



EVOLUTION ILLUSION

JESUS CHRIST

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WELCOME TO THE JESUS EXHIBIT!

Here we will examine the person of Jesus

First, you will learn why we can be sure that Jesus really existed as a real historical character. We will then make an honest comparison between Jesus and leaders of other religions.

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A. JESUS CHRIST - FACT OR FICTION?

Here's a quick test. Try and answer these 3 True or False questions correctly.

T/F: Robin Hood really existed.

T/F: King Arthur really existed.

T/F: Santa Claus really existed.

ANSWERS

- Robin Hood A legendary rebel who robbed the wealthy for the benefit of the poor. Attempts to prove him a real historical figure have failed.
- King Arthur There is no doubt that Arthur was a real historical person. There is however doubt as to whether he was a king.
- Santa Claus Saint Nicholas was probably a bishop of Myra in the 4th century. He was said to have had a generous nature. His relics are to be found in Bari.

Now answer this question.

T/F: Jesus Christ really existed.

How can you be sure? Were you there to see Jesus?

The historian Bruno Baur considered Jesus to be nothing more than the mental creation of a few 2nd century Christians

On the other hand, TIME magazine declared Jesus as not only historical, but as the single most powerful person in all history! [TIME, Dec 6, 1999]

What is the truth?

Adolf Harnack said that Jesus was beyond the powers of man to invent and anyone who regarded Him as "myth" was bereft of the capacity to distinguish between fiction and documented evidence.

In providing evidence for Jesus' existence we will be examining documented evidence. But first, let us illustrate the power and importance of documented evidence.

Moon Landing

On July 20th 1969, history was made. The USA was the first nation ever to put man on the moon. Imagine now it is 200 years into the future. A friend of yours doubts America's achievement, and asks you to prove it.

You could begin by pointing out that there are boot prints next to the American flag on the moon's surface. Your friend responds by pointing out that there are dozens of nations' flags on the moon surrounded by boot prints. (Remember, this is 200 years in the future)

You have no recourse but to fall back on the documented evidence, which is actually, by far, the strongest evidence.

There are tens of thousands of bits of information; printed, audio and visual. These all fall under documented evidence.

What makes this evidence even more convincing is the testimony of anti-American nations of that time, such as the Soviet Union. They, too, were watching and their history books also reflect the fact: The USA was the first nation ever to put man on the moon.

Documented evidence should therefore never be underestimated.

Let us apply documentary evidence in the establishment of Jesus as a real historical character. Note: For greater impact, we have chosen to use evidence from writers mostly opposed to Jesus.

Josephus

The first documentary evidence is that of Jewish Historian, Josephus. Even though not a Christian, what he says of Jesus is remarkable.

- He calls Jesus a wise man and a doer of wonderful works and then calls Him Christ. He tells of His condemnation to the cross by Pilate and writes of His resurrection.
- Josephus clearly saw Jesus as a real historical person.
- Celsus

Celsus was a pagan philosopher who not only saw Jesus as real - but as an enemy.

- He acknowledges that Jesus claimed to be God; His death at the hands of the Jews and then argues against His resurrection.
- Regardless of Celsus' denial of Jesus as God, he without a doubt believed Jesus existed.

Porphyry

- Porphyry wrote 15 books against Christianity. In his zeal to oppose Christ, he ends up affirming His existence for us today.

Lucian

- Lucian, too, wrote against Jesus. He refers to Him as a "well-known sophist" - that is, someone who misleads. Lucian's attack however further establishes Jesus' historical existence.

There is much other evidence for Jesus' existence - both friendly and unfriendly; but the greatest evidence is the New Testament of the Bible.

The New Testament

The NT is often overlooked as biased evidence - but this claim is not fair.

F.F. Bruce wrote:

"The evidence for our New Testament is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning. And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt."

The fact is that there is more documentary evidence for the existence of Jesus than there is for Moses, Mohammed, Plato, Confucius, Aristotle, Hippocrates or even Julius Caesar.

