



The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins

Larry W. Hurtado

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Much attention has been paid to the words of the earliest Christian canonical and extracanonical texts, yet Larry Hurtado points out that an even more telling story is being overlooked -- the story of the physical texts themselves.

Widely recognized for his outstanding scholarship, Hurtado combines his comprehensive knowledge of Christian origins with an archivist's eye to make sense of these earliest objects of the faith. He introduces readers to the staurogram, possibly the first representation of the cross, the nomina sacra, a textual abbreviation system, and the puzzling Christian preference for book-like texts over scrolls.

Drawing on studies by papyrologists and palaeographers as well as New Testament scholars -- and including photographic plates of selected manuscripts -- *The Earliest Christian Artifacts* astutely introduces the distinctive physical features of early Christian manuscripts, illustrating their relevance for wider inquiry into the complex origins of Christianity.

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