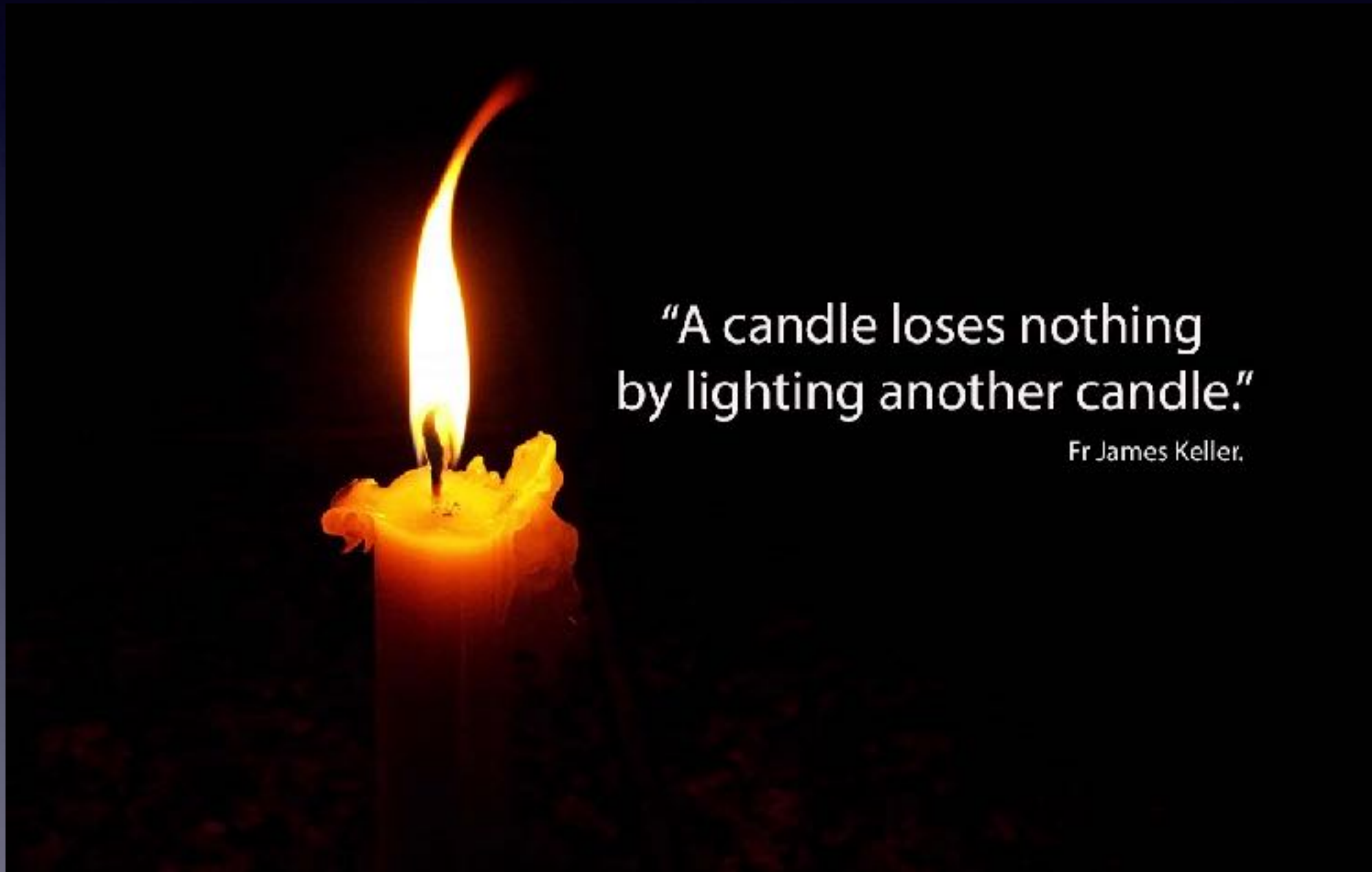
Divine Humans in Ancient Greece and Rome



