**Study Questions for Gerd Theissen, *Shadow of the Galilean***

Theissen pioneered the application of concepts drawn from modern social sciences to the study of the NT. Much of his work on Jesus and the gospels appeared in the form of technical academic articles (still untranslated from the original German). In order to make his work accessible to a wider audience, he wrote the short attempt at historical fiction in order to flesh out the significance of his research for understanding Jesus and his social-cultural context. I have used the book for courses both in Kenya and in the U. S., where students have found it particularly useful for “putting flesh and bones” on the gospel stories.

For our study of the book, I want to focus our study around the following issues. I’ll place you in online study groups of four students max in order to discuss these issues or any other questions you might have on the basis of your reading. The book is a quick read. If you’ve already read it, you can go back to memorable passages to think about this issues raised in my questions. If you still have to read it, you can use these as a guide.

1. What do you learn about the various people (different groups of Jews [many of whom are made known through representative individuals] or Romans), how do they respond to John the Baptist and Jesus, and why do these people respond in the manner they do?
2. In what ways does the book help you understand the people, places and/or events found in the Gospel of Mark?