

Here is the final portion of my proposal for the Graphic Textbook of the New Testament. The earlier part described the sections on the Gospels. Here I map out the basic coverage of the historical Jesus. The book will be extremely brief in comparison with my full-blown NT textbook, which comes in at 572 pages. This one is projected to be 150 pages, and most of it art work. Yikes! The challenge is kinda obvious.... But hey, if you can summarize the NT in one sentence (and you can) (in fact a very very short sentence: It's about the life and teachings of Jesus and his followers....), you can surely do it in 150 pages!

At the end of the prospectus I include a couple of things that always go into this kind of proposal: marketing ideas; what other books it will be competing with; and when I plan (well, hope) to have it finished.

The Historical Jesus (8 pages)

I will shift gears in the final chapter, away from explaining how Jesus is portrayed in each of the Gospels to asking what he was really like, what he actually said, did, and experienced. The chapter will begin by explaining the problems the Gospels pose as historical sources for what really happened. We will have already seen numerous differences among the Gospels. Some of these are direct contradictions. So how can we know which is right? Moreover, all the Gospels were written decades after Jesus' death by anonymous authors who did not know him or even speak his same language (they wrote in Greek; he spoke Aramaic). They received most of their stories through oral traditions, as they had been passed along by word of mouth for years and decades.

Given these problems, how can historians know what really happened in Jesus' life? After explaining ...

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