

SCRIPTURE TRACK

Week 9 Notes:

What does the evidence say about Jesus?

Who did Jesus claim to be?

Are the Gospel writers reliable?

Three types of historical sources

1. Favorable – Believers (including the four Gospel writers)
2. Neutral – Historians trying to provide accurate account of events
3. Unfavorable – People opposed to the teachings of Jesus

Four reasons people lie:

- 1) Financial Greed
- 2) Sexual or Relational Lust
- 3) Pursuit of Power
- 4) Self-Preservation

Extra-Biblical history:

11 of the 12 apostles were killed for their beliefs

John was boiled alive and survived miraculously

No apostle was wealthy or physically advantaged in any way.

They were threatened by the authorities of the day (Acts 4:17-22) and continued to preach (Acts 4:31)

What can we conclude about the Gospel writers?

The apostles believed what they were teaching was true

- Faithfulness to death, no earthly advantages, high moral character – noted by external sources

None of the behaviors of conspiracy fit the apostles

The writing in the Gospels isn't flattering to Apostles

Admired by opponents for sincerity and zeal

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Neutral and Unfavorable Sources:

Tacitus - Roman official who recorded history of the Roman Empire, starting in 14 AD (born in 56).

Jesus was a dominating historical figure during this time

Josephus – Jewish Historian

Josephus verified the following conclusions (historically undisputed):

- Jesus was a wise and virtuous man with a significant following of Jewish and non-Jewish disciples.
- He was crucified under Pilate.
- There were reports that he appeared to many eyewitnesses following his resurrection.
- Some were claiming that he was the Messiah that the Jewish prophets had predicted.

Conclusion:

The existence of Jesus is a historical fact, undisputed by skeptics

Jesus claimed to be the Son of God as recorded by multiple people

The crowds with Jesus believed he performed miracles

He made predictions that skeptics agreed “appeared” to come true

This is all evidence we’ll use to determine if Jesus is who he claimed to be.