Did Jesus Claim to be God?



Before we answer this, we must establish some truths:

I. The Bible is the primary source about Jesus

II. The Qur'an Itself Affirms the Authenticity of the Bible

The Qur'an clearly refers to the Torah (Tawrat) and the Gospel (Injeel) as revelations from Allah — in other words, the Word of Allah.

1. Surah 3:3 (Aali Imran)

"He has sent down upon you [O Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming what was before it. And He revealed the Torah and the Gospel."

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصلَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَاةَ (Arabic: وَالْإِنجِيلَ) وَالْإِنجِيلَ) وَالْإِنجِيلَ)

2. Surah 5:44 (Al-Ma'idah)

"Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The prophets who submitted [to Allah] judged by it for the Jews..."

3. Surah 5:46-47

"And We sent, following in their footsteps, Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming that which came before him in the Torah. And We gave him the Gospel, in which was guidance and light, and confirming that which preceded it of the Torah as guidance and instruction for the righteous." "So let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed therein."

4. Surah 57:27

"Then We sent Our messengers following in their footsteps, and We sent Jesus, the son of Mary, and gave him the Gospel..."

5. Surah 2:136

"Say, [O believers], 'We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the descendants, and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them...'"

Before we answer this, we must establish some truths:

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- II. The Qur'an Itself Affirms the Authenticity of the Bible

The Qur'an clearly refers to the Torah (Tawrat) and the Gospel (Injeel) as revelations from Allah — in other words, the Word of Allah.

III. The Qur'an contains multiple verses that strongly imply — and in some cases directly state — that Allah's Word cannot be changed or corrupted.

1. Surah 6:34

"There is none that can change the words of Allah." (Arabic: لاَ مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ)

2. Surah 6:115

"And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can change His words."

لا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ) (Arabic: لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ

3. Surah 10:64

"No change is there in the words of Allah. That is what is the great attainment."

4. Surah 18:27

"And recite what has been revealed to you of the Book of your Lord. None can change His words, and you will find no refuge besides Him."

What This Means in Debate

Muslims claim that the Torah and the Gospel (Injeel) were corrupted. But the Qur'an:

- Calls both of them the Word of Allah
- Commands Christians to judge by the Gospel available in the 7th century
- Asserts repeatedly that no one can change or corrupt Allah's Word

What This Means in Debate

If the Bible had truly been corrupted before Muhammad's time, then:

- Allah would have failed to protect His Word contradicting these verses.
- The Qur'an would be logically inconsistent for telling people to follow corrupted Scriptures.

Since the Qur'an acknowledges the Torah and the Gospel as Allah's Word, Muslims face a dilemma: either admit the Bible was **preserved** or accuse the Qur'an of contradiction.



IV. No Historical Evidence of a Widespread Biblical Corruption

- Specify when it was corrupted,
- By whom it was corrupted,
- Or show which verses are false and provide the originals.

If a corruption occurred, it would have required:

- A global conspiracy spanning continents,
- A complete destruction of all earlier manuscripts,
- Coordination between rival groups (e.g., Catholics, Orthodox, Nestorians.
- All without any record or evidence.

This is historically

V. Is there any other way to prove that the Bible has not been corrupted?

YES!!!

New Testament Manuscript Evidence

What Is Manuscript Evidence?

"Manuscripts" are handwritten copies of ancient texts. Since the original writings of the Bible (called autographs) no longer exist, scholars rely on manuscript copies to reconstruct what the original texts said.

Quantity:

 Over 5,800 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament have been discovered.

- Add to that:
- o ~10,000 in Latin
- ~9,300 in other languages (Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, etc.)
- That's over 25,000 total manuscripts—no other ancient work comes close.

Proximity to Original:

• The earliest fragment of the New Testament, John Rylands Fragment (P52), is dated to around 125 A.D.—possibly within 30 years of the original Gospel of John.

Here's how the New Testament compares with other respected ancient works:

Ancient Work	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Gap	Number of Copies
New Testament	AD 50-100	c. AD 125 (P52)	~25–75 years	5,800+ (Greek)
Homer's Iliad	~700 BC	~200 BC	~500 years	~1,800
Plato	~380 BC	AD 900	~1,200 years	~210
Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars	~58–50 BC	AD 900	~950 years	~10
Tacitus' Annals	AD 100	AD 1100	~1,000 years	~20
Aristotle	~350 BC	AD 1100	~1,450 years	~49
Thucydides	~430 BC	AD 900	~1,300 years	~8

Accuracy and Agreement

- Scholars estimate the New Testament text is 99.5% textually pure.
- The remaining 0.5% of variants are mostly:
- o Spelling errors
- Minor word order differences
- o Synonyms
- No major Christian doctrine hinges on any of these variants.

Textual critics—both secular and Christian—affirm the New Testament is the most reliable ancient document ever preserved.

The New Testament stands head and shoulders above every ancient text in terms of:

- Manuscript quantity
- Chronological proximity
- Cross-linguistic consistency
- Textual accuracy

F. F. Bruce

British biblical scholar and historian

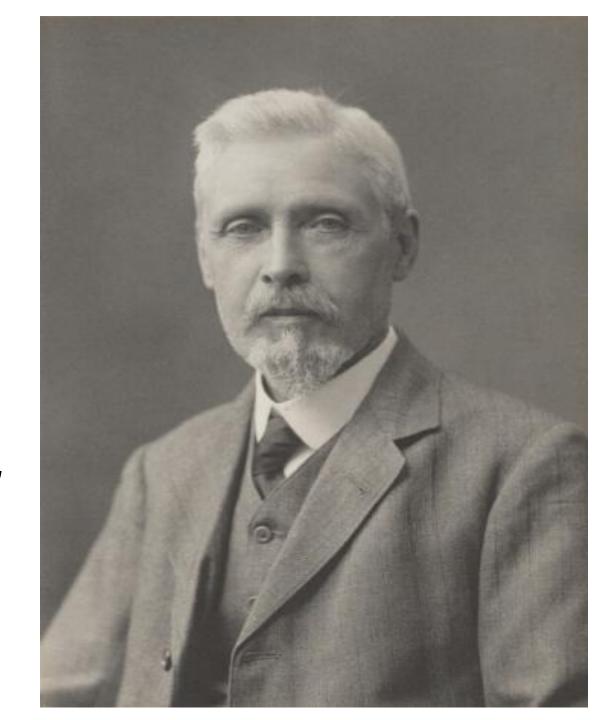
"There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament."



Sir William Ramsay

Renowned 19th-century archaeologist and historian

"Luke is a historian of the first rank. Not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy... he should be placed along with the very greatest of historians."



Craig Blomberg

American New Testament scholar

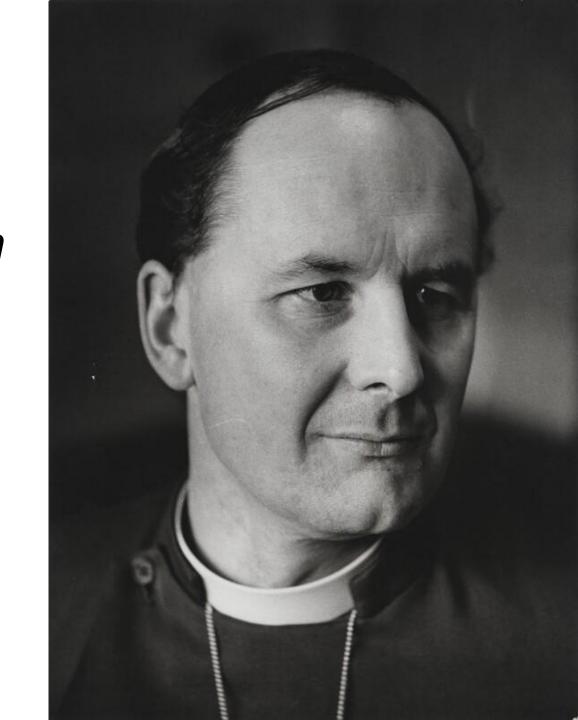
"The case for the reliability of the Gospels remains very strong when judged by the standards of historical research."



John A. T. Robinson

Liberal Anglican bishop and scholar

"The Gospels were written when people who knew Jesus personally were still alive... The dates of composition lie much closer to the events they record than most people think."

