

The Last Adam

A THEOLOGY OF THE OBEDIENT LIFE
OF JESUS IN THE GOSPELS



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For Simeon Christopher

καὶ [Συμεὼν] ἐδέξατο αὐτὸ εἰς τὰς ἀγκάλας καὶ
εὐλόγησεν τὸν θεὸν καὶ εἶπεν . . .
εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου τὸ σωτήριόν σου,
ὃ ἠτοίμασας κατὰ πρόσωπον πάντων τῶν λαῶν,
φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἔθνων
καὶ δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραήλ.

And Simeon took [Jesus] in his arms and blessed God and said . . .

“My eyes have seen your salvation,
Which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples;
A light for revelation to the gentiles
And the glory of your people, Israel.”
Luke 2:28, 30–32

May you be borne up by Christ, that you may bear him to others.

How has Christ abolished sin, banished the separation between us and God, and acquired righteousness to render God favorable and kindly toward us? . . . He has achieved this for us by the whole course of his obedience.

—John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 2.16.5

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Preface

My aim in this volume is to set forth the soteriological significance of the life of Jesus in the Gospels. I have written the kind of book that I would like to read, in answer to the question that I have often asked: what is Jesus doing in the Gospels? This is primarily an exegetical study, but I have not shied away from engaging with and gleaning from historical and systematic theology where relevant. Though I have written this book largely to answer my own questions, I hope it will also be helpful and accessible to anyone interested in the Jesus of the Gospels. It is particularly my desire that professors, pastors, students, and all interested exegetes will be stimulated by this study to reflect further on the life of Jesus for their various contexts. What follows is by no means the final word but is my effort to make a contribution to ongoing discussions relating to the theology and Christology of the Gospel narratives.

Writing this book has been a labor of love and is the result of a number of years of reflection, conversation, and learning from many sources. It is not possible to thank everyone who has helped my own understanding or who has provided feedback in some form. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to thank the following people specifically. First, thanks to the board of trustees, faculty, administration, and staff (especially the tireless efforts of the Montgomery Library staff) of Westminster Theological Seminary for the resources, assistance, and support that have aided in the completion of this project. Special thanks to the board of trustees and faculty for granting a Professional Advancement Leave for the first half of 2015, which allowed me to complete the bulk of this manuscript. My colleagues in the New Testament Department, Greg Beale and Vern Poythress, are continually sources of wisdom and encouragement, and I am grateful for their collegiality. Second, thanks to all those who have taken the time to provide more formal feedback

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Finally, singular thanks goes to my family. My wife Cheryl is a source of constant encouragement and is the crown of her husband (Prov. 12:4), and our four children manifest the *joie de vivre* in all sorts of creative ways. Additionally, the continued love and support of my parents and parents-in-law is a great blessing. I dedicate this volume to our second child, Simeon Christopher, whose name is inspired by the speaker of the *Nunc Dimittis* in Luke 2. For Simeon, to hold Jesus was to behold and embrace salvation, which is a father's highest prayer for his children.

Abbreviations

Old Testament

Gen.	Genesis	Song of Sol.	Song of Solomon
Exod.	Exodus	Isa.	Isaiah
Lev.	Leviticus	Jer.	Jeremiah
Num.	Numbers	Lam.	Lamentations
Deut.	Deuteronomy	Ezek.	Ezekiel
Josh.	Joshua	Dan.	Daniel
Judg.	Judges	Hosea	Hosea
Ruth	Ruth	Joel	Joel
1–2 Sam.	1–2 Samuel	Amos	Amos
1–2 Kings	1–2 Kings	Obad.	Obadiah
1–2 Chron.	1–2 Chronicles	Jon.	Jonah
Ezra	Ezra	Mic.	Micah
Neh.	Nehemiah	Nah.	Nahum
Esther	Esther	Hab.	Habakkuk
Job	Job	Zeph.	Zephaniah
Ps. (Pss.)	Psalms (Psalms)	Hag.	Haggai
Prov.	Proverbs	Zech.	Zechariah
Eccles.	Ecclesiastes	Mal.	Malachi

New Testament

Matt.	Matthew	Phil.	Philippians
Mark	Mark	Col.	Colossians
Luke	Luke	1–2 Thess.	1–2 Thessalonians
John	John	1–2 Tim.	1–2 Timothy
Acts	Acts	Titus	Titus
Rom.	Romans	Philem.	Philemon
1–2 Cor.	1–2 Corinthians	Heb.	Hebrews
Gal.	Galatians	James	James
Eph.	Ephesians	1–2 Pet.	1–2 Peter

1–3 John Jude	1–3 John Jude	Rev.	Revelation
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General

<i>b.</i>	Babylonian Talmud	frag.	fragment
B	Codex Vaticanus	LXX	Septuagint
ca.	circa	m.	Mishnah
cf.	<i>confer</i> , compare	MT	Masoretic Text
chap(s).	chapter(s)	NT	New Testament
esp.	especially	OT	Old Testament
ET	English translation	par(r).	parallel(s)
EVV	English versions	v(v).	verse(s)
fl.	<i>floruit</i> , flourished	y.	Jerusalem Talmud

Bible Versions

CEB	Common English Bible	MT	Masoretic Text
ESV	English Standard Version	NASB	New American Standard Bible
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible	NIV	New International Version
KJV	King James Version	NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
LXX	Septuagint	OG	Old Greek

Apocrypha and Septuagint

2 Esd.	2 Esdras	Wis.	Wisdom of Solomon
Sir.	Sirach/Ecclesiasticus		

Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature

1QH ^a	Thanksgiving Hymns	4Q504	Words of the Luminaries
1QM	War Scroll	4Q521	Messianic Apocalypse
1QS	Rule of the Community	4QDeut ^a	4QDeuteronomy ^a
4Q167	4QpHos ^b	11Q13	Melchizedek
4Q246	Apocryphon of Daniel	11QT ^a	Temple Scroll ^a
4Q285	Sefer Hamillhamah	CD	Damascus Document

Old Testament Pseudepigrapha

<i>Apoc. Adam</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Adam</i>	<i>Jub.</i>	<i>Jubilees</i>
<i>Apoc. Mos.</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Moses</i>	LAE	<i>Life of Adam and Eve</i>
<i>2 Bar.</i>	<i>2 Baruch</i>	<i>Pss. Sol.</i>	<i>Psalms of Solomon</i>
<i>Cav. Tr.</i>	<i>Cave of Treasures</i>	<i>Ques. Ezra</i>	<i>Questions of Ezra</i>
<i>1 En.</i>	<i>1 Enoch</i>	<i>Sib. Or.</i>	<i>Sibylline Oracles</i>
<i>2 En.</i>	<i>2 Enoch</i>	<i>T. Ab.</i>	<i>Testament of Abraham</i>
<i>4 Ezra</i>	<i>4 Ezra</i>	<i>T. Levi</i>	<i>Testament of Levi</i>
<i>6 Ezra</i>	<i>6 Ezra</i>	<i>T. Mos.</i>	<i>Testament of Moses</i>

T. Naph. Testament of Naphtali
T. Sim. Testament of Simeon

T. Sol. Testament of Solomon

Mishnah and Talmud Tractates

Ḥag. Ḥagigah
Mak. Makkot
Neg. Nega'im

Nid. Niddah
Qidd. Qiddušin
Zabim Zabim

Other Rabbinic Works

Deut. Rab. Deuteronomy Rabbah
Gen. Rab. Genesis Rabbah
Mek. Exod. Mekilta Exodus
Num. Rab. Numbers Rabbah

Pesiq. Rab. Pesiqta Rabbati
Pirqe R. El. Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer
Sipre Sipre

Apostolic Fathers

Diogn. Epistle to Diognetus
Ign. Eph. Ignatius, To the Ephesians

Ign. Magn. Ignatius, To the
 Magnesians

Other Greek and Latin Works

Athanasius of Alexandria
C. Ar. Orationes contra Arianos
Ep. Aeg. Lib. Epistula ad episcopos Aegypti et Libyae
Inc. De incarnatione

