



GATEWAY SEMINARY

Biblical • Missional • Global

Who Is Jesus?

How to Teach About Christ Accurately

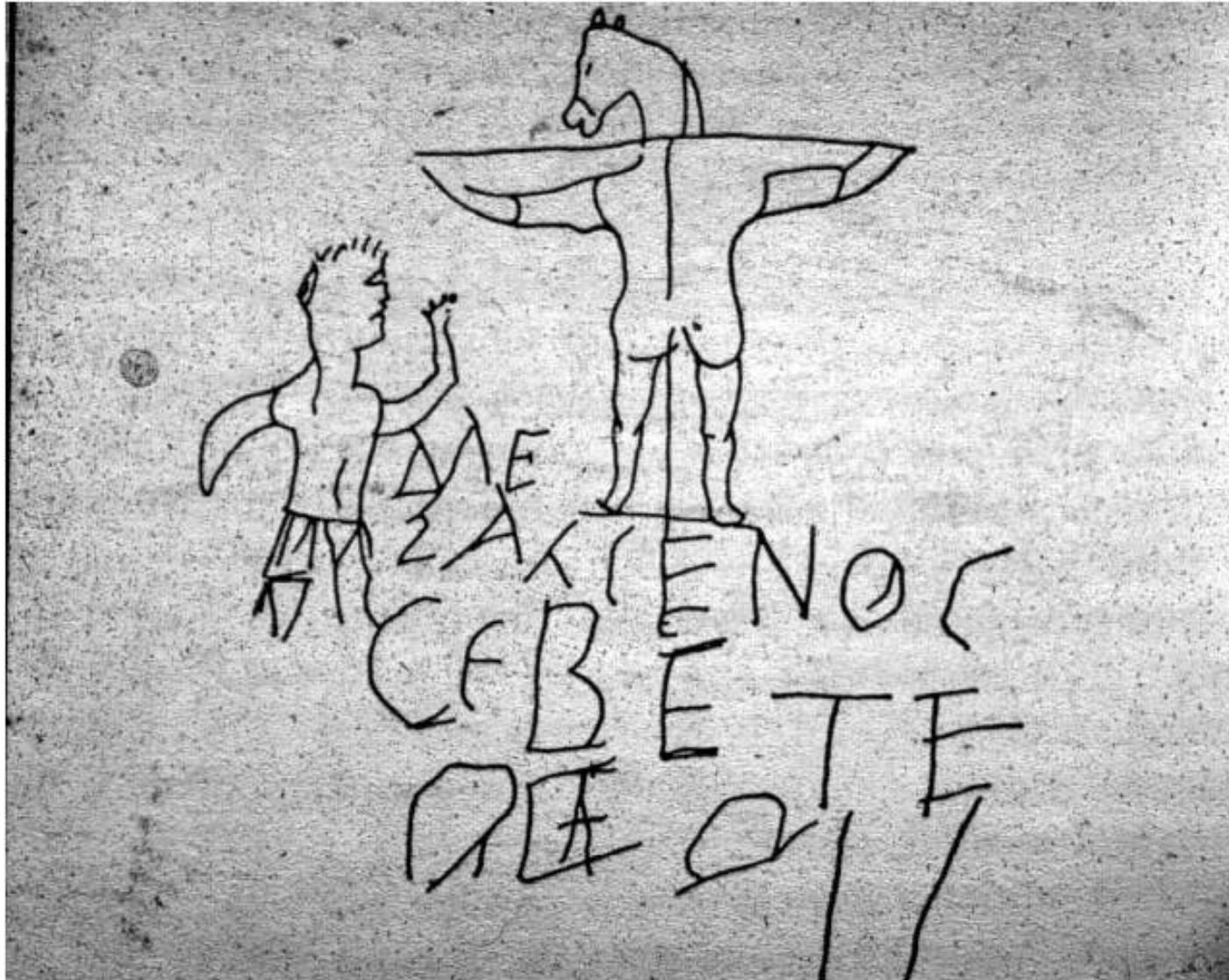
Early Roman Reactions to Jesus

“He expelled the Jews from Rome, on account of the riots in which they were constantly indulging, at the instigation of Chrestus.” —Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, *De Via Caesarum* (The Life of the Caesars).

