

“Evidence that Jesus Didn’t Become the Christ Till Centuries Later?”

I was recently at the A&E (aande.com) website when I came across a set of videos that they offer. One of them titled “Unknown Jesus” caught my eye. I read the short description and they claim to have found evidence that Christ wasn’t assigned the title of Christ until many centuries later by the Greeks and that he may not have existed until a couple of centuries after his proclaimed death. This is supposed archaeological evidence also. Can someone please write me back with your comments please? Thank you.

Thanks for your question. Although I have not seen the tapes, I am familiar with similar arguments. Unfortunately, these men are presenting poor and biased research. The claims they make will not be taken by any serious historian.

Jesus definitely existed in the first century. We have several Jewish and Roman sources clearly telling us so. Josephus, a Jewish historian, recorded the events of Israel for the Roman Empire from 37-100 AD. Not a follower of Christ, he wrote, “Now there appeared about this time Jesus, a wise man if it be lawful to call him a man. He was a doer of wonderful works ... He was the Christ and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had him condemned to the cross...” Tacitus, a Roman historian who wrote in 115 A.D., recorded Nero’s persecution of the Christians. He wrote, “Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of the procurators, Pontius Pilatus...”

Here these historians confirm the existence of Jesus and even give him the title “Christ” in the first century. There are

several other historical accounts outside the New Testament that verify the existence of Jesus. Pliny the Younger, Thallus, Suetonius, etc... We also have the gospels which were circulated in the first century. We have a fragment of the book of John dating as early as 125 A.D. This fragment proves how early the books were written and circulated by the first century. Finished copies of the gospels were around as early as 70 A.D. The gospels base their entire account on a historical person: Jesus and his acts, they clearly claim, happened in the context of history. If their claim was false and Jesus never existed, the gospels would have been refuted by the enemies of Christianity and they would never have lasted because their claims would be proven false. They were written in the generation of the eye witnesses who could have easily disproven their accounts. It is amazing no one doubts or questions the historical existence of Jesus until many centuries later. It is not that Jesus did not exist till centuries later, it is the critics who make this assertion whose arguments do not appear till centuries later. If Jesus never existed, why was this argument not around in the first or second century?

Whatever new archaeology has been found, I do not believe can counter the overwhelming evidence for Jesus being a first century person.

Thanks for writing. I hope this helps.

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