Augustus (Roman emperor)
Res gest. divi Aug. Res gestae divi Augusti

John Calvin
Inst. Institutio christianae religionis

Eusebius of Caesarea
Hist. eccl. Historia ecclesiastica

Homer
Il. Ilias

Irenaeus
Epid. Epideixis tou apostolikou
 kērygmatos (Demonstration of
 the Apostolic Preaching)

Haer. Adversus haereses (Against
 Heresies)

Jerome

Comm. Matt. Commentariorum in
 Matthaeum libri IV
Epist. Epistulae

John Chrysostom

Hom. Jo. Homiliae in Joannem

Josephus

Ant. Jewish Antiquities
J.W. Jewish War

Justin

Dial. Dialogus cum Tryphone

Philo

Leg. Legum allegoriae
Opif. De opificio mundi
QG Quaestiones et solutiones in
 Genesin
Virt. De virtutibus

<i>Tertullian</i>	<i>Francis Turretin</i>
<i>Carn. Chr. De carne Christi</i>	<i>Inst. Institutio theologiae elencticae</i>

Modern Works

AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
ACT	Ancient Christian Texts
ANF	<i>The Ante-Nicene Fathers</i> . Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 1885–1887. 10 vols. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994
ANZK	Archiv für neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte und Kulturkunde
ArBib	The Aramaic Bible
ASBT	Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
AYB	Anchor Yale Bible
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	W. Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999
BDF	Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BGBE	Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese
BHQ	<i>Biblia Hebraica Quinta</i> . Edited by Adrian Schenker et al. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004–
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibAnChr	Bible in Ancient Christianity
BMSEC	Baylor–Mohr Siebeck Studies in Early Christianity
BRS	Biblical Resource Series
BST	The Bible Speaks Today
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BTNT	Biblical Theology of the New Testament
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAHQ	Christian Answers to Hard Questions
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CC	Cascade Companions
CCT	Contours of Christian Theology
CGTC	Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary
CM	Christianity in the Making
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
COQG	Christian Origins and the Question of God
CSS	Cistercian Studies Series
CTQ	<i>Concordia Theological Quarterly</i>

<i>CurTM</i>	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>
DCH	<i>Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i> . Edited by David J. A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 1993–2014
DCLS	Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
<i>DJG</i>	<i>Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels</i> . Edited by Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992
EHS.T	Europäische Hochschulschriften: Reihe 23, Theologie
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>EuroJTh</i>	<i>European Journal of Theology</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FTS	Freiburger theologische Studien
GBSNT	Guides to Biblical Scholarship: New Testament Series
GH	Gorgias Handbooks
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
HThKNT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HvTSt</i>	<i>Hervormde theologiese studies</i>
<i>IBHS</i>	<i>An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax</i> . Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JTISup	Journal of Theological Interpretation, Supplements
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
K&D	Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch. <i>Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament</i> . Translated by James Martin et al. 25 vols. Edinburgh, 1857–1878. Repr., 10 vols., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996
KBOST	Koinonia: Beiträge zur ökumenischen Spiritualität und Theologie
LCC	Library of Christian Classics
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LNTS	The Library of New Testament Studies
<i>LTP</i>	<i>Laval théologique et philosophique</i>
<i>MdB</i>	<i>Le Monde de la Bible</i>
MST	Mediaeval Sources in Translation
NAC	New American Commentary

NACSBT	New American Commentary Studies in Bible & Theology
NIBCNT	New International Biblical Commentary on the New Testament
NIBCOT	New International Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NPNF ¹	<i>The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i> , Series 1. Edited by Philip Schaff. 1886–89. 14 vols. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994
NPNF ²	<i>The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i> , Series 2. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. 1890–1900. 14 vols. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTL	New Testament Library
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
NTTSD	New Testament Tools, Studies, and Documents
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTP	<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. Anchor Bible Reference Library. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983, 1985
PC	Proclamation Commentaries
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
PPS	Popular Patristics Series
<i>Presb</i>	<i>Presbyterion</i>
<i>ProEccl</i>	<i>Pro Ecclesia</i>
PRR	<i>Presbyterian and Reformed Review</i>
PRSt	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
REC	Reformed Expository Commentary
RHT	Reformed Historical Theology
SBET	<i>Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology</i>
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>ScRel</i>	<i>Sciences religieuses</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
ST	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
StPatr	Studia Patristica
Str-B	Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck. <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i> . 6 vols. Munich, 1922–1961
TBC	Torch Bible Commentaries
TBT	<i>The Bible Today</i>
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
TEG	Traditio Exegetica Graeca
TL	A Theology of Lordship

TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TWOT	<i>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VSI	A Very Short Introduction
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
WW	<i>Word and World</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>



A Tale of Two Adams in the History of Interpretation

A Crucial Question

What is the purpose and significance of the life and ministry of Jesus in the Gospels? At one level, this may seem like an obvious question. The Gospels¹ are all about Jesus. Moreover, given the structure of each of the four Gospels, it is difficult to miss the central role played by the Passion Narratives. And yet there is much more in the Gospels beyond the Passion Narratives. Jesus is amazingly active. He preaches, heals, exorcises, prays, rebukes, forgives, calls, authorizes, confounds, challenges, rejoices, weeps, blesses, curses, prophesies, and more. In addition, he consistently draws attention to himself as he does these things.

And then there are the Christmas stories (that is, the infancy narratives). These are among the more familiar parts of the Gospels in today's culture. But what is the relationship between the infancy narratives and salvation?² Jesus

1. I will be working from the four canonical Gospels. This is not the place to argue for the legitimacy of the four canonical Gospels, but these Gospels have the greatest claim to being the earliest and most widely used Gospels in the early church. See further Charles E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

2. *Salvation* is difficult to define concisely, since it is richly multifaceted, entailing at once various dimensions, which would take many hundreds of pages to tease out sufficiently. However,

appears to be quite passive lying in the manger as he is adored by shepherds, and we do not find him to be very active when the magi come and prostrate themselves before him in Matthew 2. But can we look even to the infancy of Jesus and say that Jesus was somehow already beginning to *accomplish* something of significance? To ask this question is to lead us back to the driving question of this volume, since Jesus did not bypass infancy, childhood, adolescence, or adulthood on his way to the cross. Why? What was it about the life of Jesus that was necessary for salvation—from the manger to the cross and everything in between?³ Do the Evangelists themselves give us any indications that this is a question they have in view as they write their Gospels? I will argue that they do.

In this volume I will argue that we find a shared perspective among the diversity of the four Gospels that the obedient life of Jesus—in its entirety—is vicarious and salvific in character.⁴ More specifically, I will argue that Jesus is portrayed in the Gospels as the last Adam whose obedience is necessary for God's people to experience the blessings of salvation. In pursuit of this thesis, I will consider what the Gospels themselves say about the lifelong obedience of Jesus, which concomitantly involves considering how Jesus's life and ministry are related to his passion. By concentrating on the Gospels I do not intend to imply that these are the only documents in the New Testament that speak to this issue. I do believe, however, that a focus on the Gospels qua Gospels is important because of the way they narrate the life of Jesus, and because their testimony to the significance of Jesus's life for salvation has often not been given sufficient attention. Thus a sub-aim of this book is to help us read and interpret the Gospels theologically.

I will explain more of my method and limitations below. At this juncture I would like to linger over the need to identify the theological significance of the life of Jesus *from the Gospels*. In recent years many have emphasized the importance of the Gospels' theological contributions, along with the need to articulate more fully the task and mission of Jesus in accord with how we approach the Gospels. This concern is evident in Jürgen Moltmann's *The Way of Jesus Christ*, where Moltmann traces the messianic mission of Christ in the Gospels and suggests that the standard creeds, such as the Apostles' Creed

by way of shorthand I will consider salvation to be deliverance from sin unto everlasting life in fellowship with the Triune God. For fuller studies, see John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955); Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003–8), esp. vols. 3–4.

