

HAVE YOU HEARD? JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS NOT A MYTHOLOGICAL PERSON – PART 2

by David R. Kenney

Have you heard people reject the existence of Jesus contrary to the evidence?

The New Testament (NT) is one of the best evidences for Jesus' existence. Events surrounding His life in the NT also validate its testimony. For example, people required to return to their birthplace for registration at the time of Christ (Luke 2:1-7) was attacked as inaccurate until further research substantiated its record. Some may be astonished to learn that the NT is the most validated text in antiquity. We have over 24,000 ancient copies, in whole or in part, some copies within 100 years of original composition. The *Iliad* by Homer is the distant second most copied text at 643 copies, but 500 years separates its writing from the earliest copy. So one cannot dismiss the evidence presented in the NT by attacking its validity. In fact, a case can be made for the validity of its testimony by efforts to ensure the text's preservation!

Writers from the centuries immediately following the NT produced volumes testifying abundantly to the historical Christ. For example, Polycarp (69-155 AD) is believed to have known some of the apostles and was appointed bishop by the apostle John.

Additional evidence of Jesus' existence includes the Catacombs created during 2-5th centuries. There are 600 miles of underground passages containing an estimated 1.175-4.0 million graves. This was one of the secret worshiping places of Christians. The artwork in these passages testifies of Jesus' existence abundantly. The survival of Christianity alone is testimony of existence of Christ. Multiple of thousands of people were put to death for their faith, not over the existence of Jesus, but that Jesus, not Caesar, was Lord. Did multitudes living in the shadows of the first century, die for a "myth"? Such a theory makes no sense.

Sources:

Wayne Jackson, "The Historicity of Jesus," <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/26-the-historicity-of-jesus-christ>.

Matt Slick, "Manuscript Evidence for Superior New Testament Reliability," <http://carm.org/manuscript-evidence>.

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