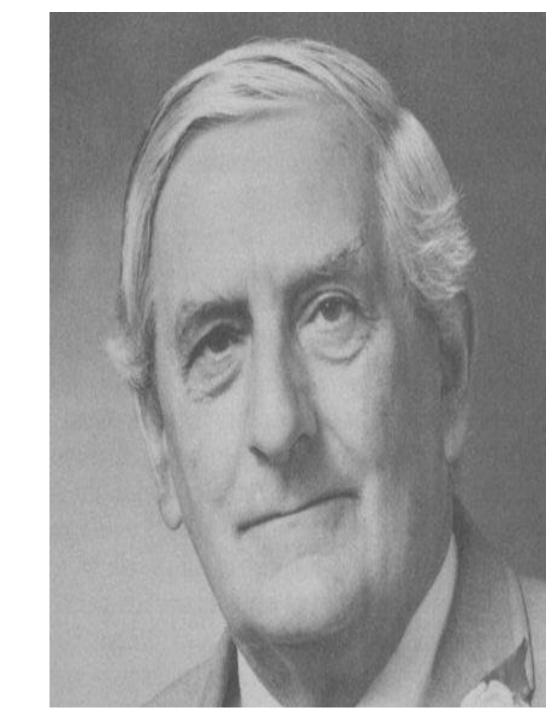


A. N. Sherwin-White

Classical historian from Oxford University

"For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming."

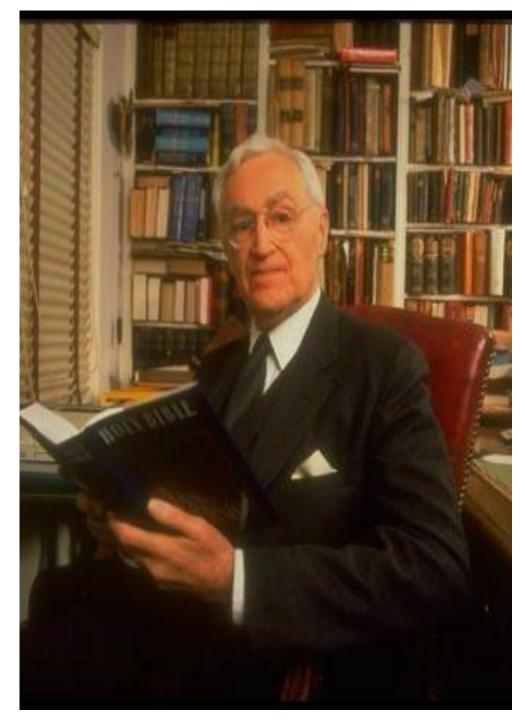
"The confirmation of historicity in Acts is overwhelming... Any attempt to reject its basic historicity must now appear absurd."



Bruce Metzger

World-renowned textual critic from Princeton

"The New Testament is transmitted to us with no substantial loss of content."



Bart Ehrman

Agnostic textual critic and former evangelical

"Essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament."



Daniel B. Wallace

New Testament scholar and expert in textual criticism

"Yes, we have an extraordinarily reliable Bible. The Bible we have in our hands today is, in all essential respects, what was written in the first century..."



Gary Habermas

Historian and apologist specializing in the resurrection of Jesus

"The New Testament's manuscript tradition—its age, number, and distribution—makes it far stronger than any other ancient text."



Michael Grant

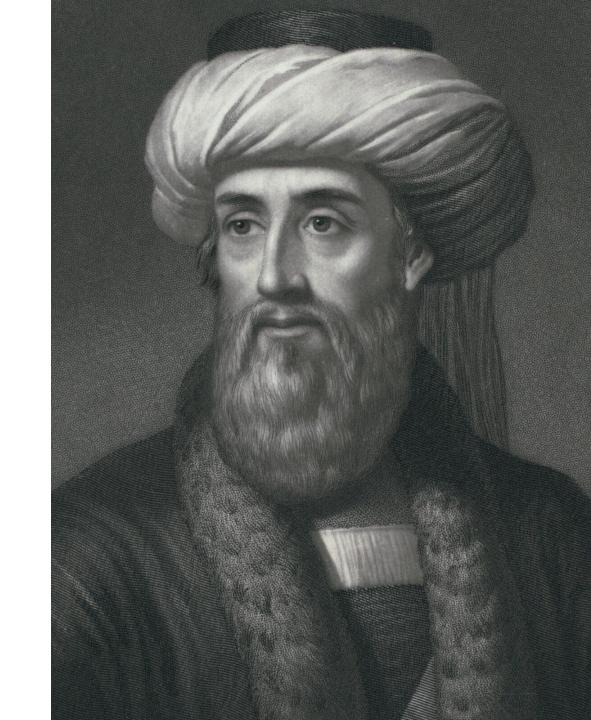
Secular classical historian

"If we apply to the New Testament the same sort of criteria we would apply to other ancient writings... then we can no more reject Jesus' existence than we can reject the existence of a mass of pagan figures."



Josephus

First-century Jewish historian



"At this time there was a wise man named Jesus. He was a doer of startling deeds and a teacher of people who receive the truth with pleasure. He won over many Jews and also many of the Greeks. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing among us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still not disappeared."

Across centuries, both Christian and secular historians, including skeptics, affirm that:

- The Bible is rooted in real history.
- The New Testament is well-preserved and textually reliable.
- Key events (like the life and crucifixion of Jesus) are historically confirmed.



Historical Evidence From the Early Church on the Bible's Reliability

Why is Their testimony Important:

- They were close in time to the original events,
- 2. They copied, quoted, and circulated the Scriptures widely
- 3. They treated the texts as sacred and authoritative—not just inspirational writings

1. Early Christian Writings Quote the N.T. Extensively

Examples:

- Clement of Rome (c. AD 96) quotes from the Gospels, Acts, and Paul's letters.
- Ignatius of Antioch (c. AD 110) references Matthew, John, Romans, and more—showing these books were already widely recognized and circulated.
- Polycarp quoted from at least 17 New Testament books.

This proves that the New Testament wasn't invented later, it was already being used, revered, and quoted by those closest to the apostles.

2. The Early Church Recognized the Bible as Authoritative

The Muratorian Fragment (c. AD 170)



- The Muratorian Fragment (also called the Muratorian Canon) is the earliest known list of New Testament books, providing critical insight into how the early church recognized which writings were considered Scripture.
- It lists the books that were accepted by the church as Scripture—including the four Gospels, Acts, 13 Pauline epistles, 1 John, and Revelation.
- It excludes: Hebrews | James | 1 and 2 Peter

Why It Matters

- It shows that by the late 2nd century, the core of the New Testament canon was already widely recognized and affirmed by the early church.
- It provides evidence against the claim that the New Testament was invented or formalized much later (e.g., at Constantine's Council of Nicaea).
- It reflects the early church's concern for orthodoxy—only books that were apostolic, orthodox, and widely used in churches were accepted.

This shows that early Christians already had a recognized canon, and they treated it as divinely inspired, not something evolving centuries later.

3. Church Fathers Defended the Integrity of Scripture

- Tertullian (c. AD 200) said that the apostles' writings were being faithfully passed down in the churches they founded.
- Origen (c. AD 250) produced a text-critical edition of the Old Testament (the Hexapla) and engaged in serious textual scholarship.
- Eusebius of Caesarea (c. AD 325) in Ecclesiastical History documented the transmission of Scripture, the recognition of canonical books, and how the early church combated heretical corruptions.

4. Widespread Geographic Distribution of the Text

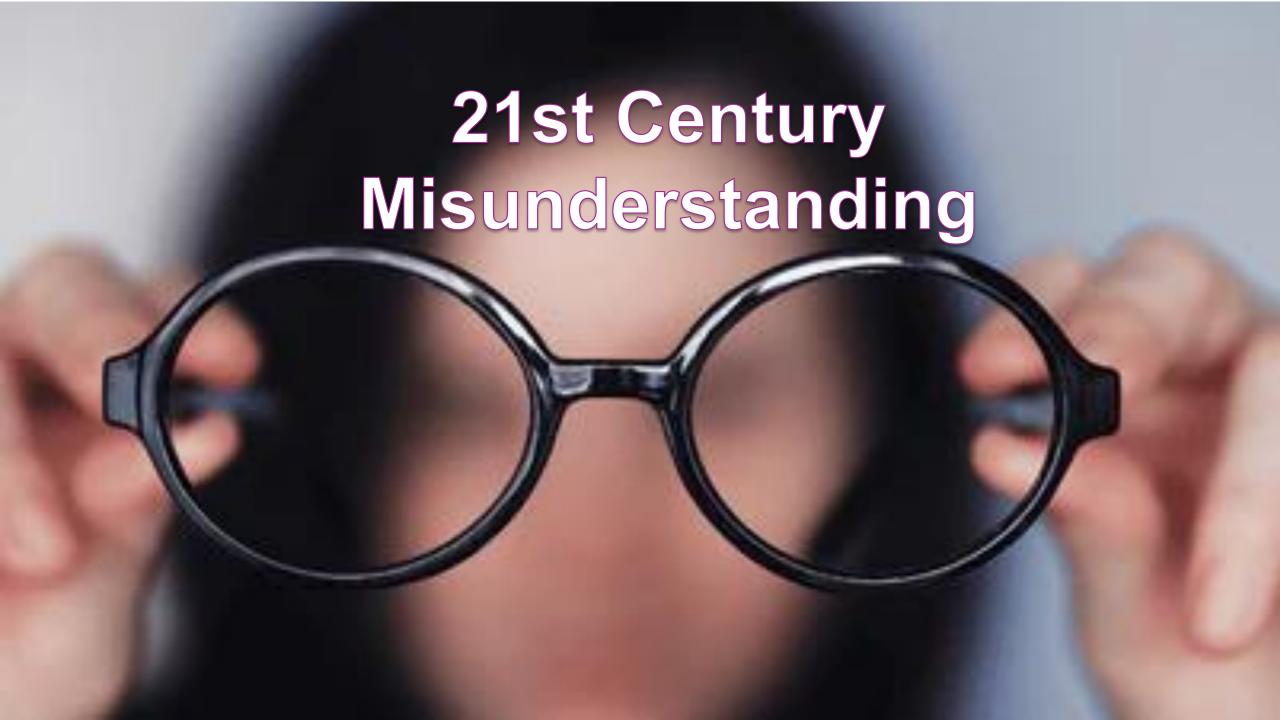
By the 2nd and 3rd centuries, Scripture was already circulating in:

