

REASONS TO BELIEVE

Lesson 6 – The Historical Jesus



INTRODUCTION

Acts 2:36, 1 Peter 3:15

Christians believe in the God whose Son is Jesus, who reigns as Lord and Christ.

Why do you believe this?





JESUS' RESURRECTION



1 Corinthians 15:1-8

“Of first importance” –

Jesus' death

Jesus' burial

Jesus' resurrection

Jesus' appearances



JESUS' RESURRECTION



Resurrection passages in Acts

2:31-32

3:15

4:10, 33

5:30-32

10:40-41

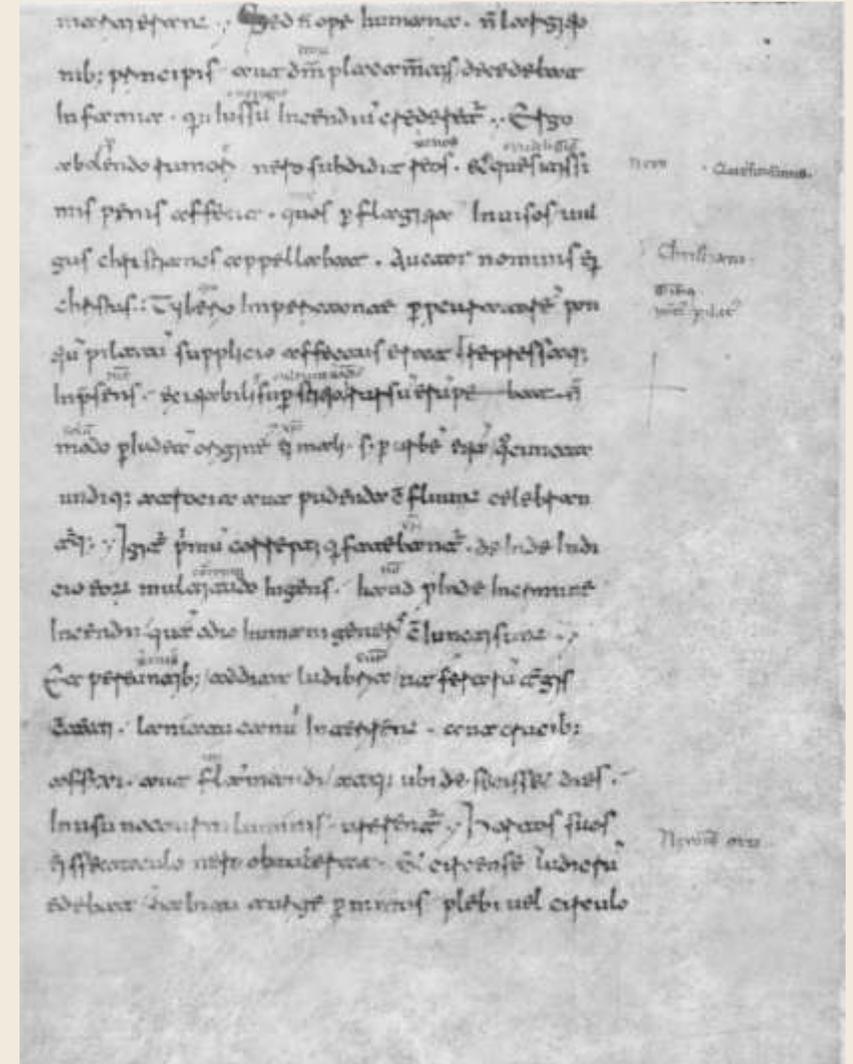
13:30-31

17:3, 31

DID JESUS REALLY EXIST?

Tacitus (Roman Historian, AD 110)

“Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name has its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome...” (*Annals*, 15.44)



DID JESUS REALLY EXIST?

