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Book Review: Christobiography

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Book Reviews



Keener, C. S. (2019). *Christobiography: Memories, history, and the reliability of the Gospels*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 713 pp. \$54.99. ISBN 9780802876751

Christobiography is a scholarly and comprehensive treatment of the New Testament Gospels as biographies that compare to ancient biographies of that day. After presenting a thorough treatment of ancient biographies, Keener, a conservative New Testament scholar and professor of biblical studies at Asbury Theological Seminary, wrote that biographers of that day emphasized, communicated, and interpreted the character of the subject from their own perspectives to give moral instruction. However, they generally did not quote verbatim, use precision on minor points, or use chronological precision except for the subject's early development and death. The author also deals with the miracles in the Gospels, the distinctiveness of John from the other three Gospels, and the part that eyewitness memories play in the Gospel accounts – all while maintaining the Gospels' historical reliability.

I highly recommend *Christobiography* for its uniqueness, thoroughness, and clarity. The most similar recent book is Licuna's *Why are there differences in the gospels?: What we can learn from ancient biography*, but that book is different in purpose and scope. The reader has to respect the amount of work that the author has put into this labor of love. This scholarly is a gold mine for those who are looking for credible information on the reliability of the Gospels but a challenge for those with no formal training in biblical studies. Nevertheless, in spite of the 501 pages of text (the rest of the book is given to an extensive bibliography and indexes), a motivated reader will find it quite readable.

Reviewer

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