- Syria
- North Africa
- Europe
- Egypt

This wide distribution prevents the idea of central manipulation, the text was already public and spread across continents, making editing or corruption nearly impossible without being noticed.

The early church offers strong historical evidence that:

- The Bible we have today matches what the early Christians had.
- They treated it as authoritative from the beginning—not centuries later.
- They quoted it extensively, preserved it carefully, and spread it widely.
- The canon was recognized early and defended against false writings.



Modern Expectations vs. Ancient Categories

2. Loss of First-Century Jewish Context

4. Different Definitions of "God"

Was the Deity of Jesus a later Development?



To refute the belief that the deity of Jesus developed over time, we must demonstrate that:

- 1. The earliest Christian sources affirm Jesus' divinity.
- 2. The New Testament writers (especially the earliest ones like Paul) already believed Jesus was God.
- 3. The belief in Jesus' deity was not a later invention, but rooted in Jesus' own words and actions, as well as the testimony of those who knew Him.

1. Earliest Sources Affirm His Divinity

1.Philippians 2:5–11 (written around AD 60)

Paul quotes an early Christian hymn:

- "...Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped..."
- 2. Jesus Was Worshiped From the Start

1 Corinthians 1:2

Paul greets "those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"—a phrase used in the Old Testament only for Yahweh.

1. Earliest Sources Affirm His Divinity

3. Jesus Claimed Divine Authority

4. Old Testament Titles Applied to Jesus

Jesus is consistently identified with Yahweh using Old Testament language

5. Historical Evidence From the Early Church

Even outside Scripture, early Christian writings affirm Jesus' divinity long before the Council of Nicaea (AD 325).

Ignatius of Antioch (AD 110)- "Jesus Christ our God."

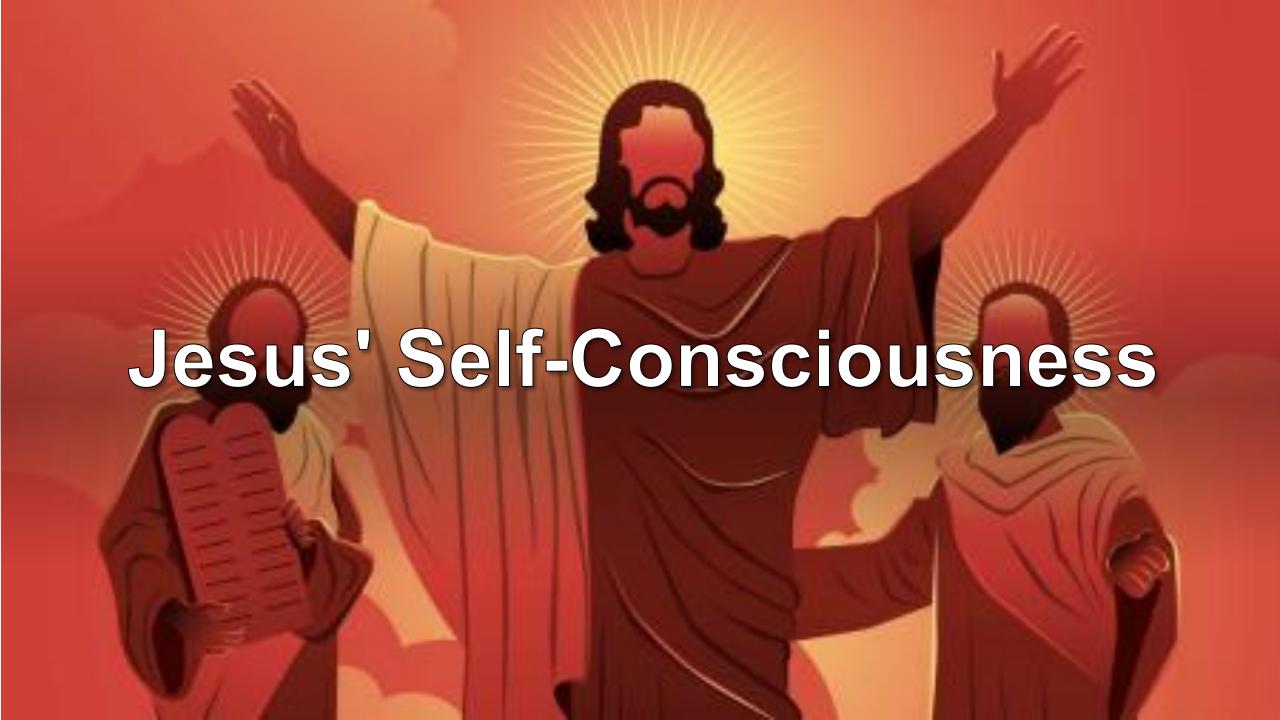
6. Why the Deity of Christ Could Not Have Been Invented Later

- Jews were strict monotheists. They would not have worshiped a man unless they were absolutely convinced He was God in the flesh.
- The disciples were willing to die for this belief. If Jesus was just a man, why would they risk everything?
- The resurrection is the key. If Jesus truly rose from the dead (as even skeptics like Bart Ehrman admit was claimed very early), then His claims to deity are vindicated.

Conclusion

The belief in Jesus' deity was not a later theological invention. It is:

- Rooted in Jesus' own words and actions,
- Reflected in the earliest Christian writings and worship,
- Affirmed by the apostles and early church, and
- Consistent with Old Testament expectations of God's selfrevelation.



Jesus' self-consciousness refers to what Jesus believed and understood about Himself, particularly regarding His identity, mission, relationship with the Father, and divine nature.

Matt.13:41 Luke 12:8-9; 15:10

His Angels = Angels of God



Divine Prerogative S



Jesus assumes the role of God Himself.

- > "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (v. 7)
- In Jewish theology, only God can forgive sin, because all sin is ultimately an offense against God (cf. Psalm 51:4).
- This statement directly challenged the religious structures of the day.
- Blasphemy was a capital offense (Leviticus 24:16)

- "Jesus, perceiving in His spirit..." (v. 8)
- Jesus supernaturally perceives their internal thoughts.
- In the Old Testament, only God is described as one who knows the thoughts of the heart (see 1 Samuel 16:7; Jeremiah 17:10).
- Jesus demonstrates another divine attribute omniscience.

"Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'?" (v. 9)

- To say "Your sins are forgiven" is easier because it's invisible no one can prove whether it happened or not.
- But to say "Get up and walk" demands immediate, visible proof.
- Jesus is setting up a miraculous demonstration to validate His invisible authority.

Jesus Proves His Authority by Healing

"But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." (v. 10)

- The healing was not just an act of compassion it was an apologetic, a proof of His divine authority.
- Jesus uses the title "Son of Man", which links to Daniel 7:13–
 14, where the Son of Man is:
- o Given dominion, glory, and a kingdom
- o Worshiped by all peoples
- o Possesses an everlasting dominion

"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." (v. 11)

- Jesus Replaces the Temple as the Center of Forgiveness
- In Judaism, forgiveness was accessed through:
- o The priesthood
- o The sacrificial system
- o The temple
- Jesus bypasses all of these, offering forgiveness on His own authority.
- This event anticipates a new covenant, in which forgiveness comes through faith in Jesus, not through ritual or sacrifice.