Pliny the Younger (governor, AD 111-113)

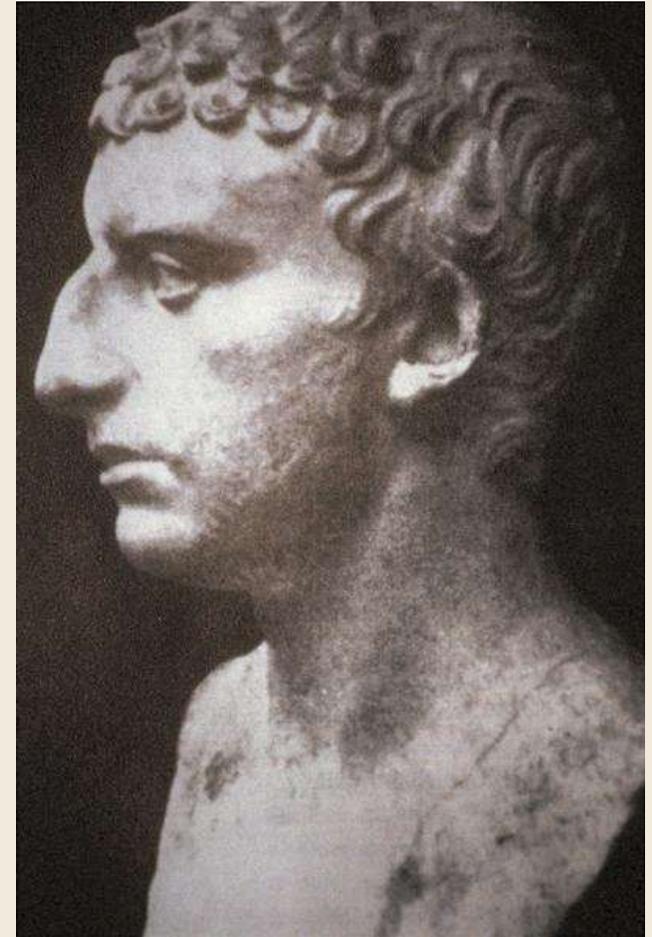
“[the Christians] were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so.” (“Letter to Trajan,” *Letters* 10.97-97)



DID JESUS REALLY EXIST?

Josephus (Jewish historian, AD 100)

“Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst them, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these things and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.” (*Antiquities*, 18.63-64)

