

Many readers on the blog will know of Larry Hurtado, a prominent New Testament scholar who has been influential as one of the most regular and reliable bloggers on issues of relevance to the study of early Christianity. Larry has announced that he is very ill and will no longer be able to participate in either scholarship or the promotion of early Christians studies to a broader reading audience. This is very sad, especially for us who know him. (I will give his announcement about his illness and the prospects at the end of this post.)

I have known Larry for over thirty years. He started out as a New Testament textual critic, with his first book a published version of his dissertation: Hurtado, Larry W. (1981). *Text-Critical Methodology and the Pre-Caesarean Text: Codex W in the Gospel of Mark*. Studies and Documents. **43**. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. It's not something you will want to try to reading, unless you're an expert on Greek and the Greek manuscript tradition of the NT. Trust me. But I used it when writing my dissertation four years later on a not-altogether dissimilar (and equally unreadable) topic.

I would venture to say that the book he is best known for was his next: (1988). *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press. This book is very much accessible to the non-expert and deals with an even more important topic: how Christ was worshiped as God very early in the Christian tradition by followers who nonetheless insisted there was only one God (and who believed Christ was not the same being as the Father). This book was an intervention in the claims of others that the deity of Christ was a *later* development in the early Christian tradition. Rather than simply look at doctrinal statements about Christ, Larry realized the solution to understanding how Christian views was to see how they *worshiped*. If they worshiped Christ as God then, well, you can't very well say they didn't see him as God. Yet they remained monotheists. How'd they do that? Read the book and see!

Larry later wrote a more scholarly and far more sophisticated and much longer assessment of the same phenomenon, in many ways his magnum opus. This is probably still accessible to lay folk, but it is very serious scholarship all the same and is not for the casual reader: (2003). *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Larry never abandoned his passion for the study of early Christian manuscripts and very helpfully turned to the question of how the surviving texts of the New Testament can help us understand better the *social* history of Christianity at different periods. This led to a book that possibly most readers of this blog would be particularly interested in: (2006). *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. If you had to pick one of his books to read, I would say this is it.

Larry wrote a number of other books and articles, especially on another of his long-term interests, the Gospel of Mark. You can get an idea of the oeuvre from the Wikipedia page: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larry_Hurtado

I first met Larry when he was a professor of the University of Manitoba in Canada; he later moved to a senior position at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland; he retired eight years ago as a Professor Emeritus from there, but has remained active academically since. But that appears now to be coming to an end. Here is the post from several days ago in which he announces the health issues, to which he will now need to be devoting his attention, full time:

New post on **Larry Hurtado's Blog**

[Health Issues and Blogging](#)

by [larryhurtado](#)

The leukemia (AML) for which I was treated here last summer has reactivated, after some 9 months of remission. The further treatment options are quite limited, and may only be palliative care of various sorts. In any case, I am now fully occupied with exploring various arrangements for the situation and aftermath of my death on my wife and others. So, I shall have no time for blogging or my scholarly work. Signing off unless further notice. I hope that the archives on the site will continue to prove useful to interested readers.

[larryhurtado](#) | July 8, 2019 at 9:02 am | Categories: [Uncategorized](#) |

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