The Christians
Wed., Jan. 23, 2002
Class notes

Next time: 1) Borg handout
2) 3 biblical readings
3) Wilson pp. 25-27

Today: 1) Jewish background of Jesus
2) In-class biblical interpretation - Luke 18:15-30 NRSV
3) Jewish teaching + ministry

- Worship Analysis Assignment Requirements were given
- Handout on growth rate for religions in the U.S.
- Questions on reading and discussion of syllabus topics
- "In the Wake of Goddesses" by Tikua Fryman Kensky was mentioned for personal reading if interested

5 points to be clear on Judaism

1. Monotheist view of God
   - Important view in Judaism that is inherited by Christianity
2. Covenant
   - Important notion
   - Promise or agreement between God and Jews (or people of Israel)
   - People's side of Covenant = ethical and ritual laws
   - Rituals very concerned with purity
   - Purity important because God is holy, therefore God's people must be holy
   - Defining holy as set apart through ritual practices doing different things than others around you
   - Which is more important Ethical or Ritual?

3. Political History
   - Beginning as nomads tribal judgesà Kings (David/Solomon 1000BCE)à foreign rulers (1st Century Roman Empire)
   - 1st CE double taxation existed; Jews taxed by Romans and Temple, which totaled about 35% of income
- Kings had messianic expectation (ruler) because of Isaiah (profit) had a vision

4. Common interpretations of Judaism in 1st CE
a) Sadducees
   - Priestly rulers who ran the temple
   - Placed great significance on ritual purity
b) Pharisees
   - Leaders of synagogues who cared about individual purity through ritual
c) Zealots
   - Wanted to overthrow foreign rule
d) Kingdom of God Movements
   - One group was Essenes—communes—apocalyptic
   - Another group was led by wandering healers + rabbi/teachers

We then did the in class biblical interpretation