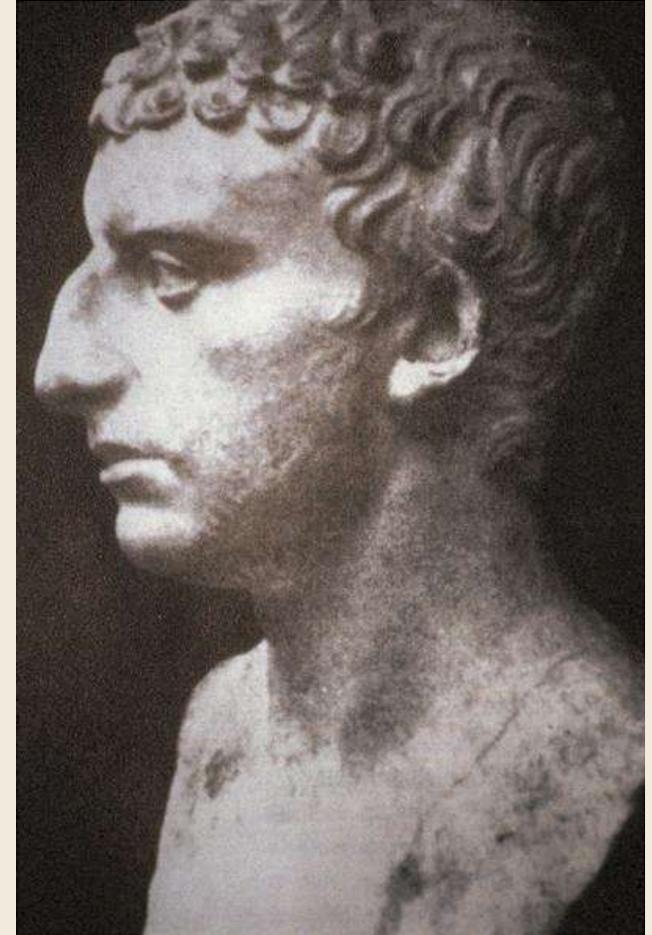


<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/josephus-flavius>

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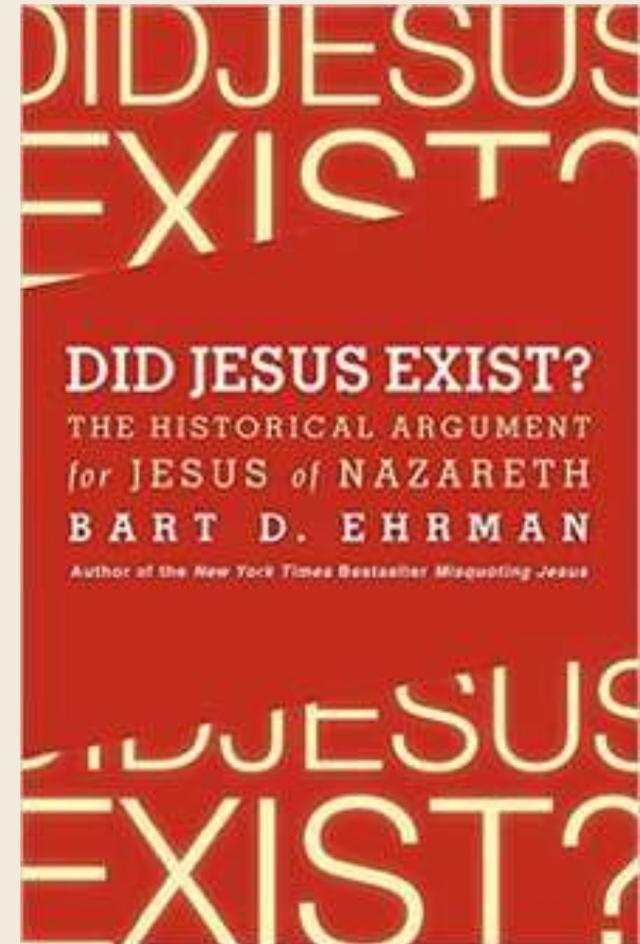
John Dominic Crossan

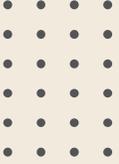
“That he was crucified is as sure as anything historical can ever be.”

(*Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, p. 145)

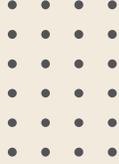


Bart D. Ehrman (2012)





HISTORICAL JESUS FACTS



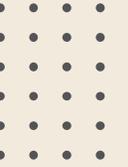
Secular history attests to these basic facts about Jesus –

When Jesus lived – 1st cent. Palestine, Tiberius Casesar

How Jesus died – crucifixion under Pontius Pilate

*What happened after Jesus died – movement spread from Judea
to Rome*

*How Jesus' followers lived – worshipped Jesus as God, lived
righteously*



JESUS' CLAIMS

Who did Jesus claim to be?

Luke 4:16-21

John 8:58-59, 10:31-39

Luke 22:66-71

Importance –

Some question if Jesus really claimed this or if this is legend

Shows the stakes of the resurrection



WHO IS JESUS?

Three Options –

He claimed to be God but knew He wasn't – a **liar**

He thought He was God but wasn't – a **lunatic**

He is who He says He is – the **Lord**

Who Is JESUS?

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.” (CS Lewis, *Mere Christianity*)





WHO IS JESUS?

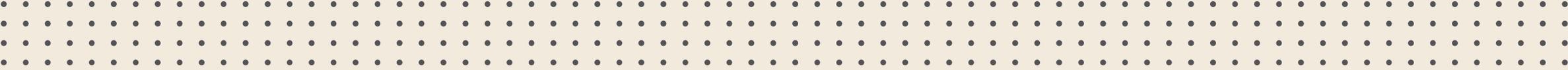
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*Skeptics today add a 4th option –
the Jesus presented in the gospels is mythical **legend***



CONCLUSION

The most important argument for Christianity is Jesus' resurrection, which if He existed and it really happened, would prove His claims true.

Romans 1:1-4