Session # 2

- Opening
- Presentation
- Break
- Video - PBS
- Discussions
- Closing

Opening

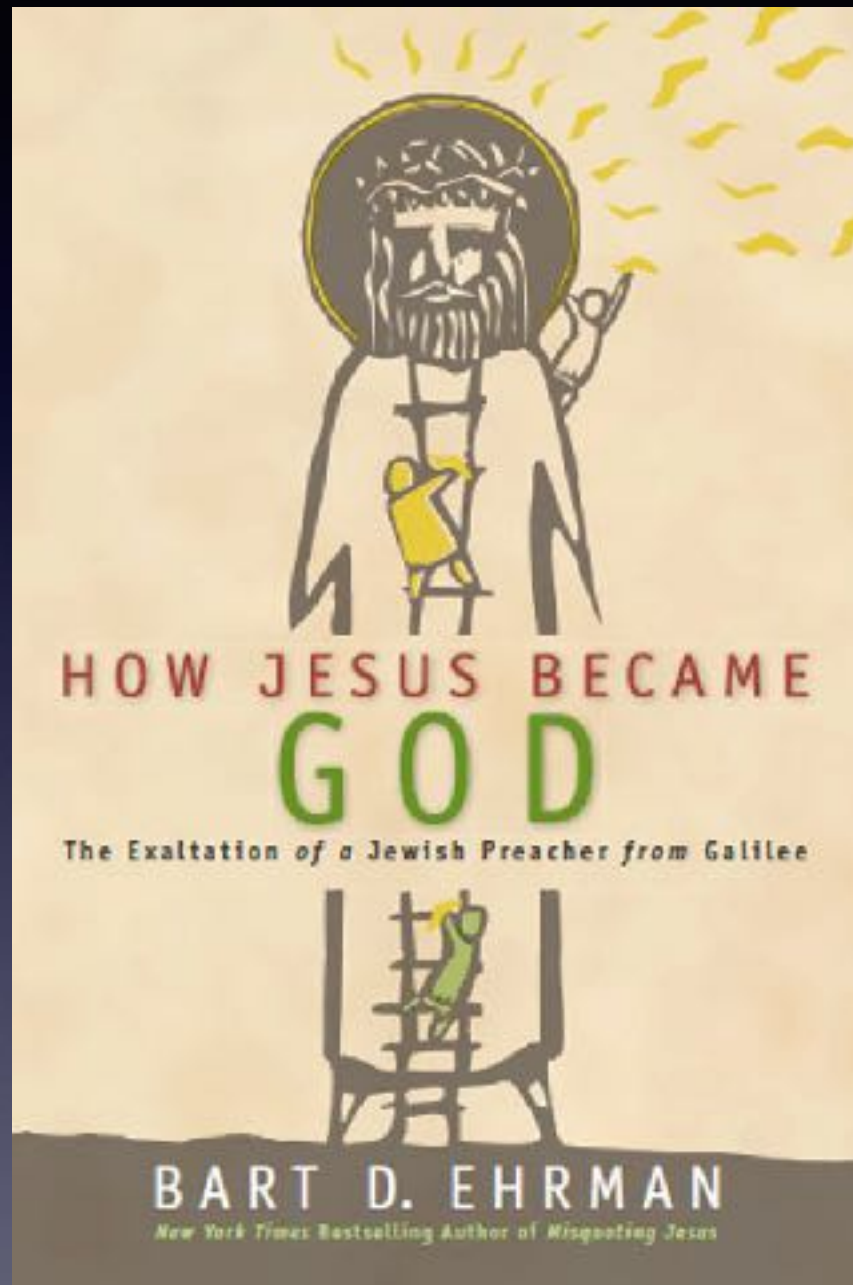


Holy Manners Bookstudy 38

How Jesus Became God

Chapter 1

Divine Humans in Ancient
Greece and Rome



Why Study "How Jesus Became God?"

