Instructor
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I. Course Description
The Christian religion is inextricably bound up with contemporary culture not only in America but also around the globe. Yet, even after centuries of scholarly inquiry, numerous questions regarding its historical origins remain contested and unanswered. This course probes several:
How did Jesus of Nazareth, the son of an obscure carpenter, come to be worshiped as the eternal son of God? How did his death at the hands of the Romans, by any ordinary measure a calamitous misfortune, come to be interpreted as a means of salvation for the world? And how, in the wake of this death, did his marginalized band of followers evolve into the church that would eventually convert the Roman Empire? Using historical and literary methodologies, we will discover which aspects of these events can be reconstructed and which ones remain obscure and speculative.

II. Textbooks

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III. Schedule

Week 1 (June 4): The Kingdom of God and the End of the (Roman) World

Gospel of Mark, especially chapters 1–4 and 8

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\(^1\) Equivalent reading selections are given for both the 6th and 7th edition of Ehrman.
Week 2 (June 11): Tell Me the Story of Jesus: (Synoptic) Gospel Traditions and Inventions

Gospel of Matthew, chapters 1–7

Week 3 (June 18): Historical Jesus: A Man behind the Myths?


Week 4 (June 25): Jesus of Nazareth: From Resurrection to Pre-Existence and Back

Gospel of John, chapter 1; First Corinthians, chapter 15