Theological Summary

DIVINE IMPLICATION

Recognizes divine power at work

ELEMENT

Crowd glorifies God

Forgives sins directly	Assumes divine prerogative
Perceives hidden thoughts	Displays omniscience
Heals instantly	Confirms divine power
Calls Himself "Son of Man"	Links to Daniel 7's exalted,
	divine figure
No temple or sacrifice involved	Establishes new, direct access to
	forgiveness through Himself



- "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." (v. 27)
- The Sabbath was not meant to be a burdensome obligation, but a gift of rest and renewal (see Genesis 2:3; Exodus 31:17).
- The Pharisees had distorted the purpose of the Sabbath, turning it into a system of legalistic bondage.
- Jesus asserts His authority to clarify and redefine how God's law is rightly understood.

"So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." (v. 28)

- 1. The Sabbath is God's Institution
- The Sabbath is rooted in creation (Genesis 2:2–3) and codified by God in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8–11).
- To claim lordship over the Sabbath is to claim authority over something God Himself established.
- 2. Jesus Claims to be "Lord" of a Divine Ordinance
- The term "Lord of the Sabbath" means:
- o He is the one who rules it
- o He has the authority to interpret, override, or fulfill it
- He stands above it which is only true of God

Other Gospels include this same scene with added emphasis:

- Matthew 12:6 "I tell you, something greater than the temple is here."
- o Jesus places Himself above the temple, the Sabbath, and all Jewish institutions.
- Luke 6:5 Echoes the same conclusion: "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

Theological Summary

ELEMENT	DIVINE IMPLICATION
God created and owns the	Jesus claims to be Lord of the
Sabbath	Sabbath
The Sabbath is part of divine	Jesus claims authority over it
law	
Prophets called people back	Jesus redefines the Law by
to the Law	His own authority
The Sabbath was a sign of	Jesus presents Himself as
the covenant	the new covenant mediator

3. John 10:30–33 – "I and the Father are one."



The Meaning of "I and the Father are One"

- It doesn't mean Jesus and the Father are the same person, but that they are one in essence, nature, and purpose.
- They are distinct persons, but they share a single divine nature
 — coequal, coeternal, and inseparable.

In short, Jesus is claiming unity with God in the most profound and ontological sense possible.

The Immediate Reaction: Attempted Stoning for Blasphemy

- Verse 31: "The Jews picked up stones again to stone him."
- This isn't a misunderstanding. They fully grasp the implication of Jesus' words.
- Verse 33 makes it explicit: "Because you, being a man, make yourself God."
- ➤ They knew exactly what He was claiming not just to be the Messiah, but to be God Himself in human flesh.

Jesus Does Not Deny Their Accusation

- Jesus does not respond by saying:
- "You misunderstood Me."
- "I'm not claiming to be God."
- o "I'm only God's messenger."
- Instead, He affirms His works as evidence of divine identity (v. 37–38)

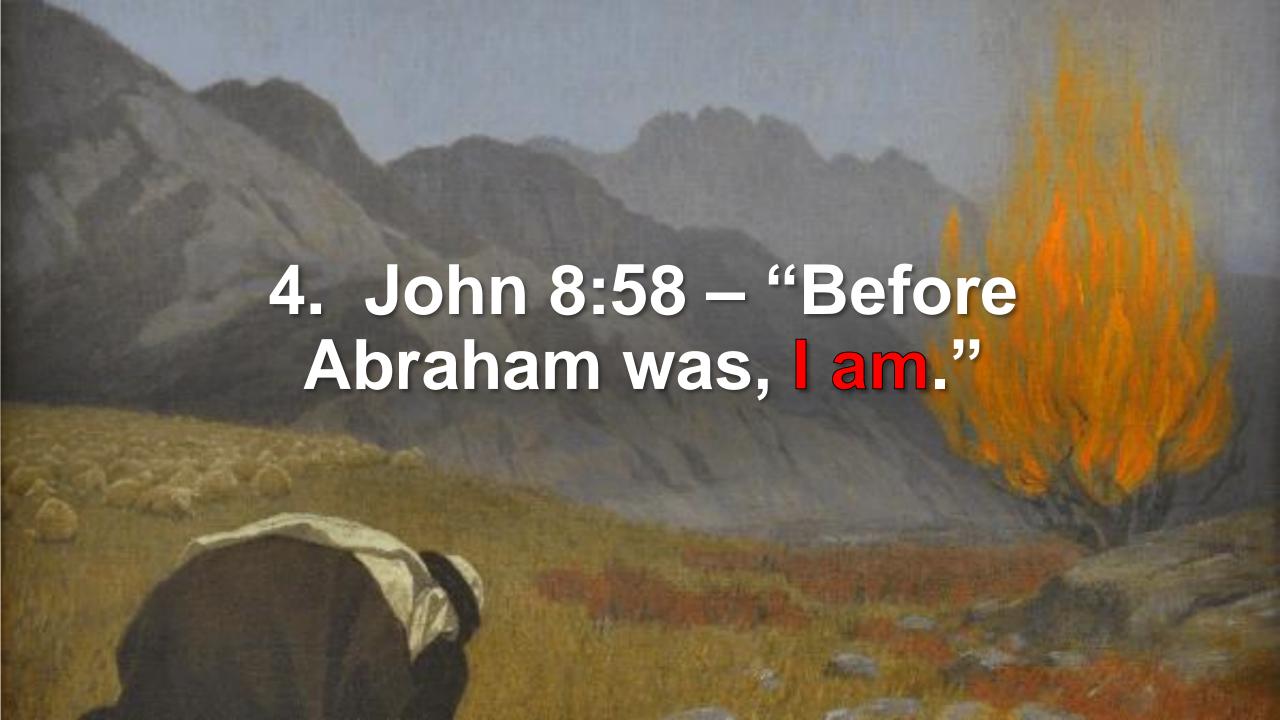
Old Testament Background: The Exclusive Oneness of God

Deuteronomy 6:4 – "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."

- The Jewish people were fiercely monotheistic.
- To claim unity with God in essence was to violate the core
 of Jewish identity unless it was true.
- That's why they accused Jesus of blasphemy not for claiming to be a prophet or miracle-worker, but for claiming

Theological Summary

Doctrine	Affirmed in the Text
Unity of essence	"I and the Father are one" – one divine nature
Distinction of persons	The Father and the Son are distinct, not the same person
Mutual indwelling	"The Father is in Me, and I am in the Father"
Cooperative work	The Son does the works of the Father — not independently



Translation: "Before Abraham came into being, I am."

• Jesus is not simply saying, "I existed before Abraham." He is saying: "I exist outside of time. I am eternally present. I am."

Jesus is Echoing God's Name from Exodus 3:14: "God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you."

- When God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush,
 He used the name "I AM" (Yahweh) the self-existent, eternal One.
- The Greek Septuagint (LXX) translates it as: "Ego eimi ho ōn"
- "I am the one who is."

By using the exact phrase "ego eimi", Jesus is claiming the divine name of Yahweh for Himself.

The Crowd's Reaction Proves They Understood His Claim:

- "So they picked up stones to throw at Him..." (v. 59)
- The crowd didn't misunderstand they understood perfectly: Jesus was claiming to be God.
- They weren't outraged by a metaphor or allegory. They heard a man declare Himself eternal God and that, to them, was worthy of death.
- If Jesus wasn't claiming to be God, He would have clarified.
 Instead, He left the claim standing and walked away

Theological Implications

Doctrine Affirmed	How It's Revealed in John
	8:58
Pre-existence	Jesus existed before Abraham
	(2000+ years prior)
Eternality	"I AM" — not "I was"
Divine Identity	Uses God's covenant name
	from Exodus 3
Self-awareness of Deity	He consciously presents
	Himself as Yahweh
Worthy of Worship	He is not just Lord over
	Abraham, but Lord over all



The term "Son of Man" carries deep biblical, theological, and Christological significance—especially when used by Jesus in the Gospels. Far from being a simple way of referring to His humanity, "Son of Man" is a divinely loaded title that connects Jesus to Old Testament prophecy, expresses His heavenly origin, His mission of redemption, and His final role as Judge and King.

1. It Was Jesus' Favorite Self-Title

➤ Why this matters:

 Jesus avoided loaded political titles like "Messiah" or "King," which were often misunderstood.

2. It Affirms His Humanity

 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5)

3. It Connects to the Divine Figure in Daniel 7

This "Son of Man":

- Comes on the clouds (a divine attribute)
- Is worshiped by all nations (the word used in Aramaic implies divine worship)
- Has an eternal kingdom (God alone reigns forever)

Jesus identifies Himself with this figure directly:

"You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26:64)

4. It Emphasizes His Role as the Suffering Servant

"The Son of Man must suffer many things... and be killed, and after three days rise again." (Mark 8:31)

- Jesus redefines "Son of Man" not just as the glorious judge, but as the suffering redeemer (Isaiah 53).
- He brings together:
- o The heavenly figure of Daniel 7
- o The suffering servant who bears our sins

5. It Declares His Authority to Forgive, Heal, and Judge

6. It Reveals His Final Role as Judge and King

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne..." (Matthew 25:31)

- He will return with glory
- He will separate the righteous from the wicked
- He will rule eternally

> Jesus presents Himself not as one of many religious figures, but as the final authority over every human soul.