1. To give us a better understanding of how the early Christian Community developed the story of Jesus from the time he walked this earth and then portrayed in the Gospels.



ck photo

Why Study "How Jesus Became God?"

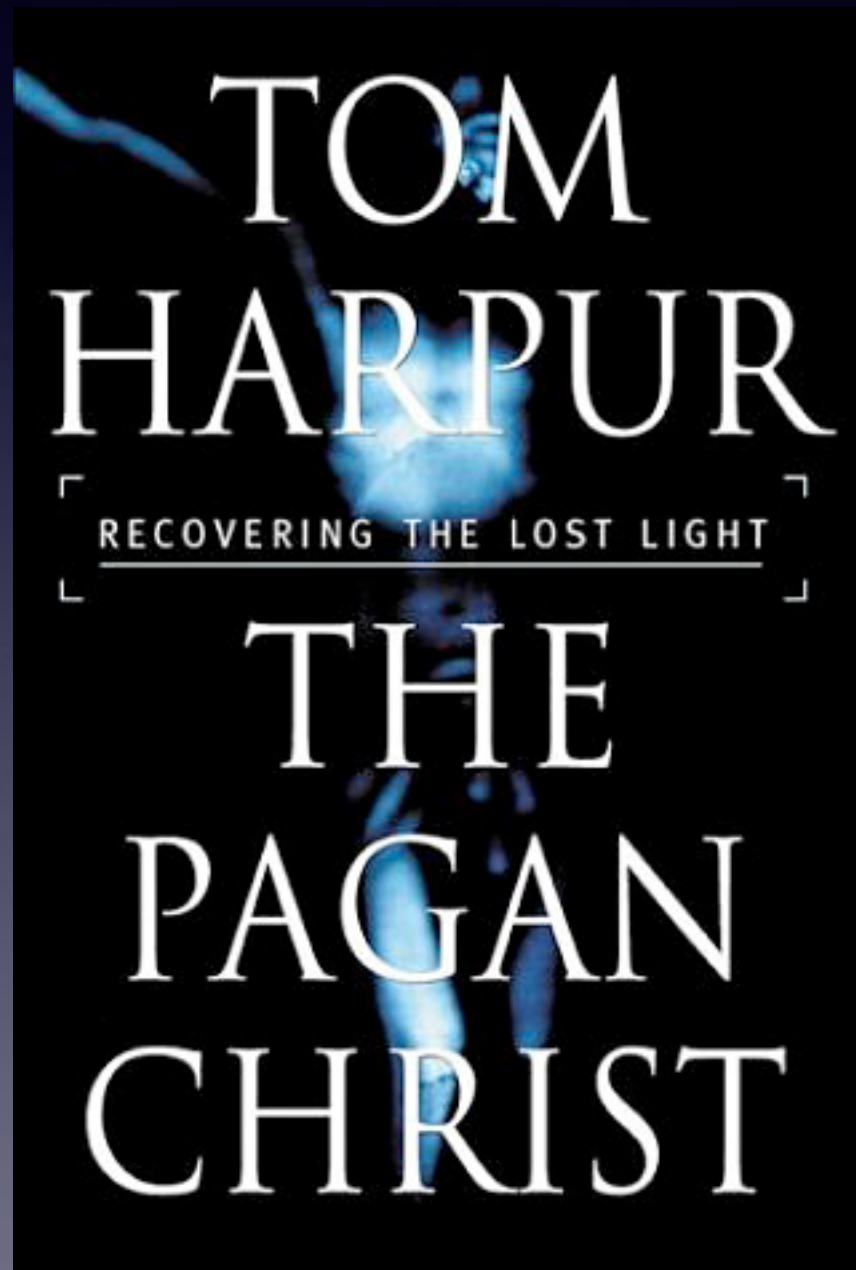
2. To make us more aware of how Christian dogma has separated us from other faiths, especially Judaism and Islam and how we need to take a new look at Jesus in light of interfaith dialogue today.



ck photo



Why Study “How Jesus Became God?”



