

A man in a striped t-shirt is shown from the chest up, with his hand resting on his chin in a thoughtful pose. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Did Jesus Really Exist?

Examining the  
Evidence for Jesus

**“The Gospel stories are no more historic than the Genesis creation accounts are scientific. It is rational to conclude that the New Testament Jesus is a myth.”**

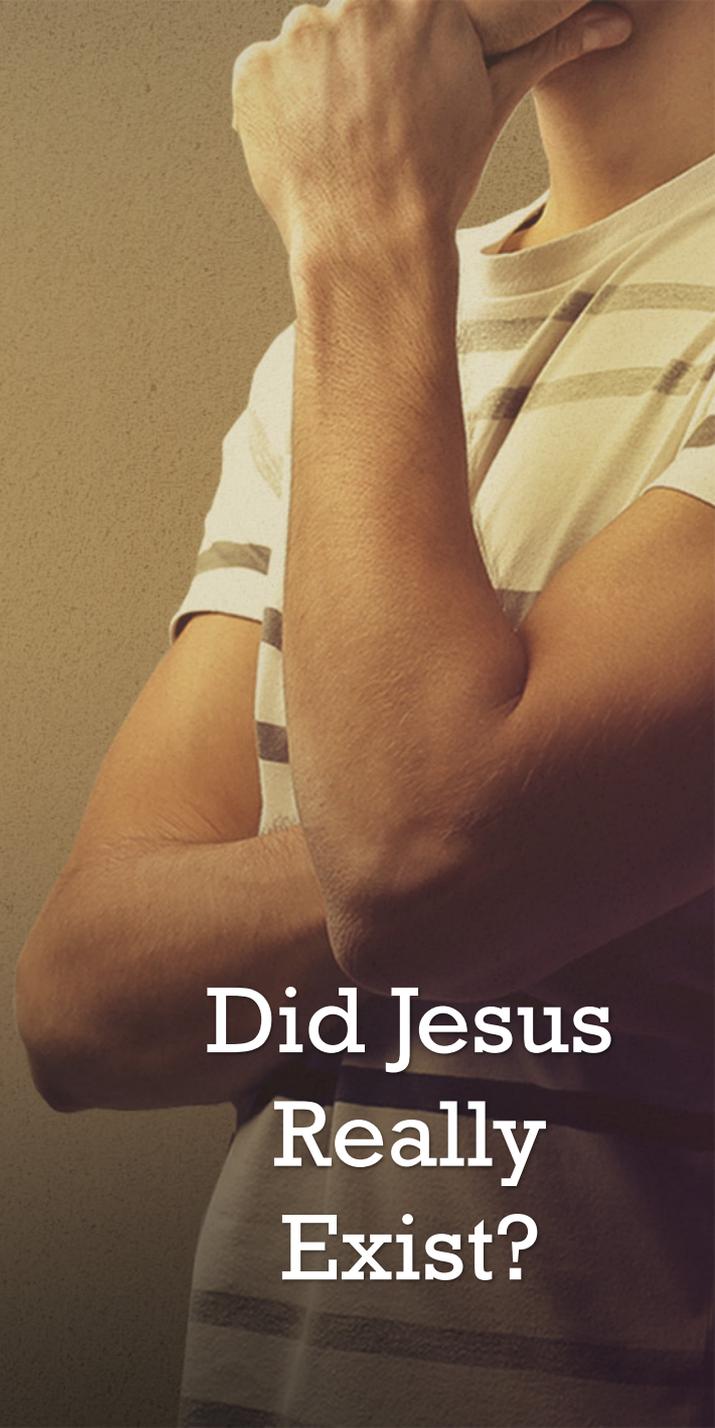
**Dan Barker “Losing Faith in Faith”**

“Just whether or not Jesus was an actual historical figure is the subject of much scholarly debate. He may have existed and then again he may not have.”

Judith Hayes “In God We Trust:  
But Which One?”