What "Son of Man" Means for Jesus

Meaning	Significance in Jesus' Identity
Common idiom for	Jesus was truly human, like us
humanity	
Title from Daniel 7	"Jesus is divine, exalted, and eternal
Suffering Servant	He came to die and rise again for our
	salvation
Authority to forgive and	Jesus acts with divine prerogative
judge	
Future King and Judge	Jesus will return to rule and judge all
	people
Chosen self-title	He defines His own mission — divine
	and redeeming

7. Philippians
2:6-11 - Jesus
Added
Humanity to
His Deity



A. Jesus Did Not Cease to Be God

• The word "morphē" refers to the essential form or nature — meaning Jesus existed eternally in the full essence of God.

B. He Emptied Himself — Not of Divinity, But of Privilege

 This "self-emptying" was not a subtraction of deity but an addition of humanity.

C. He Took On the Form of a Servant

 α

• This indicates that just as He was fully and truly God, He became fully and truly man, not in appearance only, but in

D. He Was "Made in Human Likeness"

•The phrase "being made in human likeness" affirms that Jesus entered real human existence.

E. The Humiliation of the Cross

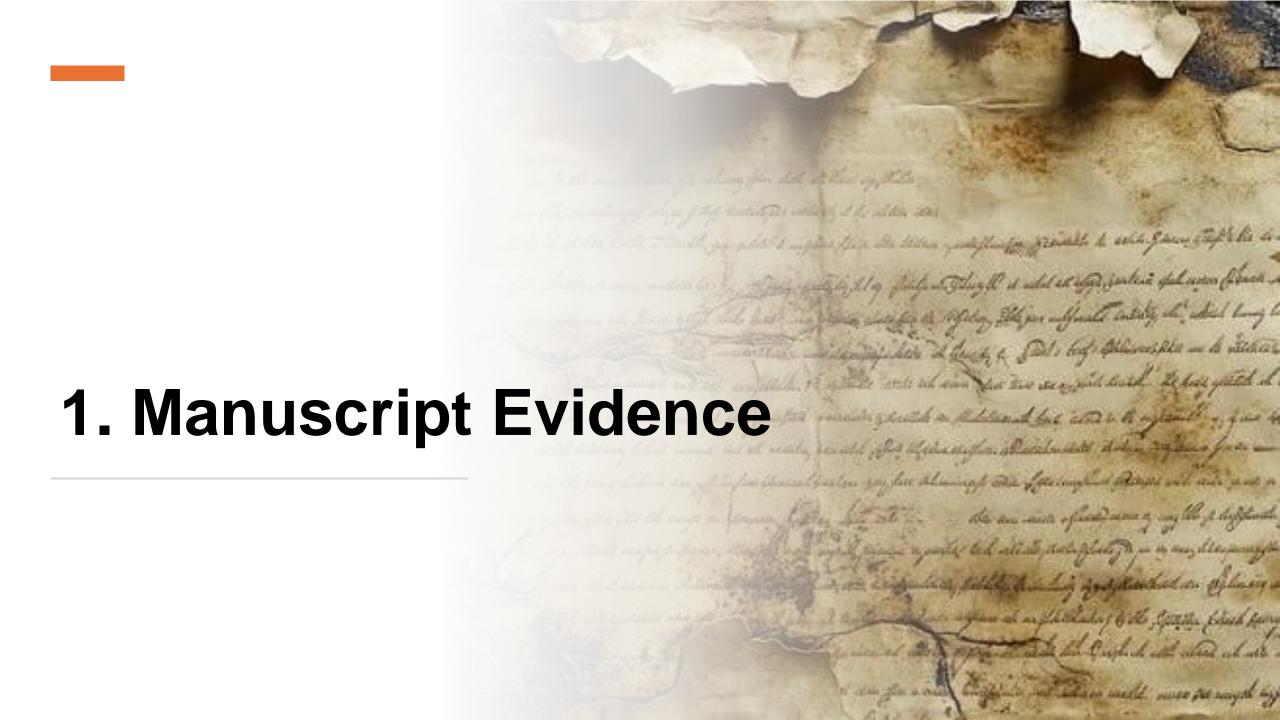
• His humility went even further: "He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross!"

F. Theological Summary: The Hypostatic Union

• This passage reflects the doctrine of the hypostatic union: Jesus is one Person with two natures — fully God and fully man.

G. God Highly Exalted Him (vv. 9–11)

- The final proof of His divinity is this: every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, quoting Isaiah 45:23, a passage originally referring to Yahweh.
- This shows the eternal recognition of Jesus as God.



Masoretic Text (MT)

- •The **Masoretic Text** is the authoritative Hebrew text for Judaism and most of Christianity.
- •It was standardized by Jewish scribes (Masoretes) between **500–1000 AD**.
- •Incredible accuracy: The Masoretes developed intricate methods of counting words, letters, and verses to avoid errors.

Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS)

- •Discovered between 1947–1956, these scrolls date from 250 BC to 70 AD.
- They include every book of the Old Testament except Esther.
- •Comparison of the DSS with the Masoretic Text shows remarkable consistency, especially with the book of Isaiah—demonstrating over 95% word-for-word accuracy.

Example: The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsaa) is nearly identical to the Masoretic Isaiah, affirming textual preservation over a thousand years.

2. Textual Transmission

- •Jewish scribes were meticulously trained and followed strict protocols when copying the Scriptures.
- Any scroll with even one mistake was destroyed.
- •The reverence for God's Word resulted in **unusually faithful transmission** of texts over centuries.

3. Archaeological Support

Examples:

- •Hittites: Once thought to be mythical, now confirmed by archaeology.
- •Sennacherib's Prism: Confirms the Assyrian campaign during Hezekiah's reign (2 Kings 18–19).
- •House of David Inscription (Tel Dan Stele): Confirms David as a historical figure.
- •Cyrus Cylinder: Confirms the Persian policy allowing Jews to return and rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1–4).

4. Internal Consistency and Prophetic Accuracy

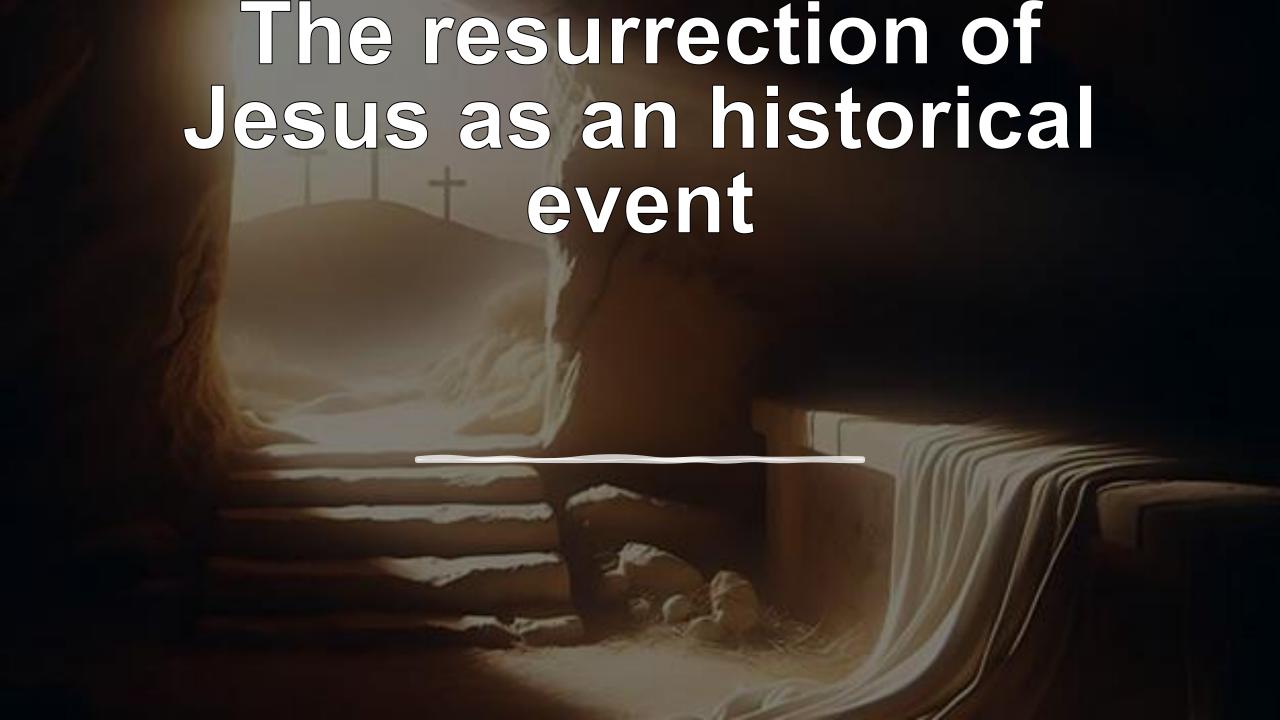
- •The Old Testament contains hundreds of prophecies, many fulfilled in historical events and in the New Testament (e.g., prophecies of the Messiah).
- •Despite being written by 40+ authors over 1,000+ years, the text remains theologically and thematically consistent, especially concerning God's covenant, holiness, and the coming Messiah.