In 2004 Tom Harpur introduced me to the key issues of our study tonight when he wrote a book "The Pagan Christ"

<http://www.tomharpur.com/books/paganchrist/>

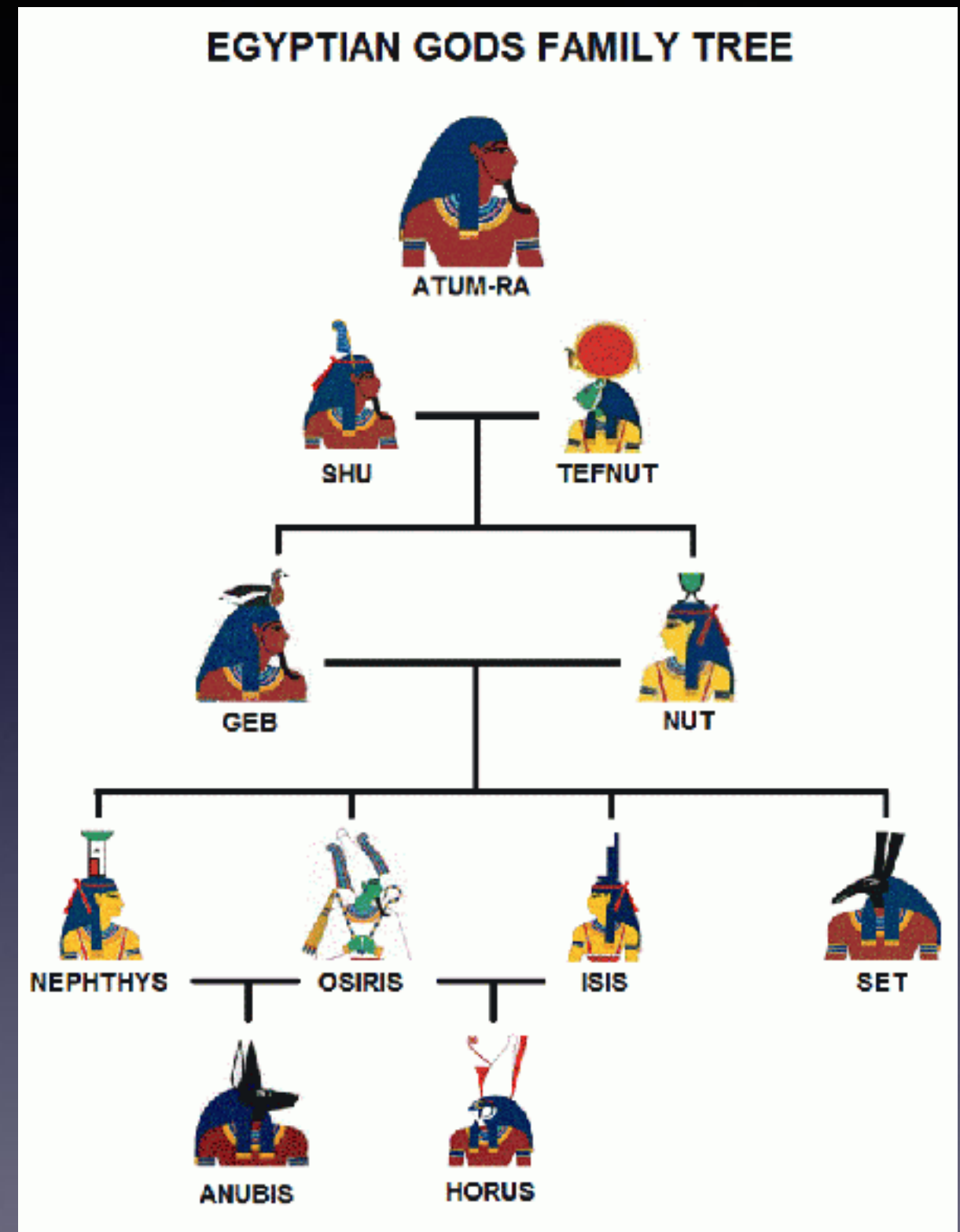


How Jesus Became God?

