

## Jesus is Proof

Introduction: Philosopher, Bertrand Russell wrote concerning Jesus in his book, *Why I Am Not a Christian*, "Historically it is quite doubtful whether he ever existed at all, and if he did, we do not know anything about him." To determine the Bible's authenticity consider what history tells us about "Jesus of Nazareth."

### I. Secular History Proves That Jesus Existed

- A. We rely on eyewitness accounts.
- B. Cornelius Tacitus (c. a.d. 55-120): "Christus, the founder of the name [Christians], was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius: But the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time, broke out again, not only through Judea where the mischief originated, but through the city of Rome also." (Annals XV, 44; compare with Luke 3:1; Acts 4:27-28)

### II. Jewish History Recorded Jesus' Existence & Claims

- A. Babylonian Talmud: Jesus was crucified by Jews and Romans; he had disciples; and gives reference to the virgin birth claim.
- B. Josephus Ben Mattathias (37-100? a.d.): "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise 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 among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him... and the tribe of Christians so named from him are not extinct at this day." [Italics indicate supposed Christian additions] (McDowell, *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*)

### III. First Century Christian Writings About Jesus Prove to be Historically Accurate

- A. 30-50 a.d. Testimonies during the earliest stages of N.T. writings. (Luke 24:34; Romans 1:3-4; 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 15:3-8; 1 John 4:2)
- B. Other "Christian" writers with Testimonies that accord with the Bible: Clement of Rome; Ignatius, Quadratus, Justin the Martyr.

Conclusion: Non-Christian writings confirm about Jesus: (a) a Jewish teacher; (b) Many believed he performed healings/exorcisms; (c) rejected by the Jewish leaders; (d) crucified under Pontius Pilate during the reign of Tiberius; (e) followers spread beyond Palestine to Rome by a.d. 64; (f) all kinds of people worshipped him as God by the beginning of the second century. Who is willing to say Jesus did not exist? The Bible is real because Jesus is real.