No one however questions their existence.

So to answer the question: Jesus Christ, fact or fiction? Without a doubt, He is fact!



B. JESUS CHRIST: WHO WAS HE - REALLY?

People often class Jesus as a "great moral teacher" on par with people such as Moses, Buddha, Confucius and Mohammed. This however is a great mistake. Jesus never claimed to be merely a "great moral teacher".

In the book of John while teaching one day, Jesus speaks of His preexistence and then calls Himself "I AM" - a name reserved exclusively for God Himself!

No other great moral teacher has ever made such a claim. What if Jesus were lying? He then could not possibly be a great moral teacher, could He?

On the other hand, what if He is telling the truth? What if Jesus truly is God? If Jesus is God, we must be careful to never again class Him among ordinary human beings such as Moses, Buddha, Confucius or Mohammed!

In discussing Jesus' true identity C.S. Lewis wrote:

"A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg - or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make the choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit on Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. he did not intend to."

Let us examine Lewis' statement:

When it comes to Jesus there are only 3 options - none of which is the "a great moral teacher" route.

One option is that He LIED

- If this were true then what a deception! 20 centuries of Christianity with literally billions of followers all deceived! If this were true then Jesus clearly could never be a "good moral teacher."
- Furthermore, world religions such as Hinduism and Islam accept Jesus as a prophet from God! Islam teaches that a prophet cannot lie. If Jesus lied about who He was, then it is not only the Christians who have been deceived, but billions of other religions' adherents too!
- Jesus' life and teaching however show that He was no liar. The world, too, recognizes this fact by calling Him a "good moral teacher."

Another option is that Jesus was INSANE

- No one insane can be mistaken for a "great moral teacher." Jesus has an entire dating system centered around His time of birth. TIME magazine honored Jesus with the title of "single most powerful person... in all human history."
- Jesus was not insane.

He spoke TRUTH

- This is actually the only possible option. There is no other alternative.

- Christ Jesus was and is God, and as God, He cannot be placed on the same lowly level of mere "human moral teachers." As God, we owe Him our full attention above all other human religious leaders.

So who was Jesus - really? All logic and reason dictate that He was and is God Himself, the eternal "I AM."

What will you do with Jesus?

You can either reject Him as liar and insane or you can, as Thomas, fall on your knees and acknowledge Him as "My Lord and my God!"

You can however not simply dismiss Him as just another great moral teacher.



C. JESUS CHRIST: THE WAY

Jesus said.

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me (John 14:6)
Well, what did Jesus mean by this? You see, Jesus is the only Way to heaven because He is the only person who never sinned (Hebrews 4:15.)

- God is perfect. Nothing impure can exist in His Presence (1 John 1:5)
- We, however have all sinned, and so, fall short of His glory (Romans 3:23)
- Before the world was created, Jesus offered Himself as punishment in His place (Hebrews 10:7.)
- So the Father sent Jesus to the cross, and there, He bore all our sins. By His wounds, we were healed. (Isaiah 53:5)
- Jesus died for you and me (Matthew 27:50)
- He was buried (Matthew 27:59,60)
- But then, praise God, He arose on the third day, victor over decay - never to die again! (Matthew 28:5,6)
- Jesus opened the Way for us to go heaven (Hebrews 10:19-22)
- That Way is available for all who believe in Him (John 3:16)
- To enter His Way Jesus said we must surrender to Him and die to ourselves – just as Jesus surrendered to the Father and died on the cross (Romans 6:3)
- We must be buried in the waters of baptism – just as Jesus was buried in the earth (Romans 6:4)
- And just as Jesus arose from the dead, so we can arise from the waters to begin living a new life! (Romans 6:4)
- Jesus became our Way to heaven through His death, burial and resurrection. (1 Corinthians 15:1-5)
- Let us all follow Him! You can follow Him!



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