Our focus tonight is on how humans became divine, and gods became human, in Greek and Roman mythology, but we need to realize that ancient mythologies were often inter-related and borrowed from each other.

Harpur saw many of the same themes in Egyptian mythology that Ehrman sees in Greek and Roman myths.

Our spiritual
ancestors include
spiritual and
moral ideas from
Israel, Greece
and Egypt.



Egyptian Gods

Horus

Horus was represented by the “Eye of Horus” - a good luck charm, by “Horus the Falcon” and by other icons.

Horus was God of the Sky and of the Pharaoh. Osiris was his father, and Isis, his mother.

Horus and Set divided Egypt and fought endlessly.



How Jesus Became God?

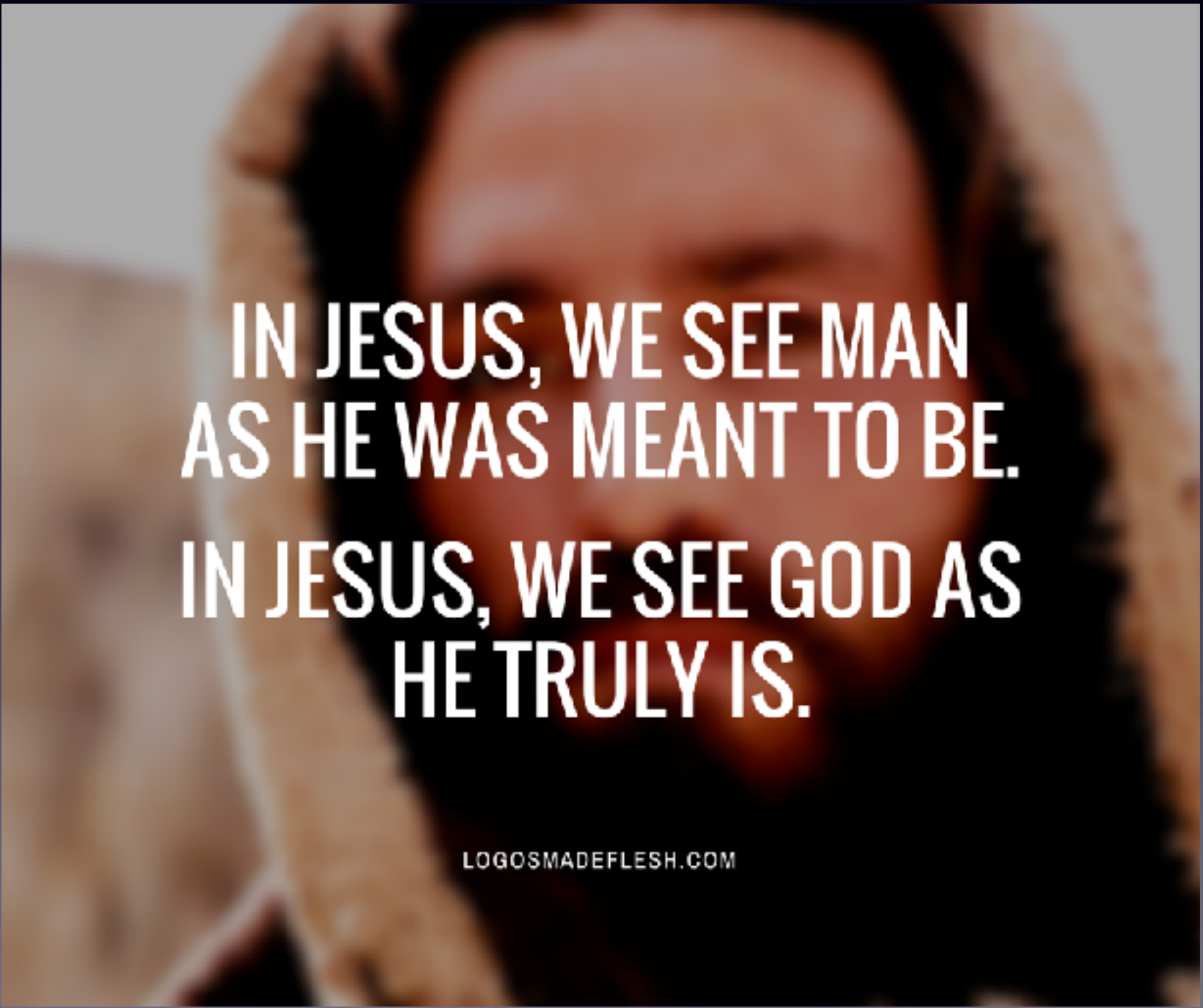
The key idea behind all of this is how humans tried to define their relationship to their gods, and their gods with humans, and how they described their political leaders (pharaohs, caesars, etc.) in light of this.