5. Jesus' View of the Old Testament

Jesus treated the Old Testament as divinely authoritative and historically accurate:

- He quoted from Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, and others.
- •He affirmed the creation account, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jonah.
- •In Luke 24:44, He said: "Everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

OBJECTION	RESPONSE
"The OT is full of contradictions"	Most are resolved through context, translation clarity, or scribal variants.
"It's just legend or myth"	Archaeology increasingly supports biblical history. The OT often records unflattering or difficult truths, which adds credibility.
"The OT God is immoral"	This is often a moral misunderstanding, and context (judgment, covenant, ancient culture) must be considered.

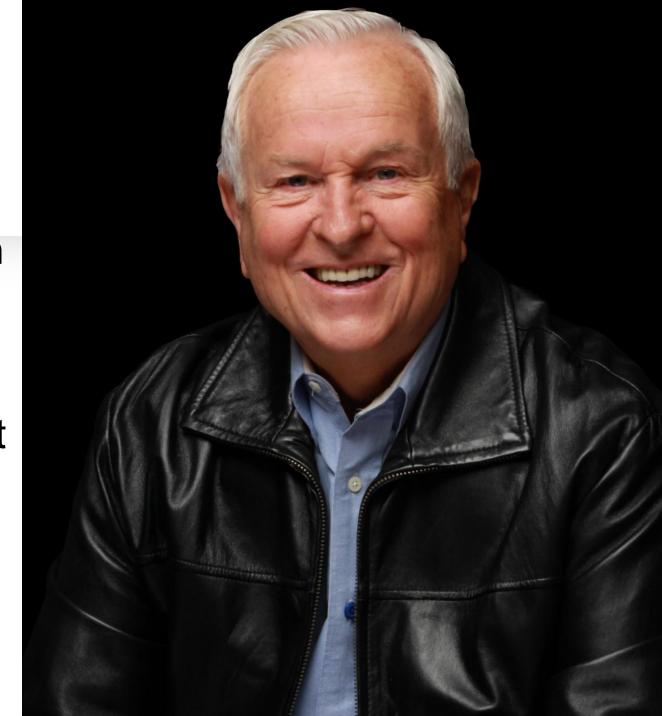


1 Corinthians 15:14-19

14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either, 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

"After more than 700 hours of studying this subject and thoroughly investigating its foundation, I have come to the conclusion that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most wicked, vicious, heartless hoaxes ever foisted upon the minds of men, OR it is the most fantastic fact of history."

~Josh McDowell

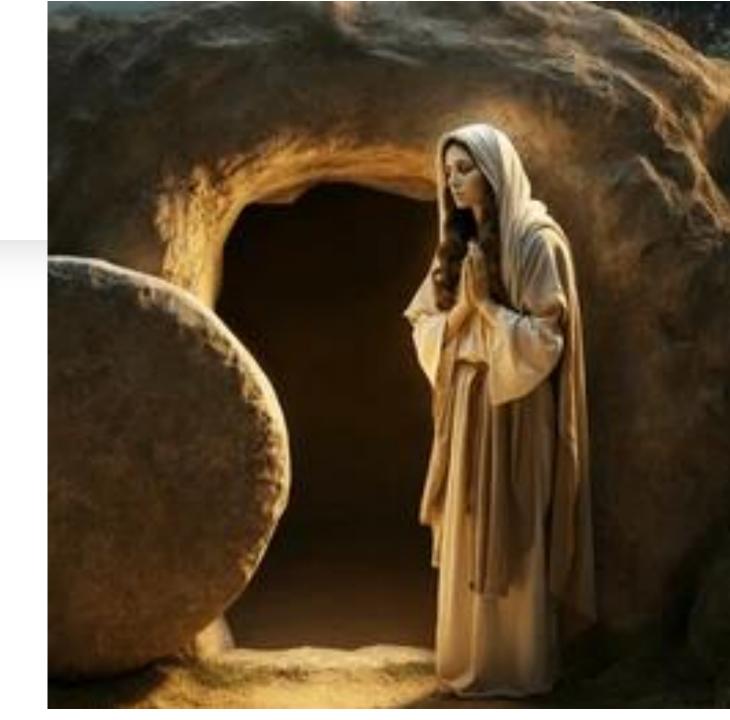


1. Criterion of Embarrassment

In the Talmud (oral law and commentary), women were often excluded from acting as legal witnesses, especially in criminal cases. For example:

"A woman is disqualified from bearing witness, as is a slave and a minor."

~ Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 22a



2. The principle of enemy attestation

The Criterion of Enemy Attestation is a principle used in historical analysis, particularly in studying ancient texts like the New Testament. It states that if an account or detail is affirmed or acknowledged by enemies or opponents of a person or movement, it is more likely to be historically credible — especially if that detail is not in the enemy's favor.

3. Criterion of Dissimilarity (Discontinuity)

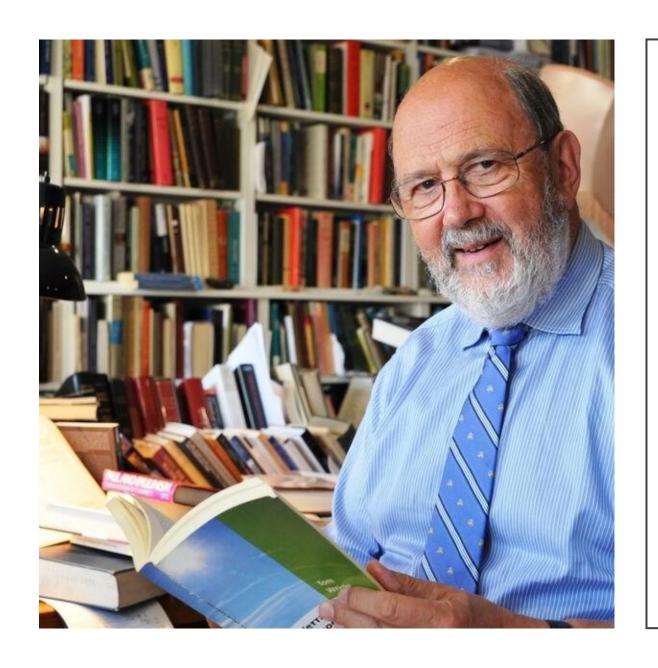
The Criterion of Dissimilarity holds that if a teaching or event in the Gospels is dissimilar from both:

- 1. The established beliefs and expectations of Second Temple Judaism, and
- 2. The later teachings or agendas of the early Church, then it's more likely to be historically authentic—because it would not likely have been invented either by Jesus' Jewish context or by the early Christian community.

Applied to the Resurrection:

A. Jewish Expectations of Resurrection

- In first-century Judaism, **resurrection** was understood as a **collective event** that would happen **to all the righteous at the end of time** (cf. Daniel 12:2, Isaiah 26:19).
- . **No Jewish group** expected a **single individual** to rise bodily from the dead **in the middle of history** while the rest of the dead remained in their graves.
- . Therefore, the early Christian claim that **Jesus had already been bodily raised** stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing Jewish eschatology.



"The disciples were not expecting Jesus to rise from the dead. Such a belief would have been entirely foreign to their Jewish worldview. A risen Messiah was a contradiction in terms." ~N.T. Wright



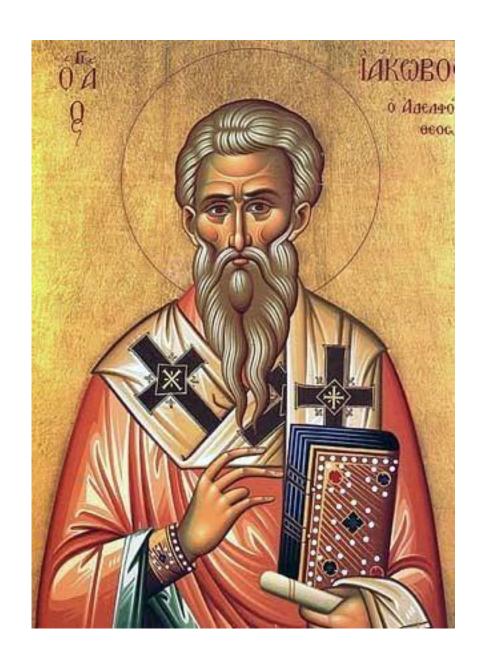
"The resurrection traditions do not fit what the disciples would have expected. If they were inventing a story to bolster their hopes, they would not have chosen resurrection as the means—especially not a bodily one in the middle of history."

