



The Scribes

Peter Rodgers

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This book traces the fortunes and misfortunes of a group of scribes in the late second century Christian Church. Justin and Marcus are scribes for the Church of Rome. Juliana is a scribe of the Alexandrian church, and a member of the Catechetical school. The story begins when Juliana visits Rome, and she and Justin discover that they have different readings in their Gospel manuscripts. The story develops as Justin and Marcus travel to the churches of the Roman Empire, delivering letters for their bishop. Their final destination is Egypt, where the differences in readings and methods of copying intensify, as does Justin's growing affection for Juliana. Discover all the dangers and challenges faced by scribes and their manuscripts. Will Justin find the true text? Will he win his true love?

The Scribes Details

Date : Published September 10th 2012 (first published June 28th 2000)

ISBN :

Author : Peter Rodgers

Format : Kindle Edition 372 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Religion, Theology

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From Reader Review The Scribes for online ebook

Joel Mitchell says

As a novel, this is not terribly well written...definitely on the hokey side, but it is a fun way of being introduced to the issue of New Testament textual criticism (i.e. determining the original wording of a given passage when manuscripts disagree).

Victoria Gaile says

A pleasant journey through the second century Roman empire, as seen through the eyes of its Christian inhabitants, by a reliable guide whose life's work is the serious study of the subject. Students of the era will enjoy recognizing persons, surviving texts, and the various Christian movements of the time; those who are unfamiliar but curious to learn more will find helpful pointers in the author's endnotes, which also provides a *dramatis personae* clearly indicating which characters were historical and which fictional. I only wish that my Kindle edition had included a link to the appropriate note at the end of each chapter, as I would have enjoyed reading this material as I went along.

The plot was a bit thin, but it mainly serves to drive the exploration of the setting, which is the real point. The main characters were a bit flat, and their dialogue tended to be overly earnest: though whether this is due to a lack of skill in the author, or a lack of cultural competence in this 21st century reader, I couldn't say. But Justin's quandary of what to do when faced with scrolls containing variant readings of the gospels, additional gospels outside the four that he knows, and his struggles to discern how to most faithfully carry out his vocation as a scribe in the face of these challenges have a genuine ring.

Eighteen centuries later, our approach to these varying surviving texts, both in and out of the canon, tends to be systematic and somewhat abstract. It had never occurred to me to wonder what a scribe of a church who had preserved one textual tradition would do when faced with another. *The Scribes* gives this abstract issue a human face, and is the hidden prize of this little book.

Patricia says

Interesting story and a refresher course about early church history. The dialog was weak and I almost thought it was written for young adults.

No sex
No violence

Dorien says

I stopped reading because the book is so poorly written. The idea of a novel with 2nd century scribes as main characters is original and deserves a better written story.

Patrick says

This is a great fiction book that describes how we got the New Testament. Through a very inventive story, the author shows many of the interesting quirks of the transmission of the NT. It helps you to understand the basics behind Textual Criticism.

Jo Notary says

372pgs, This book traces the fortunes and misfortunes of a group of scribes in the late second century Christian Church

Tom Harrington says

Dull, plodding, and generally boring.

Dancingfoolvb says

The author clearly did his research, but the writing is amateurish.

Henry says

About Roman scribes in the early church, meant to teach about why we have manuscript differences for the bible. No one would mistake this for fine literature, but it was an easy read and I enjoyed it. I enjoyed reading about inspirational characters for a change.

Alia D. says

The plot had potential and it was interesting to look at the times and wonder how these historical trends had actually influenced history. Unfortunately both the dialog and the narration were very stiff. I'm not if it was ancient litature accidentally seeping in, a stylistic choice, or just that the author hasn't learned the highly developed craft of modern fiction writers. This really hurt the enjoyablity of the book which otherwise had a lot of potential.