3. N. T. Wright asks a similar question in *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2012), 3, 8.

4. See similarly, among others, Robert Letham, *The Work of Christ*, CCT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993), 113–17; Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:378–80, 405.

and Nicene Creed, would have done well to fill in the details between “born of the Virgin Mary / was made man” and “suffered under Pontius Pilate.”⁵

An even more relevant volume is N. T. Wright’s *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Wright in his typically provocative way suggests that the Reformers have never had a great answer to the question “Why did Jesus live?” and “orthodoxy, represented by much popular preaching and writing, has had no clear idea of the purpose of Jesus’ ministry.”⁶ Wright proceeds with his answer to the perceived dilemma, arguing for a prophetic, suffering-servant role for Jesus the Messiah, who announces, enacts, and embodies the end of exile, the defeat of evil, and Yahweh’s returning to Zion.⁷

Wright’s assessment of the task of Jesus places Jesus firmly within the context of Israel’s history. His approach has been influential, and he continues to popularize it. In the more recent *How God Became King* he refers to the question of “Why did Jesus live?” as the “puzzle of a lifetime” and warns us against lopping off *de facto* the four Gospels from the front of the New Testament canon.⁸ I concur with the question Wright is asking, and I have been stimulated by his writings. Yet I believe there is more to be said.

Another example is the recent work of Scot McKnight, who wants to show us that the *gospel* is in *the Gospels*.⁹ McKnight, much like Wright, emphasizes that the story of Israel is resolved in the person of Jesus in a saving way.¹⁰ Further, we find the gospel in the Gospels because “the gospel is the saving Story of Jesus completing Israel’s Story, and Jesus clearly set himself at the center of God’s saving plan for Israel.”¹¹ McKnight correctly observes that the good news has a clear focus on Jesus.¹² Not only in his more popular work but also in a recent essay, McKnight explores the story of Jesus’s life in the context of Israel and affirms that the story of Jesus is a *saving* story. For McKnight, the Gospel of Matthew is gospel because Jesus releases his people from the burden of sin in the inner conscience *and* because he liberates in a more comprehensive manner (i.e., from oppressing burdens).¹³ But can we still say

5. Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 69–70, 73–150.

6. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, COQG 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 14.

7. *Ibid.*, 481, 593.

8. See Wright, *How God Became King*, 9.

9. Scot McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011).

10. *Ibid.*, 79, 82–83. McKnight also cites Martin Hengel and I. H. Marshall to this end (*ibid.*, 83).

11. *Ibid.*, 111.

12. *Ibid.*, 92–93.

13. Scot McKnight, “Matthew as ‘Gospel,’” in *Jesus, Matthew’s Gospel and Early Christianity: Studies in Memory of Graham N. Stanton*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge, LNTS 435 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 59–75.

more about how the holistic story of Jesus's life is a *saving* story? McKnight rightly points to the movement toward the cross in the Gospels,¹⁴ along with the more integrated means by which Jesus bears our burdens in accord with Isaiah 53 in Matthew 8:16–17.¹⁵ Even still, I believe there are further connections between the saving character of Jesus's life and his death to be explored.

Close to the time McKnight's *King Jesus Gospel* appeared, Darrell Bock released *Recovering the Real Lost Gospel*, in which he argues that to understand the New Testament gospel we must recognize that Jesus "brought the good news that God's promised rule of deliverance had arrived."¹⁶ Further, Bock notes that Jesus's dying for sin is not the whole gospel, but the cross (at least as we find it in 1 Cor.) "functions as a hub and a synecdoche for all that Jesus' work brings."¹⁷ Although neither Bock's *Recovering the Real Lost Gospel* nor McKnight's *King Jesus Gospel* is concerned exclusively with the message of the Gospels, both acknowledge the need to understand the message pertaining to the work of Christ more holistically, in a way that considers more than just the cross, and these holistic approaches have implications for how we read the Gospels.

A more sustained focus on the Gospels is found in Jonathan Pennington's *Reading the Gospels Wisely*. As he considers the meaning of *euangelion* in the Gospels, Pennington first observes that the gospel originated as an oral message about Jesus Christ, including especially who he was and what he accomplished in his life, death, and resurrection.¹⁸ It is instructive that Pennington includes much more than just the death of Christ in this introductory definition. As he considers the definition of *euangelion* in the Gospels, Pennington observes the connection between the gospel and the kingdom and focuses on the good news of the return of God's restorative reign.¹⁹ Thus kingship is front and center in the good news that "your God reigns" (Isa. 52:7). Additionally, Pennington helpfully observes that the message of the forgiveness of sins cannot be separated from the kingdom message of Jesus.²⁰ There is, in other words, an intricate connection between the good news of God's kingly reign and the good news of forgiveness of sins, which must be related to the Gospels as thoroughly christological documents. Pennington

14. McKnight, *King Jesus Gospel*, 85.

15. McKnight, "Matthew as 'Gospel,'" 71.

16. Darrell L. Bock, *Recovering the Real Lost Gospel: Reclaiming the Gospel as Good News* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 1.

17. *Ibid.*, 3–4.

18. Jonathan T. Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 5.

19. *Ibid.*, 10–16.

20. *Ibid.*, 16 and 16n39.

brings into sharp focus the need to define the good news of the life of Jesus from the Gospels in light of the current scholarly conversation about the role of Israel and also the realization that the Gospels are centrally important *narratives* about Jesus.²¹ These are important observations, and we will consider the narrative Christology of the Gospels throughout this study.

One final recent example is Michael Bird's *Evangelical Theology*. A distinctive aspect of this volume is the thoroughgoing focus on the evangel, which leads Bird to focus significantly on the life and ministry of Jesus. In Bird's estimation, the life of Jesus does not figure prominently in evangelical theology; many are content with Jesus being born of a virgin and dying as a sinless sacrifice for sin.²² In this Bird echoes Wright's sentiment that a number of standard doctrinal formulations do not sufficiently reference the life and teaching of Jesus. Bird poses an important question: "what is the theological significance of [Jesus's] life and teaching?"²³ He proceeds to consider the significance of these in accord with such topics as Jesus's messianic anointing, miracles, parables, fulfillment of Old Testament hopes for Israel, and especially the inauguration of the kingdom of God.²⁴ Bird's desire to focus on the work of Jesus on these points is to be commended. His articulation of the purpose of Jesus's ministry as God becoming king of Israel in Jesus's work stands in clear continuity with the view of Wright noted above. Although I agree that due attention needs to be given to the life of Jesus, I am not convinced that Christian theology (or Reformed theology, more specifically) has been quite as silent on this point as Bird suggests. Nor does the history of exegesis lack the categories to deal with the life of Jesus in the Gospels. I do think Bird, Moltmann, Wright, McKnight, and others are correct that the life of Jesus is not always emphasized in theological discourse. Nevertheless, we can find wisdom from previous generations that will help us today understand and articulate the saving significance of Jesus's life and ministry in the Gospels.

I am therefore encouraged by the conversation that is under way. Some points of fairly wide consensus seem to be developing. Israel's story as we find it in Scripture must provide our framework for understanding Jesus's actions, and those actions must be understood in the context of each Gospel's narrative structure. In the Gospels we find Jesus coming in the fullness of time as Israel's messianic king, bringing the already/not-yet kingdom of God, and fulfilling the eschatological hopes of the prophets. Wright even avers that

21. *Ibid.*, 35.

22. Michael F. Bird, *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 357.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*, 375–82.

Jesus's whole life is gospel.²⁵ These are important advancements over some of the more fragmented approaches of form criticism from the first half of the twentieth century. Yet more needs to be said about what we mean. *How* and *why* is the life of Jesus significant as narrated in the Gospels and for the gospel? Why is there such a strong focus on the *obedience* of Jesus throughout all four Gospels?²⁶ How does the *life* of Jesus relate to the kingdom of God? Why does Jesus so often speak of himself? Is there something about the obedience of the king that lends efficacy to his death on the cross?

In this book I desire to give more attention to questions relating to the saving significance of the life of Jesus in the Gospels, and I will do so through the lens of Christ as the last Adam. By so doing, I hope to help answer the question, how does Jesus's lifelong obedience in the Gospels relate to the salvation of his people?

A Practical Question

As the authors canvassed above have often argued, this debate is not merely academic; it has important implications for the church. By arguing for Jesus as the obedient last Adam in the Gospels, I hope also to illuminate the role of the non-Passion Narrative portions of the Gospels in order to support the preaching of the Gospels. Martin Kähler (in)famously referred to the Gospels as Passion Narratives with extended introductions.²⁷ This identification is debatable, but his comments point us to a legitimate question: how do pastors preach from the so-called extended introductions in a way that does justice to the Passion Narratives yet also recognizes that earlier portions of the Gospels have something vitally important to say about how Jesus saves? Historically, too many have seen Jesus as merely providing an inspiring example or an encouragement for humanity to reach its highest potential.²⁸ Such readings vastly underestimate the significance of Jesus in the Gospels.²⁹ For others, perhaps following in the spirit of Kähler's statement, the beginning chapters

25. Wright, *Jesus*, xiv.

26. I will defend this view in following chapters.

27. Martin Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*, trans. Carl E. Braaten (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 80n11.