~Dale C. Allison

B. Greco-Roman Views of the Afterlife

- . In the Greco-Roman world, **bodily resurrection** was generally **mocked or denied**. Philosophers like **Plato** saw the body as a prison from which the soul escapes at death.
- The idea of a **physical resurrection** was considered **undesirable or absurd** (cf. Acts 17:32 the Athenians sneer at the resurrection).
- So the resurrection story was **not borrowed from pagan mythology**, which focused more on **immortal souls or dying-and-rising gods** in symbolic forms.

The Criterion of Dissimilarity strongly supports the idea that the resurrection belief did not emerge from cultural or religious wishful thinking. The radical departure from Jewish expectation and the countercultural nature of the claim within both Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts point to a genuine historical experience that forced the earliest Christians to rethink everything they believed.



4. Conversion of James

John 7:1-

After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. He did not want to go about in Judea because the Jewish leaders there were looking for a way to kill him. 2 But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, 3 Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. 4 No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." 5 For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

Mark 3:20– 21

20 Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. 21 When his family[a] heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

Acts 1:14

14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Galatians 1:18-19;

18 Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas[a] and stayed with him fifteen days. 19 I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord's brother.

James, Cephas[a] and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.

1 Corinthians 15:7

7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,



5. Conversion of Saul/Paul

Acts

"made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison"

Acts

I persecuted the followers of the Way to their death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women"

1 Corinthians 15:8

in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness...



"Shortly after Jesus was executed, his followers were suddenly galvanized from a baffled and cowering group into people whose message about a living Jesus and a coming kingdom, preached at the risk of their lives, eventually changed an empire. Something happened ... But exactly what?"

~New York Times

Acts 4:10, 12

"Let it be known to you all, and to the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole... Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"

7. The Existence of the Church

Theudas

For before these days Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing (Acts 5:36).

It came to pass, while Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, that a certain char-la-tan, whose name was Theudas, persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and follow him to the Jordan river; for he told them he was a prophet, and that he would, by his own command, divide the river, and afford them an easy passage over it. Many were deluded by his words. However, Fadus did not permit them to make any advantage of his wild attempt, but sent a troop of horsemen out against them. After falling upon them unexpectedly, they slew many of them, and took many of them alive. They also took Theudas alive, cut off his head, and carried it to Jerusalem. (Josephus - Jewish Antiquities 20.97-98)

Judas of Galilee

Acts 5:37, "After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered."

Even after Judas had perished, his spirit continued to animate his followers. Two of his sons, Jacob and Simon, were crucified by Tiberius Alexander ("Ant." xx. 5, § 2); another son, Menahem, became the leader of the Sicarii and for a time had much power; he was finally slain by the high-priestly party.

~Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews

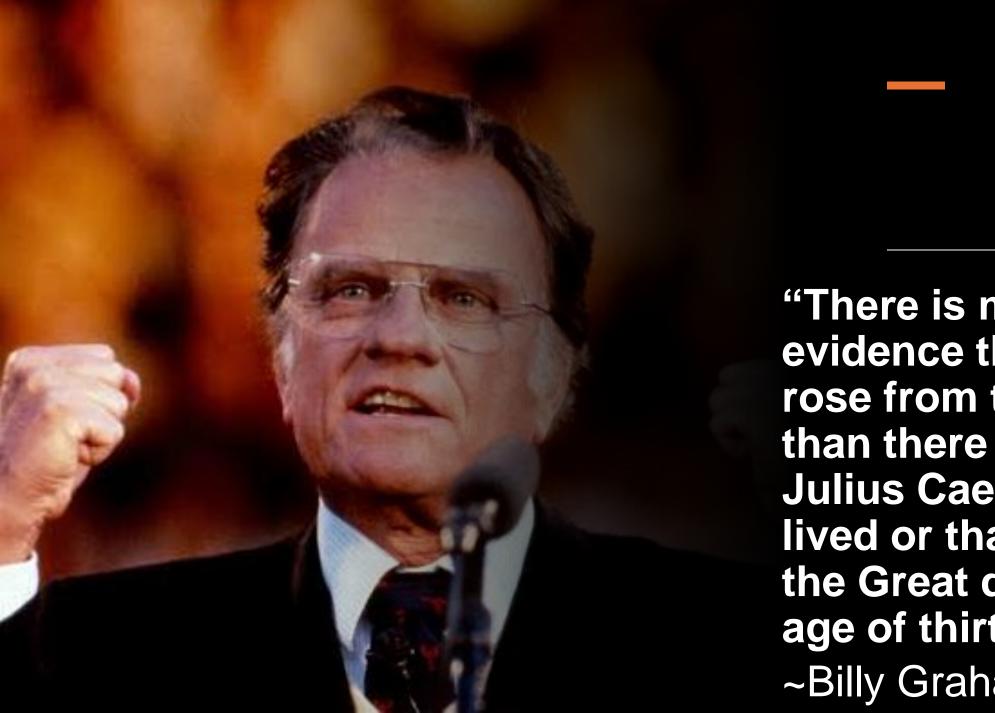
Simeon ben-Kosiba

"The Christian church rests on the resurrection of its Founder. Without this fact the church could never have been born, or if born, it would soon have died a natural death."

~Philip Schaff

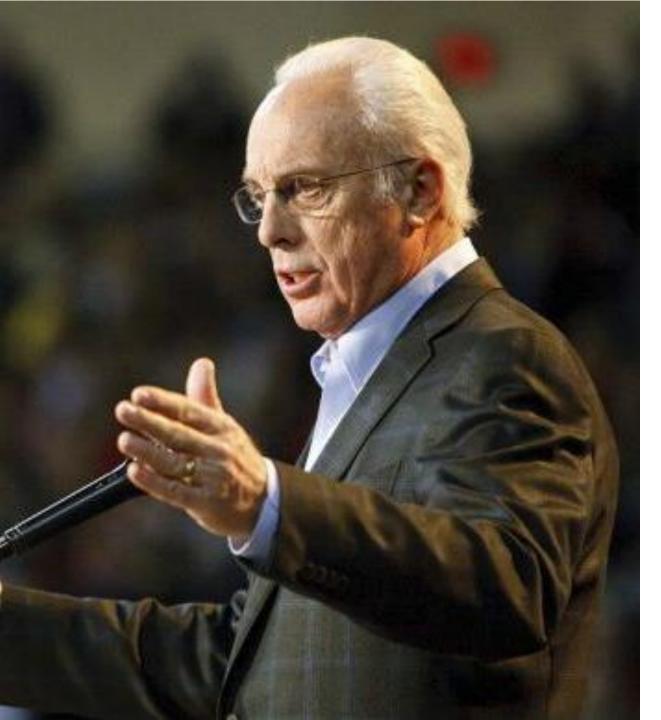
"Christianity is bizarre apart from the assumption that virtually all early Christians ... did indeed believe that Jesus of Nazareth had been raised bodily from the dead."

~N.T. Wright



"There is more evidence that Jesus rose from the dead than there is that **Julius Caesar ever** lived or that Alexander the Great died at the age of thirty-three."

~Billy Graham



The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single greatest event in the history of the world. It is so foundational to Christianity that no one who denies it can be a true Christian...A person who believes in a Christ who was not raised believes in a powerless Christ, a dead Christ. If Christ did not rise from the dead, then no redemption was accomplished at the cross and "your faith is worthless," Paul goes on to say; "you are still in your sins" (v. 17)."

~John MacArthur



The Hallucination Theory asserts that the many people who saw Jesus in His resurrected body just imagined doing so.

"Hallucinations are like dreams. They are private occurrences You could not share an hallucination you were having with someone any more than you could wake up your spouse in the middle of the night and ask him or her to join you in a dream you were having." ~Dr. Michael Licona



- (a) Jesus appearance was not exclusive to one person on one occasion
- (b) The empty tomb also causes a problem for this theory.