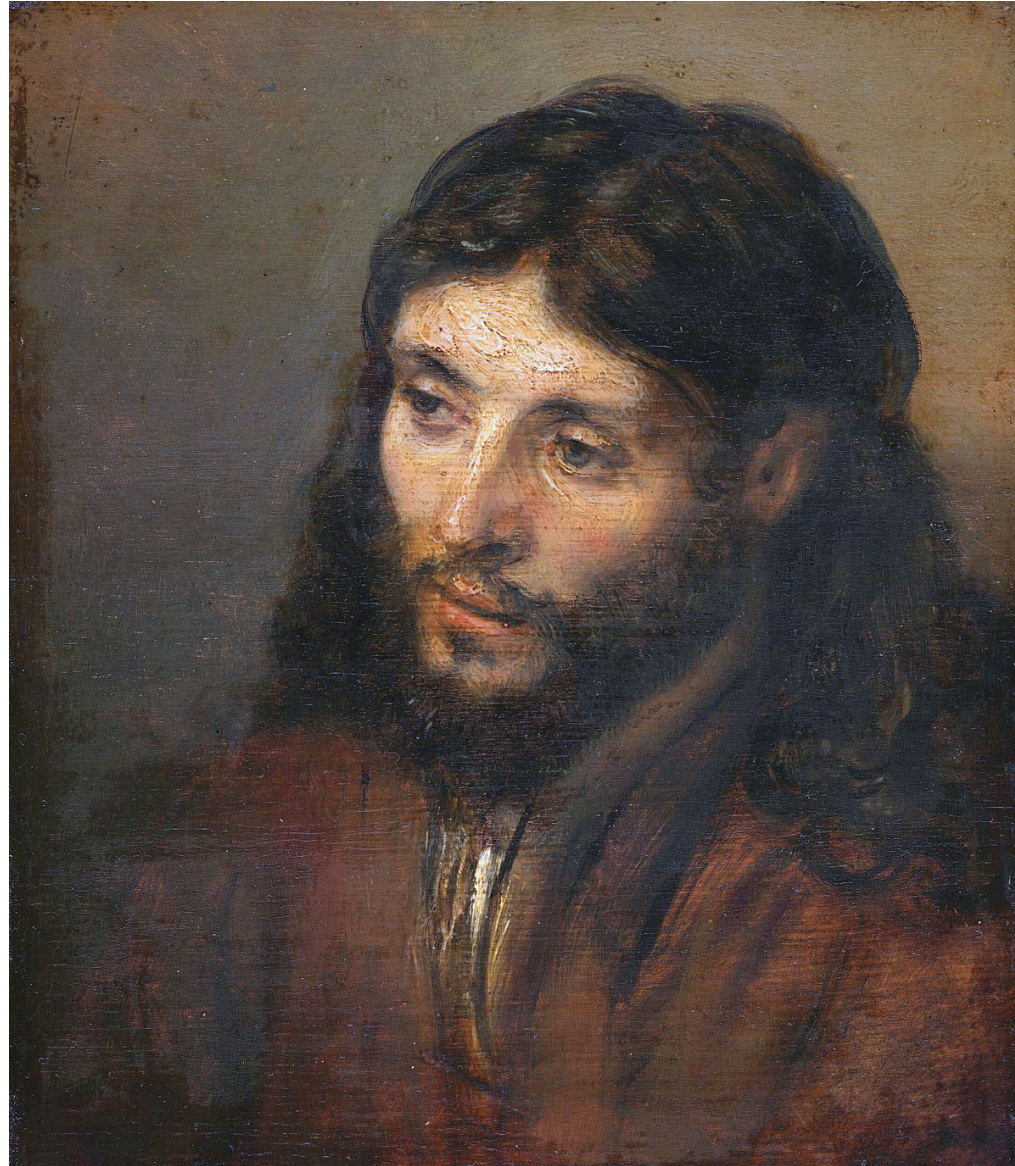
“Therefore, to squelch the rumor, Nero created scapegoats and subjected to the most refined tortures those whom the common people called “Christians” [a group] hated for their abominable crimes. The author of this name, Christ, during the reign of Tiberius, had been executed by the procurator Pontius Pilate. Suppressed for the moment, the deadly superstition broke out again, not only in Judea, the land which originated this evil, but also in the city of Rome, where all sorts of horrendous and shameful practices from every part of the world converge and are fervently cultivated.” —Tacitus, *Annals*

“It was their habit on a fixed day to assemble before daylight and recite by turns a form of words to Christ as a god; and that they bound themselves with an oath, not for any crime, but not to commit theft or robbery or adultery, nor to break their word, and not to deny a deposit when demanded. After this, they went on, it was their custom to separate, and then meet again to partake of food, but food of an ordinary and innocent kind.” —Pliny the Younger, *Epistles*

Early Graffiti



A Complex First-Century Figure



The Son as Eternal

- **John 1:1-18**
- John 20:28
- Romans 9:5
- **Colossians 1:15-21**
- **Hebrews 1:1-4**
- Titus 2:13
- **1 Cor 8:6**

The Son as God Incarnate

- **Phil 2:1-11**
- Other texts:
 - John says that one who does not say that Jesus has come in the flesh has the spirit of the antichrist (1 John 4:2)
 - Jesus accomplished his redemptive work “in his body of the flesh” (Col 1:22)
 - God sent his Son “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3)
 - Christ died for sinners “in the flesh” (1 Peter 3:18)
 - Christ was a little “lower than the angels” (Heb 2:9-10)

Details About the Incarnate Son

The NT Presents Jesus as Possessing a Normal Human Body

- He had hands feet blood, bones both before and after his resurrection: Matt 26:12, 26-28; Mark 14:8; Luke 7:44-46; Luke 22:20; Luke 24:39; John 6:53-56

The NT Presents Jesus as Developing as a Normal Child

- Luke 2:40
- Gal 4:4: Jesus “born out of [*ek*] a woman” and not “through” [*dia*] her
- Romans 1:3: Jesus “was descended from [*ek*] the seed [*spermatos*] of David, according to the flesh.”

The NT Presents Jesus as Entering Completely into the Human Experience

- Jesus felt hunger, thirst, weariness, pain, and sorrow: **Matt 4:2**; John 19:28; Matt 8:24; Matt 27:33-35; **John 11:35**; **Luke 19:41**; **Matt 26:38**

The Contrast

- Divine will.....but a human will that has to submit to the divine will
- Know everything.....have to learn
- Divine impassibility.....human emotions
- Cannot suffer or die.....suffer and die
- Sinless.....tempted by sin



Unhelpful Tendencies

Rejection of
Deity

Rejection of Humanity

Unhelpful Tendencies

Rejection of Christ's Unity

Rejection of
Distinctions in
Natures

The Mystery of Incarnation

The Son took on a new manner of existence—as a man. The divine and human are united in the one person of Christ without the distinctions between humanity and deity being lost.

Teaching Children

I would simply say:

God loves us and became one of us simply out of his love.

The Son of God took on human flesh and as a man and died.

Jesus felt experienced human life just as we do—but he remained without sin.

God is not absent from us; he is present.

The God-man can save.