28. See the critique of the "moral lives of Jesus" in Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede*, trans. W. Montgomery (New York: MacMillan, 1968). See also James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, CM 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 34–39.

29. However, I do not deny there is a place for imitation, when understood rightly. See Jason B. Hood, *Imitating God in Christ: Recapturing a Biblical Pattern* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013); Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely*, 161–62; C. D. "Jimmy" Agan III, *The*

of the (Synoptic) Gospels—featuring various sayings, miracles, narratives, and so forth—demonstrate the authority of Jesus but are secondary to the core message of the cross.³⁰ Yet if most Gospel passages should be considered merely as extended introductions, we must admit that these are richly nuanced and wide-ranging introductions. Indeed, we must admit that these “introductions” are actually more extensive than the Passion Narratives themselves.³¹

There must be a way to navigate between the Scylla of the merely exemplary, moralistic life of Jesus and the Charybdis of Jesus’s life as only a preparatory “warm-up” for the Passion Narratives. To this end, focusing on Christ as the last Adam in the Gospels offers a viable way forward. This approach is able to take into account what recent scholarship has been saying about the centrality of the kingdom of God, while also recognizing the clear importance of the Passion Narratives. Understanding Christ as the last Adam need not discount the model of righteousness that Christ provides, but first recognizes the obedience of Jesus as a *representative* figure. Further supporting this approach are the rich and varied Christian exegetical and theological traditions relating Adam to Christ.

Two Adams in the History of Interpretation

We turn now to consider some voices from previous generations, specifically related to the pervasive Adam-Christ parallel.³² Though the following examples are not all from the Gospels, many are, and these approaches may prove insightful for reading the Gospels today. Among the earliest church fathers, Irenaeus (ca. 130–ca. 202) is well known for having a theology of recapitulation in which Jesus’s obedience overcomes the disobedience of Adam.³³ Irenaeus

Imitation of Christ in the Gospel of Luke: Growing in Christlike Love for God and Neighbor (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014).

30. E.g., Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel, 2 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1951–55), 1:86.

31. Kähler himself recognized he was putting the matter “somewhat provocatively,” as he distanced himself from those who focused on the supposed development of Jesus’s consciousness before the passion (*So-Called Historical Jesus*, 80n11). Yet I do not agree with Kähler when he suggests that the emphasis in the “extended introductions” is not so much on *what* happened as the *who* and *how* of his actions (*ibid.*, 81). Instead, the *what* of the so-called extended introductions is crucially important.

32. See also Letham, *Work of Christ*, 24–37. I use the term “Adam-Christ parallel” as a collective term to refer to an array of comparisons between Adam and Christ, recognizing the diversity of views among those who make such comparisons. Yet the singular “parallel” is intended to denote the relative consistency of such an approach in the history of Christian interpretation.

33. See, e.g., *Haer.* 3.18.1; 3.18.7; 3.21.10; 3.23.1; 4.4.2; 5.1.2; 5.16.3; 5.21.1. It has been noted in recent years that recapitulation may not be the center of Irenaeus’s theology, yet it is

seems to derive this teaching in large measure from Paul's statements,³⁴ but, as I will argue at the conclusion of this chapter, he does not derive his Adam Christology *only* from Paul. Irenaeus also gleans from the Gospels to explain Christ's work in Adamic terms.

The *Epistle to Diognetus*, though difficult to date with certainty, is probably also from the second century. Here one finds echoes of Romans 5:18–19 in the climactic soteriological section: "O the sweet exchange, O the incomprehensible work of God, O the unexpected blessings, that the sinfulness of many should be hidden in one righteous person, while the righteousness of one should justify many sinners!" (9:5).³⁵ While not mentioning Adam explicitly, *Diognetus* 9 views the work of Christ in the incarnation as the means of undoing the sinfulness that had befallen humanity (9:2–4). If we connect this passage to Romans 5:18–19, which is a reasonable conclusion given the verbal parallels between the two passages, then Adamic imagery is likely in view.³⁶

Athanasius of Alexandria (ca. 296–373) has much to say about the work of Christ in the incarnation, including the relationship between Adam and Christ. We read in *On the Incarnation*: "For since from man it was that death prevailed over men, for this cause conversely, by the Word of God being made man has come about the destruction of death and the resurrection of life."³⁷ Similarly, in his *Homily on Matthew 11:27*: "[God] delivered to [the Son] man, that the Word himself might be made Flesh, and by taking the Flesh, restore it wholly."³⁸ Likewise, in his *Expositio fidei* Athanasius compares the paradise opened by Christ with the paradise forfeited by Adam.³⁹

clearly an important organizing principle for him. See Eric Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 110–11; Thomas Holsinger-Friesen, *Irenaeus and Genesis: A Study of a Competition in Early Christian Hermeneutics*, JTISup 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 1–26; Ronald E. Heine, *Classical Christian Doctrine: Introducing the Essentials of the Ancient Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 116–21. Recapitulation in Irenaeus is a complex concept, on which see the conclusion of this chapter.

34. J. T. Nielsen, *Adam and Christ in the Theology of Irenaeus of Lyons: An Examination of the Function of the Adam-Christ Typology in the "Adversus Haereses" of Irenaeus, against the Background of the Gnosticism of His Time* (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1968), 68–82; Ben C. Blackwell, *Christosis: Pauline Soteriology in Light of Deification in Irenaeus and Cyril of Alexandria*, WUNT 2/314 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 41–43.

35. Translation from Michael W. Holmes, ed. and trans., *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 711.

36. See further Brandon D. Crowe, "Oh Sweet Exchange! The Soteriological Significance of the Incarnation in the *Epistle to Diognetus*," ZNW 102 (2011): 108–9.

37. Athanasius, *Inc.* 10.2 (NPNF² 4:41).

38. Translation from NPNF² 4:87.

39. NPNF² 4:84–85. See also *Ep. Aeg. Lib.* 2; *C. Ar.* 1.44, 51, 59; 2.51, 61, 65, 68; 3.33, 38.

The Adam-Christ parallel is a major organizing feature in Cyril of Alexandria's (ca. 375–444) exegesis. Indeed, Christ as the second Adam⁴⁰ is perhaps the center of Cyril's theological synthesis and is a key to the overall *skopos* (aim, goal) of Scripture.⁴¹ The descent of the Spirit on Jesus in John 1, for example, provides an opportunity for Cyril to explain Christ as hospitable to the Holy Spirit using new Adam terminology: "He knew no sin at all so that, just as through the disobedience of the first we came under God's wrath, so through the obedience of the second, we might escape the curse and its evils might come to nothing. . . . The Spirit flew away because of sin, but the one who knew no sin became one of us so that the Spirit might become accustomed to remain in us."⁴²

Moving ahead to the seventh century, Maximus the Confessor (ca. 580–662) sees in Christ's life the overcoming of Adam's sin. In *Ad Thalassium* 21 Maximus contrasts the passions that overtook Adam with the victory Christ gained in his temptation, and then again at the cross, in which he overcame the passions that overtook humanity since the days of Adam.⁴³

Likely from somewhere near the same time as Maximus, the Christian pseudepigraphical work *Cave of Treasures* makes extensive comparisons between Christ and Adam.⁴⁴ *Cave of Treasures* even gives hour-by-hour comparisons of Jesus's experience on the cross to Adam's experience in the garden, concluding that "Christ resembled Adam in everything" (*Cav. Tr.* 48–49). This interpretive grid illustrates the extent to which an early Christian author (or authors) compared Adam and Christ.

The present volume is not the place for an extended survey of the Adam-Christ parallel in the ancient church. Indeed, time would fail me to speak of

40. The New Testament does not refer to Christ explicitly as second Adam but rather as last (*eschatos*) Adam (1 Cor. 15:45). Nevertheless, "second Adam" is common terminology among exegetes and theologians, and is also implied in the second man language (*ho deuterios anthrōpos*) of 1 Cor. 15:47. Throughout this study I will prefer the terminology "last Adam."