"Hallucinations usually happen only once, except to the insane. This one returned many times, to ordinary people. Five hundred separate Elvis sightings may be dismissed, but if five hundred simple fishermen in Maine saw, touched and talked with him at once, in the same town, that would be a different matter." ~Peter Kreeft

2. Swoon Theory



The Swoon Theory is the suggestion that Jesus did not die on the cross, but merely passed out or "swooned." At some point afterwards, Jesus then became conscious in the tomb and found a way to escape.

- a. The enemies and friends of Jesus both believed he was dead.
- b. His side was pierced and "blood and water" flowed (John 19:34)

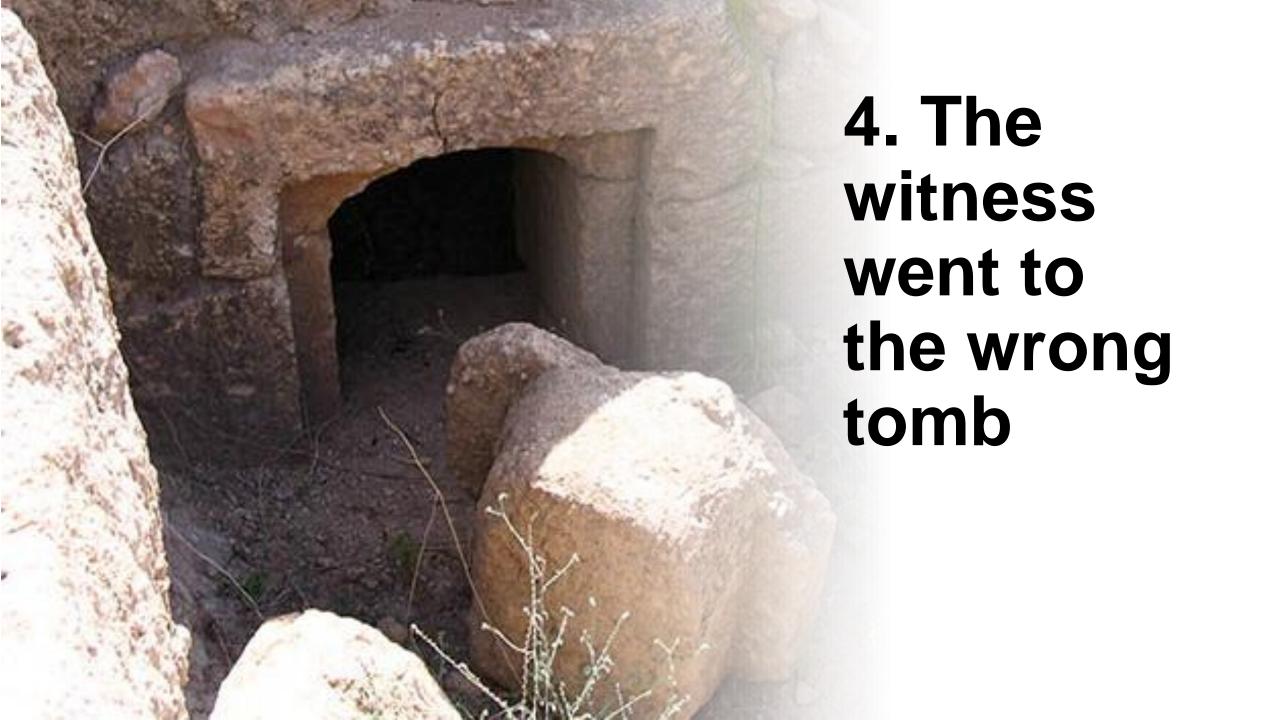
"Clearly, the weight of the historical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right rib, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured his death. Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge" (Journal of the American Medical Association, March 21, 1986, 1463).

- c. Jesus was embalmed in about 75 pounds of spices and wrapped in bandages
- d. Even if Jesus managed to remain alive when he was placed into the tomb, how would it be possible that a badly injured and bleeding man would be alive 36 hours later? He would have bleed to death in the cold, dark, damp, tomb.
- e. The Romans guards on the tomb were given the job to guard the tomb.
- f. Even if Jesus did survive in the cold, damp, dark tomb, how could he unwrap himself, move a large rock that likely weighed 2,000 pounds that sealed the entrance of the tomb and sneak by the Elite guards.

- G. Walked on pierced feet to get to the disciples.
- H. Several non-Christians writers affirmed that Jesus had dies by crucifixion.



- a. Why would these men even attempt such a feat?
- b. if the disciples were guilty of stealing the body of Jesus, why did they suddenly become fearless gospel preachers?
- c. How would a group of fishermen, a tax collector, and other members of the general public overpower or sneak past highly trained soldiers?



- a. If the disciples went to the wrong tomb, why would the Jewish and Roman authorities go to the correct tomb
- b. Consider this, even if the disciples went to the wrong tomb, which they didn't, the theory does not explain the appearance of the risen Jesus 12 different times.



5. A Substitute Took Jesus' place on the Cross

This is a claim of many Muslims who believe that Jesus was not crucified but someone like Judas took his place on the cross.

Sura 4:157-158, "but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of 'lesa (Jesus) was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not [i.e. 'lesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)]: But Allah raised him ['lesa (Jesus)] up (with his body and soul) unto Himself (and he is in the heavens). And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise."

- (a) This theory contradicts all the eye-witness testimony, and the testimony of non-Christian sources.
- (b) Are we to believe that all those who witnessed some aspect of Jesus' death the disciples, the Roman guards, Pilate, the Jews, Jesus' family and friends, were all mistaken about who was killed?
- (c) If Jesus wasn't killed, then why was then tomb empty of the man who really was killed?



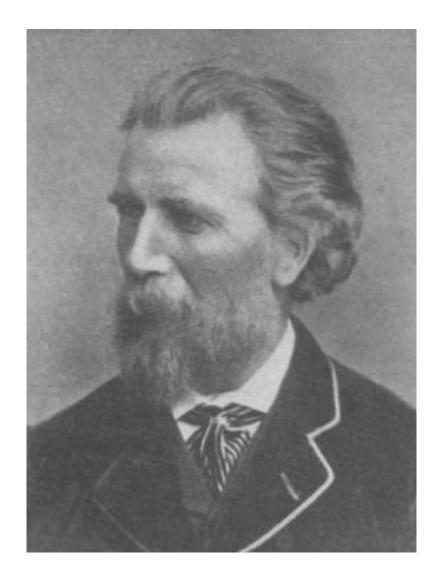
Horas: Egyptian god of the sun



- Horas was born on December 25
- Was born of a virgin
- Baptized by a man by the name of "Anup the Baptizer" who was later beheaded
- Was crucified and resurrected three days later.
- Therefore, Jesus is nothing more than plagiarized nonsense.

However, none of this is true.

- There is no reference in Egyptian Mythology to Horas being crucified or resurrected three days later.
- There is no document anywhere for the figure name "Anup the Baptizer"
- Horus mother was not a virgin woman but the goddess Isis
- and there is no specific date anywhere tying to the birth of Horus.



Gerald Massy

Mithras:
Roman cultic god of the sun



- It is believed that Mithras was born of a virgin
- Had 12 disciples
- Gave his disciples a meal consisting of his body and his blood.



- Mithras was born from a feet of a virgin
- He had two companions not 12 disciples
- and the Mithraic meal was one that he shared with the Sun god where they feasted not on his own flesh but on the flesh of a bull.



Osiris

The god of the afterlife, fertility, agriculture, and the dead

- The background to this myth is that Osiris is cut into 14
 pieces which is scattered around Egypt, then the goddess
 Isis resembles him and brings him back to life.
- Osiris does not come back to actual physical life; rather, he becomes a member of a shadowy underworld.

6 Facts why Christian did not borrow from Pagan Mythology

This is not true for 6 reasons:

- (1) Unlike pagan myth, the NT is filled with eyewitness evidence and real historical figures, and it is verified by several sources.
- (2) The pagan-myth theory cannot explain the empty tomb, the martyr of eye-witnesses, or the testimony of the non-Christian writings.
- (3) Ancient non-Christian sources knew the NT writers were not offering mythical accounts, they merely disputed the plausibility of those claims.

- (4) No Greek or Roman myth spoke of the literal incarnation of a monotheistic god in human form, by the way of a literal virgin birth, followed by his death and physical resurrection.
- The Greeks were polytheist/ New Testament Christians were monotheist.
- The Greeks believed in reincarnation into a different mortal body/ NT Christians believed in the resurrection into the same physical body made immortal.
- (5) The first real parallel of a rising and dying and rising god does not appear until 150 a.d, more than 100 years after the origin of

- Therefore, if there is any influence from to one to the other, it was the influence of the historical events of the NT on mythology, not visa versa.
- (5) Even if there are myth about dying and rising gods prior Christianity, it is a fallacy, to believe that the NT writers copied from them.