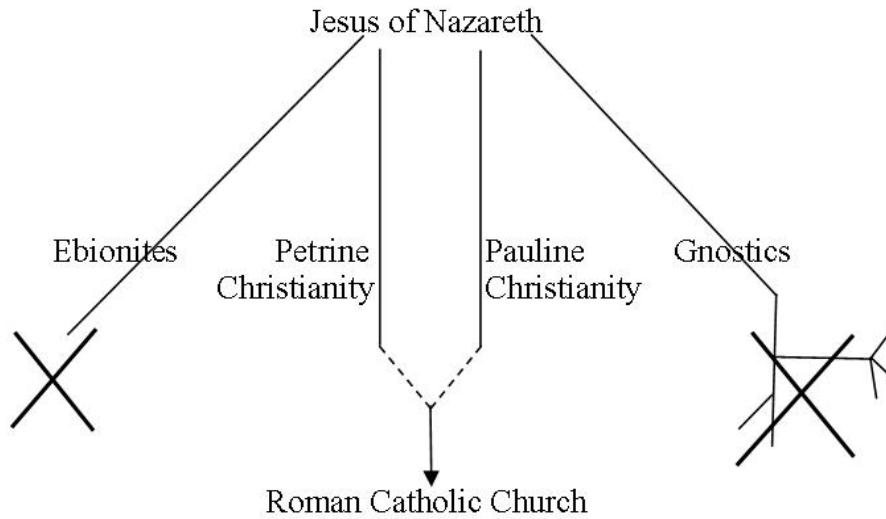


ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

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A prevalent idea in current religious studies is that Christianity as we know it became associated by way of historical process with the Roman government. The line of descent from Jesus that history preserved was that line of development, both as to its viewpoints and its literature. Petrine Christianity as represented by the Judaizers was the main contrast to Pauline Christianity and its international universalism. Government influence suppressed and destroyed the writings of "heretics" as measured by the preserved standard, and generally disenfranchised its people. So, the understanding of Jesus as well as the canonical literature that has descended to us results from historical processes and no more represent a "legitimate," or true, understanding of Jesus than other traditions did.