41. Robert Louis Wilken, "St. Cyril of Alexandria: The Mystery of Christ in the Bible," *ProEcl* 4 (1995): 454–78.

42. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John* 184, in *Commentary on John*, trans. David R. Maxwell, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, 2 vols., ACT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013–15), 1:82. One notes how naturally Cyril moves between Gospel texts and Paul at this point (cf. Rom. 5:18–19). See also Daniel Keating, "The Baptism of Jesus in Cyril of Alexandria: The Re-Creation of the Human Race," *ProEcl* 8 (1999): 210–22; Kilian McDonnell, "Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan," *TS* 56 (1995): 222.

43. Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ*, trans. Paul Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, PPS 25 (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 109–13, cf. 13–43. See also *Ambiguum* 42; *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* 42 in *ibid.*

44. Alexander Toepel, "The Cave of Treasures: A New Translation and Introduction," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, ed. Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 531–84.

Justin, Tertullian, Hilary, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nyssa, Theodore, Theodoret, and Ambrose.⁴⁵ In other words, one is not hard pressed to find any number of ancient interpreters seizing upon a perceived two-Adam structure within Scripture. Significantly, this structure is often paired with an emphasis on the obedience of the second Adam unto salvation in contrast to the disobedience of the first Adam.

A comparative approach to the two Adams is found not only in the ancient church. Similar features are seen in later interpreters as diverse as Anselm (ca. 1033–1109), Peter Lombard (ca. 1100–ca. 1160), Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225–1274), Martin Luther (1483–1546), Menno Simons (1496–1561), John Calvin (1509–1564), Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680), and John Owen (1616–1683).⁴⁶ By way of illustration, Calvin states: “Accordingly, our Lord came in order to take Adam’s place in obeying the Father, to present our flesh as the price of satisfaction to God’s righteous judgment, and, in the same flesh, to pay the penalty that we had deserved.”⁴⁷ And again, “Truly, Christ was sanctified from earliest infancy in order that he might sanctify in himself his elect from every age without distinction. For, to wipe out the guilt of the disobedience which had been committed in our flesh, he took that very flesh that in it, for our sake, and in our stead, he might achieve perfect obedience.”⁴⁸ Similarly, in Thomas Goodwin’s exposition, “[Paul] speaks of [Adam and

45. E.g., Justin, *Dial.* 88, 100, 103; Tertullian, *Carn. Chr.* 16–17. See other examples in Douglas F. Kelly, *Systematic Theology: Grounded in Holy Scripture and Understood in the Light of the Church*, vol. 2, *The Beauty of Christ: A Trinitarian Vision* (Fearn, UK: Mentor, 2014), 313; J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2007), 297, 312, 380–81, 385, 388–89, 395; Jean Daniélou, SJ, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers*, trans. Dom Wulstan Hibberd (London: Burns and Oates, 1960), 11–65 (thanks to Laura Leon for bringing Daniélou’s work to my attention).

46. See variously Anselm, *Cur deus homo* 8–9; Lombard, *Sentences* 3.15–20; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 3.39.1; 3.41.2; 3.46.4, 10; 3.51.2; Martin Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John Chapters 1–4*, vol. 22 of *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1957), 88, 119–23, 131, 286, 359, 382, 491; Martin Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John Chapters 14–16*, vol. 24 of *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1957), 344; Lydia Harder, “Power and Authority in Mennonite Theological Development,” in *Power, Authority, and the Anabaptist Tradition*, ed. Benjamin W. Redekop and Calvin W. Redekop (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 77; Calvin, *Inst.* 2.12.1, 3; 2.16.5; Mark Jones, *Why Heaven Kissed Earth: The Christology of the Puritan Reformed Orthodox Theologian, Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680)*, RHT 13 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 77–86, 173–95; John Owen, *The Glory of Christ*, vol. 1 of *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1965), 338–42; Sinclair B. Ferguson, *John Owen on the Christian Life* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1987), 87.

47. Calvin, *Inst.* 2.12.3, in John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols., LCC 20 (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1960), 1:466.

48. Calvin, *Inst.* 4.16.18 (Battles).

Christ] as if there had never been any more men in the world . . . because these two between them had all the rest of the sons of men hanging at their girdle.”⁴⁹

If we fast-forward to the twentieth century, we can find many similar features among theologians and biblical scholars articulating the significance of the work of Jesus. Reformed dogmatician Herman Bavinck has much to say regarding the Adam-Christ parallel,⁵⁰ as does Karl Barth.⁵¹ Likewise T. F. Torrance—Barth’s onetime student who drew heavily upon the church fathers—in places emphasizes the obedience of Christ in contrast to Adam.⁵²

Two more points are to be noted before moving on. First, an Adam-Christ parallel is explicit in Paul’s letters (esp. Rom. 5; 1 Cor. 15). It is thus quite common to find discussions of Adam and Christ in treatments of Paul’s Christology.⁵³ However, this structure is less often expanded upon in discussions of the Gospel accounts, Luke’s genealogy notwithstanding.⁵⁴ Second, even though many may demur at an Adam-Christ parallel in the Gospels, it is common to recognize Scripture’s emphasis on the obedience of Jesus in his incarnate state, especially in the Gospels. However, this has not always been true in Gospel studies, which brings us to our next section.

Questing for the Life of Jesus?

As we consider the significance of the life of Jesus in the Gospels, it is instructive to pay heed to the ebbs and flows of New Testament scholarship from

49. Thomas Goodwin, *Christ Set Forth*, vol. 4 of *The Works of Thomas Goodwin* (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1862), 31. Cf. F. F. Bruce, *Romans*, 2nd ed., TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 120. Thanks to Jonathan Gibson for first alerting me to this pithy quote, and to Sinclair Ferguson for pointing me to its source.

50. Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:226–31, 377–81, 394–95.

51. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/1, ed. T. F. Torrance, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956), 257–58, 512–13; cf. Peter Lengsfeld, *Die Adam-Christus-Typologie im Neuen Testament und ihre dogmatische Verwendung bei M. J. Scheeben und K. Barth*, KBOST 9 (Essen: Ludgerus, 1965), 162–216.

52. E.g., T. F. Torrance, *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ*, ed. Robert T. Walker (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 73; cf. Kevin Chiarot, *The Unassumed Is the Unhealed: The Humanity of Christ in the Theology of T. F. Torrance* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013).

53. See Felipe de Jesús Legaretta-Castillo, *The Figure of Adam in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15: The New Creation and Its Ethical and Social Reconfiguration* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014); James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 98–128; N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 18–40; Gordon D. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 513–29.

54. McKnight (*King Jesus Gospel*, 35) does note Adam in relation to the story of Jesus in the Gospels, though he expands it more in relation to Paul (*ibid.*, 136–42). Luke’s Christology will be considered in greater detail in following chapters.

the past three hundred years, since the degree to which the Gospels focus on the *life* of Jesus has often been debated. We begin this 30,000-foot overview with Albert Schweitzer's watershed appraisal that traced the development of the quest of the historical Jesus from H. S. Reimarus to William Wrede.⁵⁵ Schweitzer's critiques are well known, particularly his critique of the movement of the German and French authors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who attempted to write something like modern biographies of Jesus. These inevitably ended up being what Schweitzer's English translator dubbed "imaginative" or "fictitious lives"⁵⁶ of Jesus that were, in Schweitzer's estimation, unsatisfactory and far-fetched.

