

CHRIST OUTSIDE OF SCRIPTURE (Brian Felushko)

- A. What the critics have said.
1. There is little evidence outside of the NT that Jesus ever existed, let alone that he claimed to be or proved to be the Son of God.
 2. Those who do mention Jesus are highly questionable and of insufficient number to prove to anyone that someone like the Jesus of the NT existed.
 3. Some have even stated that Jesus was a mythological figure, perhaps loosely based on some itinerant Jewish rabbi, but entirely misrepresented and presented as deity by the NT writers.
 4. Others believe he was not unlike the legend or myth of someone like Hercules that many ancients regarded as a 'real person'
- B. The facts are quite the opposite.
1. "There are 10 known non-Christian writers who mention Jesus within 150 years of his life." (Geisler, page 222)
 - a. By contrast there are nine non-Christian sources who mention Tiberius Caesar, the Roman emperor at the time of Jesus.
 - b. Jesus wins 10 to 9. Now if you include the NT documents, Jesus beats out Tiberius 43 to 10!
 2. Some of these sources are actually anti-Christian – Celsus, Tacitus and the Jewish Talmud.
 3. When you piece together all ten non-Christian references to Jesus, here's what we can know about him, apart from the NT documents:
 - a. He lived during the time of Tiberius Caesar
 - b. He lived a virtuous life
 - c. He was a wonder-worker
 - d. He had a brother named James
 - e. He was acclaimed to be the Messiah
 - f. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate
 - g. He was crucified on the eve of the Passover
 - h. Darkness and an earthquake occurred when he died
 - i. His disciples believed that he rose from the dead
 - j. His disciples were willing to die for their belief
 - k. Christianity spread rapidly as far as Rome
 - l. His disciples denied the Roman gods and worshiped Jesus as God
 4. While scarce, these are surprisingly congruent with the NT accounts, thus affirming it, and blow away the theory postulated by critics that Jesus never existed.