How Jesus Became God?

In many ways, the Jesus story was not unique, but a synthesis of many other inherited stories known to the early Christians.

DISCUSSION

How Jesus Became God?



**IN JESUS, WE SEE MAN
AS HE WAS MEANT TO BE.
IN JESUS, WE SEE GOD AS
HE TRULY IS.**

LOGOSMADEFLESH.COM

Ultimately, the church defined Jesus as "true God and true man" but it took much struggle to arrive there.

How Jesus Became God?

The details of this resulted in the separation of Western and Eastern churches, and between Eastern churches themselves.



How Jesus Became God?

We tend to look at much of this process (councils, creeds) as esoteric, and more confusing and divisive than helpful. But at the time the results spelt life or death for many.

Ehrman sees a lot of this as a mistake.

How Jesus Became God?

Heretic - became the way to distinguish between those on the winning side of the debate, and those who lost. We need to understand that more than theological refinements were involved.



How Jesus Became God?

Ehrman says:

It is highly debateable that Jesus viewed himself as divine.

DISCUSSION

How Jesus Became God?

To understand why divinity occurred for him, we need to understand Jesus in his Greco-Roman cultural context.



How Jesus Became God?

Key Point:

While we modern, western thinkers tend to draw a sharp line between the divine and the human, the secular and the sacred - early peoples saw this on an evolving continuum.

DISCUSSION

How Jesus Became God?

People in the various global cultures from which Christianity emerged were strongly shaped by Hebrew, Greco-Roman and other ancient mythologies.



How Jesus Became God?

Christian interpreters tried to tell the Jesus story in the context of these ancient myths to help people understand him better.