Another significant voice in these discussions, which Schweitzer did not canvass in his work, is that of Martin Kähler. I have already mentioned that Kähler referred to the Gospels as Passion Narratives with extended introductions. To understand this statement, it is necessary to place Kähler in his historical context, since he was responding to what he perceived to be the trend of historical criticism to make pronouncements on theological issues beyond its capabilities.⁵⁷ He too, in other words, was reacting against the psychologized, reconstructed lives-of-Jesus movement from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Kähler downplayed the significance of the life of Jesus in the Gospels and posited a distinction between the *historische* Jesus and the *geschichtliche* Jesus. Precise translations of these two German terms is difficult, but the distinction amounts to a difference between the so-called *historical* Jesus, which is reconstructed using the tools of historical criticism, and the *historic* Christ of the church who is the object of faith.⁵⁸

Schweitzer's deconstruction of the lives-of-Jesus movement, along with Kähler's critique of the reconstructed lives of Jesus that employed what we might today call Troeltschian principles of historical criticism,⁵⁹ helped clear the deck for the following era of Gospels and Jesus studies that was dominated by form criticism. As is well known, form criticism was generally more interested in the *Sitze im Leben* of the early Christian communities that lay behind the Gospels than in the Gospels as integrated wholes. Each pericope was evaluated in a way that gave comparatively little consideration to the overall structure of the relevant Gospel. Thus the focus was on the

55. Schweitzer, *Quest of the Historical Jesus*.

56. *Ibid.*, v.

57. Kähler, *So-Called Historical Jesus*, 52–55, 62–63, 69.

58. See discussions in Robert B. Strimple, *The Modern Search for the Real Jesus: An Introductory Survey of the Historical Roots of Gospels Criticism* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1995), 89–101; J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, 5 vols., ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1991–2016), 1:27–30, 35–36n19; Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely*, 81–82.

59. See also Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely*, 82.

forms of individual units and the situation that gave rise to that literary form rather than on the overall narrative or coherence of the Gospels.⁶⁰ This was a decided step away from the biographical impulse in interpreting the Gospels and led (at least in Rudolf Bultmann's formulation) to the elevation of the *kērygma* and the experience thereof above a synthetic appeal to events or to a historical figure from the past.⁶¹ Thus, for example, Bultmann wrote a book that focused on the message of Jesus and not on his life, since in Bultmann's estimation "we can know almost nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus."⁶² This too was part of Bultmann's response, much like Schweitzer's and Kähler's, to the psychologizing *Tendenz* of the lives-of-Jesus movement.⁶³

However, not all scholars studying the Gospels in the early twentieth century imbibed deeply from the well of form criticism. One notable example is C. H. Dodd, who argues in an article titled "The Framework of the Gospel Narrative" that the pericopae in Mark "originally and intrinsically" belonged to certain stages of Jesus's ministry and that part of the *kērygma* is the order of the events (whether chronological or topical), which is often preserved in Mark.⁶⁴ Indeed, for Dodd the Markan summaries "fall naturally into something very much like a continuous narrative."⁶⁵ Dodd sees more inherent continuity and order among the Markan pericopae than do form critics such as K. L. Schmidt. One can see continuity in this article with Dodd's fuller treatment in *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*.⁶⁶ Dodd argues that the early apostolic preaching (diverse as he sees it to be) consistently made reference to the person and character of Jesus. He notes, for example, Jesus's Davidic descent, his miracles, the role of the servant, and the character of Jesus in his trial. As central as the Passion Narratives surely are, Dodd also draws attention to the importance of the ministry of Jesus. He concludes that "the history of Jesus . . . was of decisive importance for the tradition, just because in the Preaching the life, death, and resurrection

60. See the classic treatment in Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. John Marsh, rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

61. Jens Schröter sees the anticipation of this in Adolf von Harnack's focus on the proclamation of Jesus. See Schröter, *From Jesus to the New Testament*, trans. Wayne Coppins, BMSEC (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), 17.

62. Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress Lantero (New York: Scribner, 1958), 8, 12 (quote from p. 8).

63. See Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 1:37–38n24.

64. C. H. Dodd, "The Framework of the Gospel Narrative," *ExpTim* 43 (1931–32): 396–400 (quote from 397).

65. *Ibid.*, 399.

66. C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (New York: Harper & Row, 1936).

of Jesus were held to be the climax of all history, the coming of the Kingdom of God.”⁶⁷ Dodd was in many ways a voice in the wilderness in the early twentieth century, as he brought attention to the importance of the narrative structures of the Gospels and concomitantly to the character of Jesus as the founder of Christianity.⁶⁸ Dodd’s approach proved to be prescient for the direction much of Gospels studies would move toward the end of the twentieth century.⁶⁹

More extensive focus on the life of Jesus in conversation with form criticism can be found in Vincent Taylor’s *The Life and Ministry of Jesus* (1955)⁷⁰ and especially Graham Stanton’s 1974 volume *Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching*, in which Stanton argues that the early Christian message reveals a deep interest in the life and character of Jesus of Nazareth.⁷¹ Stanton sees a dual perspective in the Gospels—they are interested both in the *kērygma* and in the life of Jesus.⁷² Significantly for the present volume, Stanton concludes: “If the early church was uninterested in the past of Jesus, the emergence of the gospels becomes a puzzle. For, in spite of all possible qualification, the gospels . . . look very much like lives of Jesus.”⁷³ Stanton thus distinguished his own position from much of form criticism, yet in this early work he is reluctant to identify the Gospels as biographies.

67. *Ibid.*, 56. See also p. 49: “Not only in His death, Mark seems to say, but in His ministry, Jesus overcame the principalities and powers.”

68. C. H. Dodd, *The Founder of Christianity* (London: Collins, 1971), though in this volume Dodd underscores the centrality of the Passion Narratives (33–36).

69. Dodd (*Apostolic Preaching*, 55) also points to the Muratorian Fragment as a witness to the interest in the saving facts of Jesus’s life in the Gospels in the late second century, since the Muratorian Fragment mentions Jesus’s nativity, passion, resurrection, conversations with his disciples, and second coming (lines 20–26). Dodd is by no means alone in dating the Muratorian Fragment to the second century. This date is still to be preferred. See variously Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 194; Eckhard Schnabel, “The Muratorian Fragment: The State of Research,” *JETS* 57 (2014): 231–64; Joseph Verheyden, “The Canon Muratori: A Matter of Dispute,” in *The Biblical Canons*, ed. J.-M. Auwers and H. J. de Jonge (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 487–556; Michael J. Kruger, *The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 162–64. For an alternative view, see Geoffrey Mark Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), where one can also find a transcription of the fragment (pp. 6–7). For the argument that the fragment is from the third century, see Jonathan J. Armstrong, “Victorinus of Pettau as the Author of the Canon Muratori,” *VC* 62 (2008): 1–34.

70. Vincent Taylor, *The Life and Ministry of Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1955).

71. Graham N. Stanton, *Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching*, SNTSMS 27 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 1. McKnight (“Matthew as ‘Gospel’”) also reflects on the significance of Stanton’s work for understanding the significance of Jesus’s life in the Gospels.

72. Stanton, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 172.

73. *Ibid.*, 186.

Stanton later argued, however, that the Gospels are a form of ancient biography, and he acknowledged his appreciation for the work of Richard Burridge, who argues persuasively in *What Are the Gospels?* that the genre of the Gospels falls within the broad category of Greco-Roman *bios* (i.e., biography).⁷⁴ Burridge's work was originally published in 1992 as the fruition of his graduate work and is one of those rare PhD theses that has helped to shape the current state of discussion. Although Burridge's articulation of the Gospels as a form of Greco-Roman *bios* stands open to refinement,⁷⁵ his overarching thesis, built on an impressive comparison with ancient literature, has been generally convincing, and now the starting point for discussion of the genre of the Gospels is Greco-Roman *bios*. This is a significant departure from the form-critical paradigm of the early twentieth century that saw the Gospels as a unique genre (*sui generis*) of low-brow literature (*Kleinliteratur*).

The upshot of these moves away from form criticism (including the advent of redaction criticism and more recently narrative criticism) is that more scholars today recognize the need to read the Gospels as theologically integrated documents. Reading the Gospels "vertically," that is, beginning-to-end as holistic narratives, allows one to see the development and unfolding of the narratives in a way that appreciates the depth and richness of the theological contribution of each Gospel. Form criticism's focus on isolated, individual pericopae still casts a shadow on the study of the Gospels, but its influence has begun to wane in recent decades. The work of scholars such as Stanton and Burridge has laid the groundwork to understand that the Gospels are not just Passion Narratives but are, in Burridge's words, "Christology in narrative form."⁷⁶ It therefore behooves the reader to heed the christological contours of each Gospel in a way that neglects neither the life and ministry of Jesus (which, in Burridge's estimation, accounts for roughly 80 percent of the Gospels!⁷⁷) nor Jesus's sacrificial death. Although in various ways Schweitzer, Kähler, and form critics cautioned against reconstructed lives of Jesus, in many respects the discussion has come full circle, and today it is widely recognized that the Gospels stand close to Greco-Roman *bioi* and therefore are thoroughly about Jesus from beginning to end. This is, of course, not the same thing as trying to reconstruct a modern, psychological biography, but genre considerations do

74. Graham N. Stanton, foreword to *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* by Richard A. Burridge, 2nd ed., BRS (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), viii–ix; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 63–64.

