

## Session 3

June 18, 2023



This is not an “evangelism program”. It will not teach you to argue someone into faith. *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.* Romans 10:17

This session is not about proving the Scriptures to be the inspired word of God, but to answer the question: “Are the Gospels supported by other historical writings?”

Some who wrote about the same time as the Gospel writers (or later):

Josephus – Jewish Historian

Tacitus – Roman Historian

Pliny the Younger – Governor of Bithynia

Tertullian – 2<sup>nd</sup> century Christian writer (although not completely orthodox)

Eusebius – 3<sup>rd</sup> century Christian historian

### Video: Corroborating Evidence

What stuck out to you in the video?

What sounded like things you have said or heard?

What we know from extra-biblical historical writings

Jesus was: a Jewish teacher, worked miracle including exorcism, was tried as a heretic and crucified by Pilate, his followers (of all walks of life) claim He is resurrected and worshipped him as a God (even under threat of torture and death).

Luke 1:1-4, 2:1-2

Acts 1:1-3

Acts 2:22

Do you make claims like this unless there's evidence?

*Anyone who claims Jesus is not a real historical figure – who taught and died, and whose followers worshipped him and spread the news of his resurrection – must throw out historical documents of all kinds and places.*

*What about the “Other Gospels” (mostly Gnostic writings)*  
Gospels of Thomas, Mary, Philip, Judas, etc.

Collection from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Centuries

Universe – creation of a wicked god  
Salvation – secret knowledge

Jesus as presented in these writings does not line up with the Biblical Gospels  
Later – not the historical Jesus  
*Gnostic “Jesus” is more like a Greek philosopher,  
not a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew  
a Greek*

*A common perspective:*

*(pushed by Dan Brown’s DaVinci Code and others)*

- There were multiple writings
- The early church founders choose one perspective
- and suppressed the others
- Usually in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century

*The truth:*

The corroborating evidence supports the historical Jesus of the Biblical Gospels.

If Jesus is not a historical person, then what is the point?

Do you want to trust in a symbol or in a real historical savior?

*“Jesus didn’t come to help me discover who I am (self-realization), Jesus came to tell me who He knew I really am and to do something about it.”*

*For next time:*

*What does the historical Jesus mean today?*

*What makes Jesus different?*

*What is the greatest miracle Jesus did?*