

A Lenten Program: Jesus and the Gospels

Have you ever asked yourself any of the following questions?

- *How much can be known about the earthly life of Jesus from a historical study?*
- *Jesus is more than a historical person, so is there any other way to learn who he is?*
- *How did the Resurrection experience influence the character of the Gospels?*
- *How should we read the Gospels when we realize they were written in Greek about a Jewish Messiah who was executed by Roman authority in the 1st-century Mediterranean world?*
- *How do the Gospels compare with other ancient literature—in what ways are they similar and in what ways different?*
- *What did the experiences, oral transmissions, and memories of Jesus in the early Church contribute to the way the Gospels were written?*
- *The first Gospel, Mark, was written about 70 CE. Why did it take so long to compose a full narrative Gospel?*
- *Why are the three synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) so alike and yet so different in such intricate and complex ways?*
- *Is it possible to speak of a single Jesus when accounts of him are so various?*

If you are curious about any of these things, you are invited to a viewing and discussion of six half-hour DVD lectures by Luke Timothy Johnson, Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University. One lecture will be viewed on each of the six Sundays of Lent, March 5, 2017, to April 9, 2017, at 8:30 a.m. in the lower level of the church. Shirley Dowdy will moderate the discussion.