75. One aspect is the need to focus more on the Old Testament precedent for the Gospels. See further Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?*, chap. 11; Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely*, 25–31.

76. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?*, 289.

77. *Ibid.*, 195. This percentage may be a bit high, but the point is valid.

help us recognize the significance accorded to the words and deeds of Christ throughout the entirety of the Gospels (i.e., not just in the Passion Narratives).

In addition to this renewed interest in the life of Jesus, we can also observe the consistent emphasis on the obedience of Jesus among those who have addressed the Christology of the Gospels. This is true even among those who might view the Gospels as Passion Narratives with extended introductions. Two brief examples will suffice here. On the Synoptic Gospels, Oscar Cullmann noted that Jesus was fully obedient as Son of God and in some sense had to “live atonement.”⁷⁸ On the theology of John’s Gospel, no less than Rudolf Bultmann emphasizes that the *works* of Jesus “are ultimately one single work.”⁷⁹ That is, the work of Jesus in his life and death is a unified whole such that his death is the completion of his incarnate obedience.⁸⁰ Indeed, for Bultmann the sacrifice of Jesus in John is not only in Jesus’s death, but it involves his whole ministry.⁸¹ In sum, the obedience of Jesus has consistently been recognized as central to the Gospels’ presentations of Jesus. These observations provide fertile soil for the present study.

Toward a Solution: Vicarious Obedience

The thoroughgoing emphasis on Jesus Christ and his obedience in the Gospels, combined with the historically recognized two-Adam structure in the New Testament, provides fuel for the present volume. In what follows I will argue for a pervasive Adam Christology in the Gospels, by which I also aim to show that Christ is a *representative* figure. Moreover, Adam is also foundational for understanding Israel in the biblical narrative, so considering Christ as the last Adam will also lead us to consider how Christ relates to the nation of Israel. In both cases I will argue that Christ is portrayed in covenantal terms: as the last Adam, Christ is the covenantal (or *federal*)⁸² head of his people, the mediator of the new covenant.⁸³

I will further seek to show that the lifelong obedience of Jesus must not be dichotomized from his death, nor should his death be separated from his life.

78. Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 61, 277, 283.

79. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2:52 (§47.2).

80. *Ibid.*

81. *Ibid.*, 2:53–54.

82. I use *federal* here deriving from the Latin *foedus*, denoting *covenant*.

83. One can also speak of Christ as the head and mediator of the covenant of grace, which refers to the entire plan of redemption after the fall. Cf. Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:195, 225–32.

Instead, the work of Christ in the Gospels is a *unified* obedience that entails both his life and his death. This is more than saying the Gospels teach the sinlessness of Jesus, but it is surely not saying less than that. It is to say that Jesus was accomplishing salvation throughout his life. This makes sense of the Gospels' overarching focus on the obedience of Jesus outside the Passion Narratives, and it aligns with the focus of the early church on the life of Jesus as having a *saving* character.⁸⁴

Limits and Method

The focus of this study will be on the four canonical Gospels.⁸⁵ My focus will be not on the communities behind the Gospels, or on the sources underlying the Gospels, but on the text of the Gospels as we have them.⁸⁶ That is to say, my primary focus will be not on form or source criticism but on the Gospels as unified wholes.⁸⁷ I will also not attempt to reconstruct a historical Jesus; rather, my task is primarily exegetical: to consider relevant texts from the Gospels that speak to the vicarious obedience of Jesus.

Identifying shared theological perspectives among all the canonical Gospels can be a tricky enterprise. My aim is not to downplay the distinctive aspects of any of the Gospels. Yet from the earliest days of the church these four Gospels were viewed as one gospel.⁸⁸ Nor indeed do we find a sharp distinction between the theology of the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. As Adolf Schlatter observed of New Testament theology: "Each individual formation is worthy of individual attention. At the same time, one must take care to observe that all these free and personally believing men [New Testament authors] still constitute a unity."⁸⁹ So it is important to recognize the diversity as well as the unity within the canonical witness. Yet among the diversity of

84. Cf. Dodd, *Apostolic Preaching*, 42–45.

85. I will also consider what Acts has to say about the life and ministry of Jesus in places, but my focus will be predominantly on the Gospels.

86. To be sure, one cannot shirk text-critical questions, and I will engage them where necessary.

87. My approach is closely akin to what is often called composition criticism.

88. Cf. Martin Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Collection and Origin of the Canonical Gospels*, trans. John Bowden (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000); Graham N. Stanton, "The Fourfold Gospel," *NTS* 43 (1997): 317–46.

89. Adolf Schlatter, "The Theology of the New Testament and Dogmatics," in *The Nature of New Testament Theology: The Contribution of William Wrede and Adolf Schlatter*, ed. and trans. Robert Morgan, SBT 2/25 (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1973), 140. Similarly, Bavinck (*Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:252) concludes that the "Synoptics already contain in principle all of the things that the apostles and the Christian church later taught about the person of Christ."

the Fourfold Gospel we find a common perspective that the obedience of Jesus is vicarious in character. Thus, one way we see the fundamental unity of the Gospel witnesses is in the shared conviction that Jesus's life was accomplishing what was necessary for salvation. The present volume is not designed to be the last word on the subject, but I do hope to advance the conversation in ways that will be beneficial.

I will also be considering the Scriptures as a whole, attempting to engage in a biblical-theological understanding of the obedience of Jesus. My approach generally follows that of Geerhardus Vos,⁹⁰ which has more recently been appropriated by G. K. Beale.⁹¹ In sum, my aim will be to read the Gospels sensitively in their own contexts and in light of the primary corpus of documents quoted in the Gospels—the Old Testament. Taking a biblical-theological approach also means that I will devote more attention to canonical texts than noncanonical texts, and I will not hesitate to use other biblical texts as corroborating and potentially enlightening witnesses where relevant. However, I am also eager to consider the obedience of Jesus in light of various Jewish perspectives and the history of Christian interpretation. Therefore, I will also interact with an array of noncanonical writings where possible.

Organization of Argument

My argument is structured as follows. In chapter 2, I argue that Jesus is portrayed in the Gospels as the last Adam, and I will relate this to Jesus's identity as the Son of Man. In chapter 3, I consider the Old Testament background of Adam and Israel as sons of God and correlate these with Jesus as the obedient Son of God. Here I will give particular emphasis to Jesus's obedience in the baptism and temptation episodes. In chapter 4, I consider in more detail the divine constraints on Jesus's obedience, namely, how the divine will and Scripture pertain to the obedience of Jesus and the accomplishment of salvation. In chapter 5, I give attention to the unique contours of John's Gospel and argue that the works of Jesus in John are ultimately one work, and the Fourth Gospel narrates the climactic moments of this unified work in Adamic terms. In chapter 6, I investigate the kingdom of God and how Jesus's life, deeds, and teaching relate to the binding of the strong man and the inauguration of the kingdom, which are also laced with Adamic imagery. In chapter 7, I look

90. E.g., Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (1948; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1975).

91. G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011).

to the contours of the new covenant in the Gospels and seek to relate the life of Jesus more explicitly to his death. Again Adamic imagery looms large in the mercy that Jesus shows and in his glorious resurrection life. Finally, in chapter 8, I offer a synthesis and some theological conclusions resulting from the identification of Jesus as the last Adam in the Gospels.

Retrospect and Prospect: Irenaeus on Jesus, Adam, and the Fourfold Gospel

As we prepare to embark on the study before us, I would like to till the exegetical ground by returning briefly to Irenaeus, one of the most well-known early developers of the Adam-Christ parallel, in order to consider some ways he may serve as a bridge between the apostolic age and the postapostolic age. Irenaeus claims to have known Polycarp, the purported disciple of the apostle John, and thereby assures the reader that his knowledge (especially of the Gospels!) is trustworthy. In light of this, a couple of features of Irenaeus's thought are relevant for the present study. In the first place, Irenaeus is explicit in his theology of recapitulation that the second Adam undoes the sin of the first Adam. Second, Irenaeus manifests a deep interest in the Fourfold Gospel. Might these two features be held together in Irenaeus in a way that provides some guidance for how we are to read the Gospels today? Let us consider each of these points a bit further.