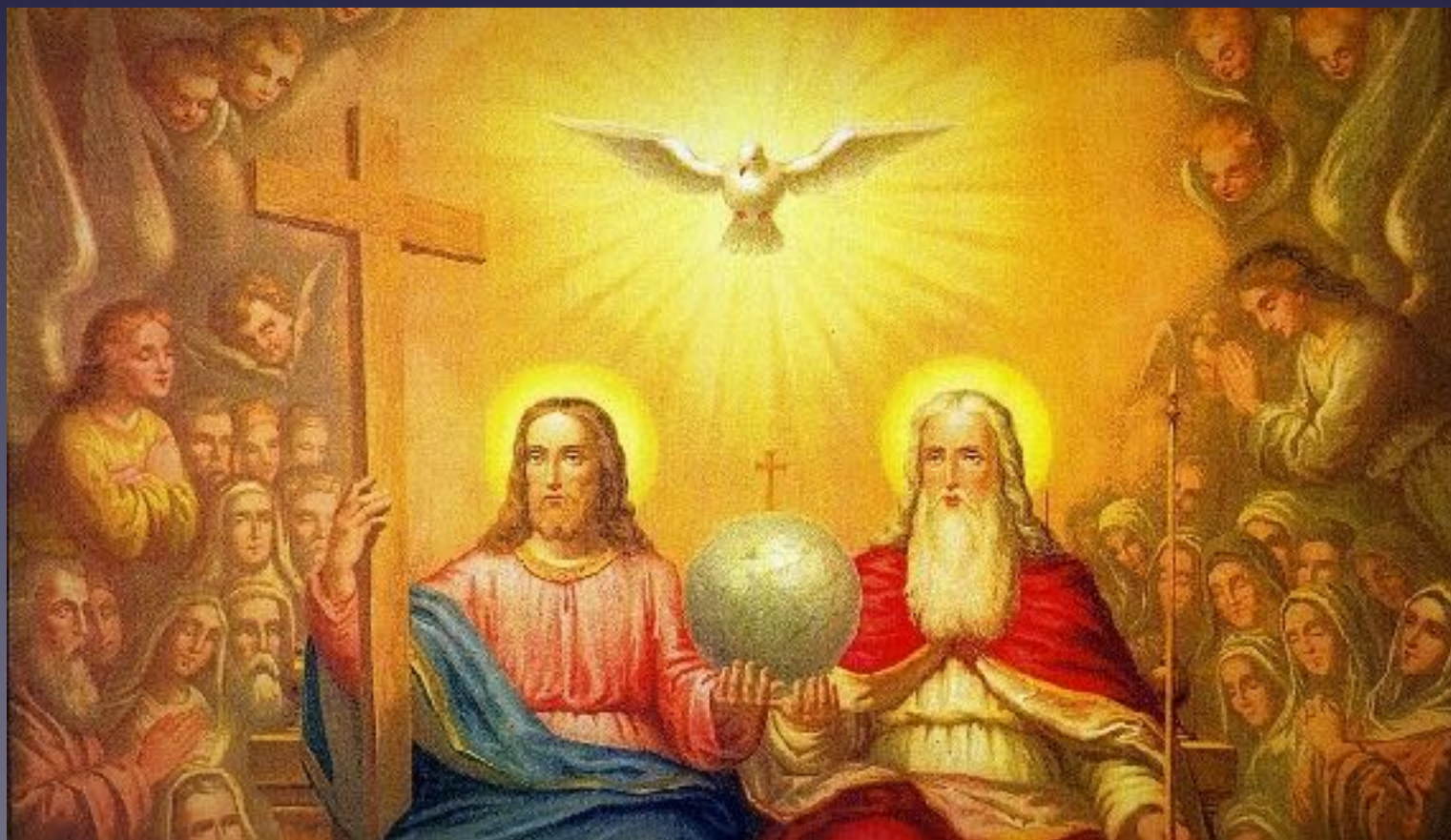
How Jesus Became God?

But Christians did not only look to the past. They read the present and future situations and interpreted accordingly.

As such, as emperor-worship (the Caesars) emerged as the leaders of the Roman empire, Christians began to interpret Jesus as a strong "spiritual counter-balance" to the worldly empire.

How Jesus Became God?

Jesus eventually came to be thought of as belonging - not down here with us - but up there with God.



Discussion

How did Jesus move from the realm of the purely human to the truly divine?

In what 'sense' did this happen?

Continuum or separate and distinct?

Existing mythological context or something uniquely new?

Break

PBS Documentary

From Jesus to Christ

Video - excerpt 15:53

Paganism and Ancient Rome

Discovery at Nag Hammadi

Pliny the Younger

Part IV 0:00 to 15:43

Transcript Page 6-8

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/watch/>

Discussion

How did Jesus move from the realm of the purely human to the truly divine?

In what 'sense' did this happen?

Continuum or separate and distinct?

Existing mythological context or something uniquely new?

Next Readings

Session 3 - 6 Feb 2017

Ch 2. Divine Humans in Ancient Judaism

Study Website

<http://hjbg.stdavidscalgary.net>

Closing



"I can only trust that even oppressive darkness cannot
snuff the light cast from many tiny flames of truth."

Melanie Jean Juneau