

The case for Jesus Christ begins with the overwhelming historical consensus that He existed as a real figure in first century Judea. This fact is affirmed not only by Christian scholars but by secular and even skeptical historians. Atheist historian Gerd Lüdemann stated, "It may be taken as historically certain that Peter and the disciples had experiences after Jesus's death in which Jesus appeared to them as the risen Christ" (Lüdemann, 1994). Similarly, Bart D. Ehrman, another atheist New Testament scholar, affirms, "One of the most certain facts of history is that Jesus was crucified on orders of the Roman prefect of Judea, Pontius Pilate" (Ehrman, 2012). This acknowledgment from critical scholars alone shatters the idea that belief in Jesus is merely mythological or rooted in blind faith.

Beyond academic consensus, Jesus is uniquely referenced across multiple world religions, including Islam, Hinduism, and even certain sects of Buddhism. The Qur'an identifies Him as a prophet and miracle worker born of a virgin. This global reverence signals that Christ's life and legacy are not confined to one tradition, but that His existence, teachings, and works have echoed across theological boundaries. He remains the singular figure to bridge such divides, serving as a common denominator in humanity's spiritual inquiry.

However, despite this universal reference, only Christianity affirms the full identity Jesus claimed for Himself. In the Gospel of John, He declares, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58, ESV). This was not a poetic metaphor, it was a direct invocation of the divine name revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:14. The Jews of His day clearly understood the gravity of His statement, as evidenced by their immediate attempt to stone Him for blasphemy. Jesus did not merely claim to be a teacher, prophet, or moral guide. He claimed to be God.

All of Christianity hinges upon whether or not that claim is true. The core of the Christian message is not simply Christ's teachings or example, but the Resurrection. If Jesus rose from the dead, His divine identity is validated. If He did not, then Christianity collapses under its own weight. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:14, "If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14, ESV).

The evidence for the Resurrection is substantial. First, there is the empty tomb, admitted even by Jesus's opponents. Second, there are post Resurrection appearances, attested by over 500 eyewitnesses according to 1 Corinthians 15:6 (1 Corinthians 15:6, ESV). Third, there is the radical transformation of the apostles. Cowards became martyrs. What other historical case exists where twelve men in twelve separate regions were willing to suffer violent deaths for a lie, along with their successors such as Pope Clement, Polycarp, and Ignatius? Mass hallucination, conspiracy, or myth building cannot explain this level of unified conviction under persecution.

Even Jesus's enemies could not deny that He performed signs and wonders. The Jewish Talmud refers to Him as a sorcerer, which, although derogatory, affirms that supernatural acts were attributed to Him. Miracles, therefore, were not Christian fabrications. They were a matter of public controversy, not private imagination.

All this culminates in a single, inescapable question: Who is Jesus? Jesus Christ, are You who You say that You are? The options are limited. As C.S. Lewis famously reasoned, a man who claimed to be God and forgave sins is either a lunatic, a liar, or exactly who He claimed to be: Lord of the Universe (Lewis, 1952). There is no in between.

The case for Christ does not rely on blind belief, but on coherent historical reasoning, corroborated testimony, fulfilled prophecy, and the unparalleled influence of a single life. His claims, death, and resurrection demand not dismissal, but response. That response, if intellectually honest, cannot ignore the weight of evidence that testifies to the divinity of Jesus Christ. As Christ's existence is historically factual, the question must be answered. Who is Jesus? It is one or the other and no in between. Was Jesus Christ just a man or is he the Lord, savior, and king of the universe?

References

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