First, Irenaeus focuses on the obedience of Jesus through the lens of the second Adam who corrects and perfects humankind and also inaugurates and consummates a new humanity.⁹² For Irenaeus recapitulation is a multifaceted concept, but in précis one can say that the obedience of Christ, the second Adam, overcomes the disobedience of the first Adam.⁹³ In the words of J. N. D. Kelly, "since the essence of Adam's sin was disobedience, the obedience of Christ was indispensable; it is obedience that God requires, and in which man's glory consists."⁹⁴ Irenaeus seems to draw much of this from Paul's Adam-Christ parallel in Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15.⁹⁵ Yet significantly, Irenaeus elaborates upon many aspects of this parallel beyond the details Paul himself

92. Osborn, *Irenaeus*, 97.

93. *Haer.* 3.18.7. Osborn (*Irenaeus*, 97) notes the complexity of recapitulation in Irenaeus. I recognize the complexities of this concept, but for this brief discussion I am using recapitulation as a shorthand to encapsulate the Adam-Christ parallel in Irenaeus. See also Holsinger-Friesen, *Irenaeus and Genesis*, 18–26.

94. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 174. On Irenaeus's understanding of atonement, see *ibid.*, 173; D. Kelly, *Systematic Theology*, 2:439.

95. Nielsen, *Adam and Christ*, 68–82.

provides. For Irenaeus, then, recapitulation is closely tied to the two-Adam schema, and various details for his schema seem to derive from the Gospels. For example, not only does Jesus recapitulate Adam, but Mary in some way recapitulates and overcomes the disobedience of Eve.⁹⁶

Second, and perhaps related to the breadth of the two-Adam schema, Irenaeus is well known for his deep interest in the Fourfold Gospel.⁹⁷ In book 3 of *Against Heresies*, Irenaeus shifts to discuss the scriptural proofs for orthodox doctrine in contrast to the heretics and heresies he canvasses in books 1–2. Key here for Irenaeus is the role of the apostles, as noted in *Against Heresies* 3.1. For Irenaeus the gospel has come down to those in his own day in the Scriptures, which can be traced back to the apostles. In this context he mentions not only Peter and Paul as apostles, but also gives his understanding that the four Gospels all derive from apostles or apostolic spokesmen: Matthew (the disciple of Jesus), Mark (the disciple and interpreter of Peter), Luke (the companion of Paul), and John (for Irenaeus, one of the Twelve). The unity of the gospel among all the apostolic witnesses is fundamental to Irenaeus’s thought; there is no dichotomy for him between Paul or Peter or Matthew or John. All are unified and testify to the recapitulation in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:10).

For Irenaeus, then, Jesus’s recapitulation of Adam is not simply a Pauline doctrine; it is found throughout the New Testament.⁹⁸ As one peruses book 3 where Irenaeus articulates this correspondence, it is clear that much comes from Paul (*Haer.* 3.18.7), and yet in the preceding paragraph we find that Jesus as the Son of Man “fought and conquered . . . and through obedience [did] away with disobedience completely: for he bound the strong man and set free the weak.”⁹⁹ Here the binding of the strong man is a clear allusion to Jesus’s statements of binding the strong man in the Gospels (Matt. 12:29 // Mark 3:27; cf. Luke 11:21–22), which Irenaeus understands to refer to the wide-ranging work of Jesus.¹⁰⁰ And the presupposition for this is the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus Christ, which enabled him to renew humanity¹⁰¹—an episode that Irenaeus most likely derives more from the baptism in the Gospels than from Paul. Additionally, it has recently been argued that the key chiasm

96. *Haer.* 5.19.1: “As the human race fell into bondage to death by means of a virgin, so is it rescued by a virgin; virginal disobedience having been balanced in the opposite scale by virginal obedience” (ANF 1:547). See also, e.g., 3.18.7; 3.21.10; 3.22.4; 5.21.1; D. Jeffrey Bingham, *Irenaeus’ Use of Matthew’s Gospel in “Adversus Haereses,”* TEG 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 164–68.

97. See C. E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*, 33–68; Stanton, “Fourfold Gospel,” 317–46.

98. On Irenaeus and the New Testament, see Metzger, *Canon of the New Testament*, 153–56; *Haer.* 4.15.2; 4.17.5; 4.28.1–2; 5.34.1.

99. *Haer.* 3.18.6 (ANF 1:447–48).

100. See Heine, *Classical Christian Doctrine*, 119–21.

101. *Haer.* 3.17. See Osborn, *Irenaeus*, 133.

in book 3 comes in 3.23.1–8, which deals with the reversal of Adam’s sin in humanity that was recapitulated in Jesus Christ.¹⁰² Significantly, it appears that this section is framed around the contrast between Adam’s disobedience and Christ’s obedience, and the imagery for this section comes in large part from Luke’s Gospel (10:19; 15:4–7; 19:10; cf. Matt. 12:29 // Mark 3:27).¹⁰³

Earlier, Irenaeus observes the way Luke’s genealogy relates Jesus all the way back to Adam, thereby “connecting the end to the beginning, and implying that it is he who has summed up in Himself all nations dispersed from Adam downwards.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, in Irenaeus’s exposition, the Gospel of Luke provides scriptural foundation for showing us that Jesus recapitulates Adam,¹⁰⁵ and this is followed immediately by a discussion of how the obedience of Jesus leads to life, in contrast to Adam (3.22.4). Significantly, in 3.22.4 Irenaeus explicitly connects Luke’s portrayal of Jesus as second Adam with Paul’s understanding of Adam as a type of Christ.

There is, then, a unity of the teaching of the Gospels and Paul in Irenaeus’s theology of Christ’s obedience as that which rectifies the disobedience of Adam. Irenaeus, especially in *Against Heresies* 3, relies heavily on both the Gospels and Paul to make his point that the obedience of Christ undoes the disobedience of Adam.¹⁰⁶ Given Irenaeus’s contention that he is not an innovator but stands in continuity with tradition, we can likely also posit that his hermeneutic highlighting Christ’s obedience as second Adam—including its foundation in *both* Paul and the Gospels—stands in continuity with earlier tradition.¹⁰⁷ Stated more boldly, we seem to find in Irenaeus an exegetical trail that leads back to the four Gospels themselves.¹⁰⁸

A detailed discussion of Irenaeus and the early church fathers is beyond the scope of this volume. But by highlighting the theme of Christ as second Adam in Irenaeus in conjunction with his emphasis on the Fourfold Gospel, I hope to show the legitimacy of looking deeper into the significance of Jesus’s life in light of Adam; Irenaeus and others have asked similar questions. I also hope to show that the answer Irenaeus gives not only adumbrates later tradition but may itself be an offshoot of something rooted in the earliest Gospel traditions. If indeed this is a viable option, then it behooves

102. Stephen O. Presley, “The Lost Sheep Who Is Found: Irenaeus’ Intertextual Reading of Genesis 3 in *Adversus Haereses* III 23.1–8,” *StPatr* 52 (2010): 47–59.

103. *Ibid.*, 49–58; cf. Stephen O. Presley, *The Intertextual Reception of Genesis 1–3 in Irenaeus of Lyons*, *BibAnChr* 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 88–133.

104. *Haer.* 3.22.3 (ANF 1:455).

105. Thanks to Stephen Presley for sparking my own reflections on this point.

106. Irenaeus also interweaves the Gospels and Paul in *Epid.* 31–42.

107. See, e.g., Justin, *Dial.* 88, 94.

108. This is also related to the *regula fidei* (rule of faith), which I discuss in chap. 8.

present-day interpreters to keep this two-Adam structure in mind as we ask what is not only an appropriate question but a crucial question of the Gospels: how was Jesus accomplishing salvation in his life and ministry? In pursuit of this answer I turn now to exegesis, beginning with the Adam Christology of the Gospels.