

Just Thinking Apologetics #15

Many sources outside the New Testament testify to the fact of the historical Jesus and Christianity. Because of space I will only mention three. In 52 AD, the historian Thallus records this event concerning the death of Jesus “On the whole world there pressed a most fearful darkness; and the rocks were rent by an earthquake (see Matt. 27: 45-51, Luke 23:44). The Roman, Pliny the Younger, who wrote around 112 AD makes statements about Christians and Jesus by saying “They (the Christians) were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day, sang hymns to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves...not to do any wicked deed.”

The final source is perhaps the best revolving around the events of Jesus and the start of the Christian faith. This source is from the Jewish historian Josephus (90-95 AD). Dr. Schlomo Pines of Hebrew University gave this interpretation of Josephus “At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. His conduct was good and he was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. But those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he appeared to them three days after his crucifixion, and he was alive; accordingly he was perhaps the Messiah, concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders.”

Many other sources exist outside of the New Testament describing Jesus and early Christian beliefs. Some sources are even antagonistic against Christians, such as Lucian or come from a Jewish perspective. The point is there exist many historical accounts outside the New Testament that support the historicity of the New Testament writers.