# I. The N.T. Writers

1. 2 Peter 1:16-18
2. John 1:1-4, 14
3. 1 John 1:1-4
4. 1 Cor. 15:3-8

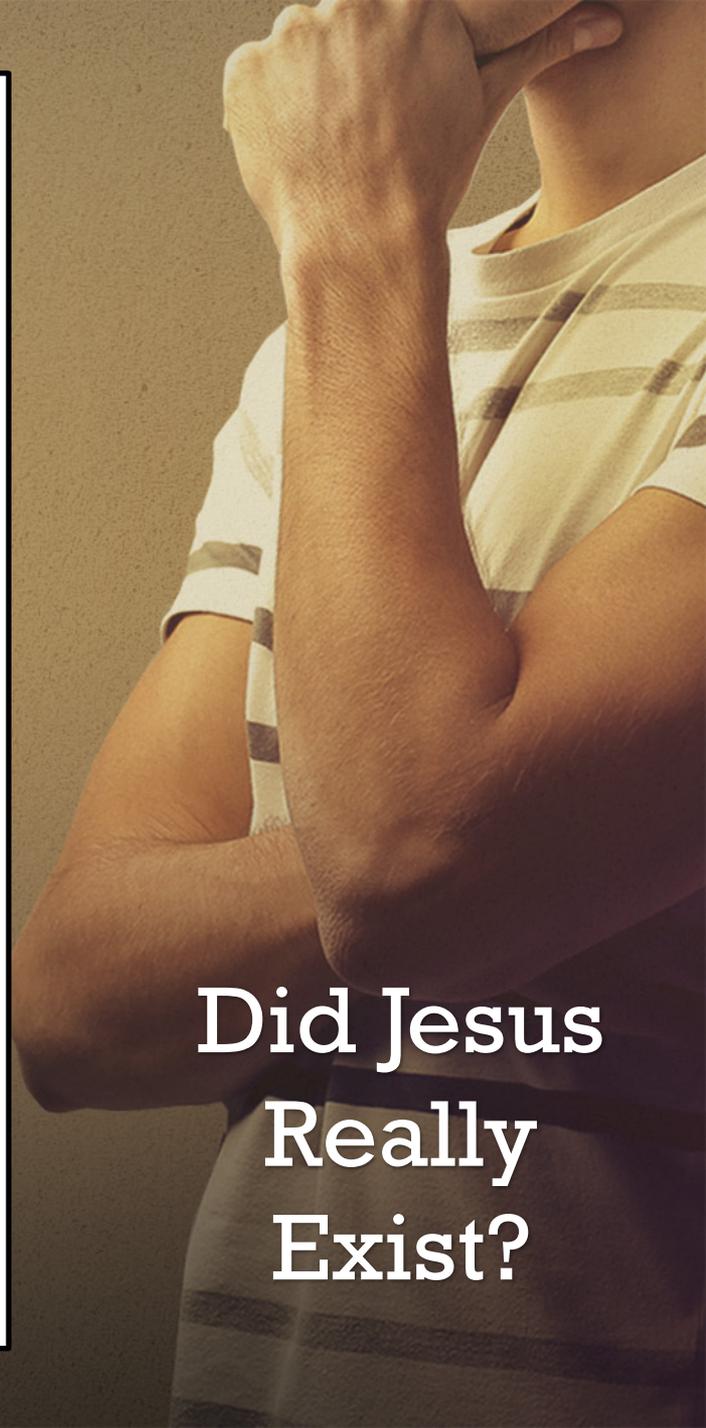


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# Can We Trust the N.T. Writers?

- Manuscript Evidence

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<b>Ancient Literature</b>	<b># of MSS</b>	<b>Earliest MSS to Autograph</b>
<i>Livy's History of Rome</i>	150	400 years
<i>Caesar's Gallic Wars</i>	251	950 years
<i>Tacitus' Annals</i>	51	750-950 years
<i>Homer's Illiad</i>	1800	400 years
<b>Greek New Testament</b>		

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<b>Greek New Testament</b>	<b>5838</b>	<b>50 years</b>

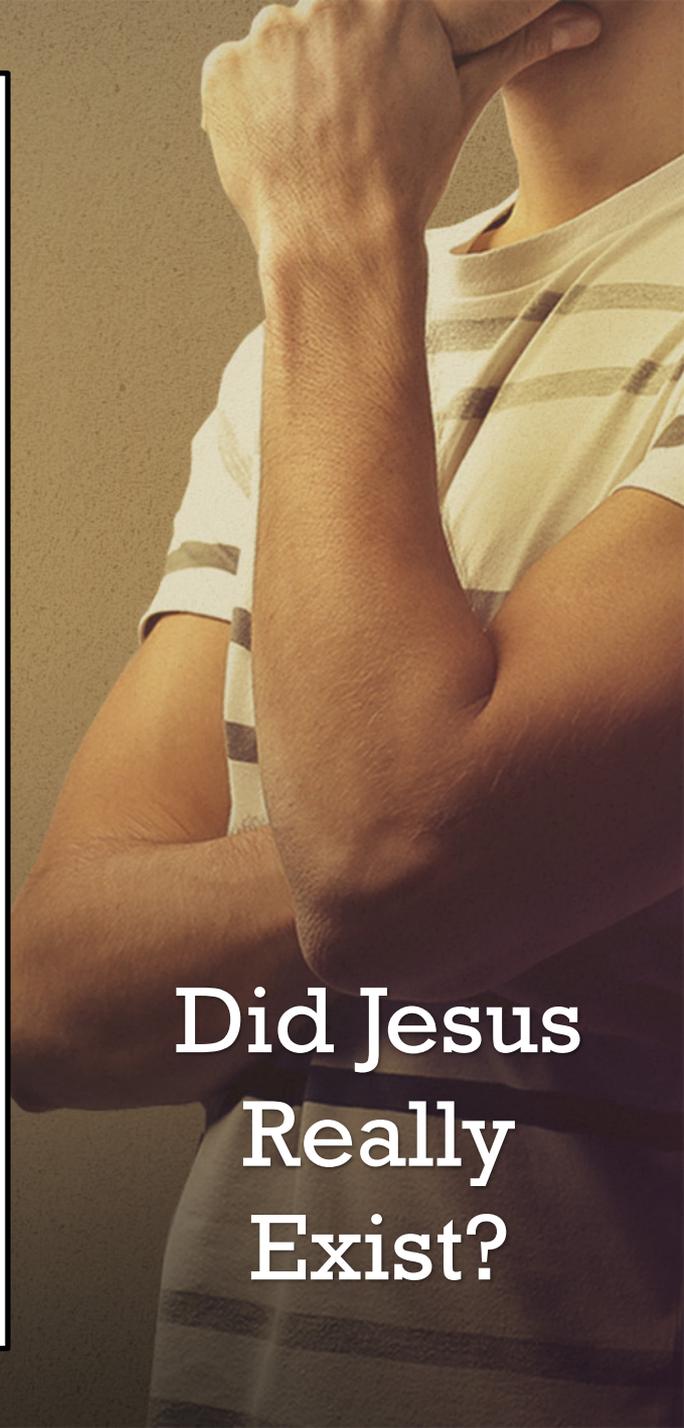
“The Evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning. And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond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

F.F. Bruce: Biblical Scholar

# Can We Trust the N.T. Writers?

- Manuscript Evidence
- Goal: to Record History (Luke 1:1-4)
- Not Biased
- Detail Oriented

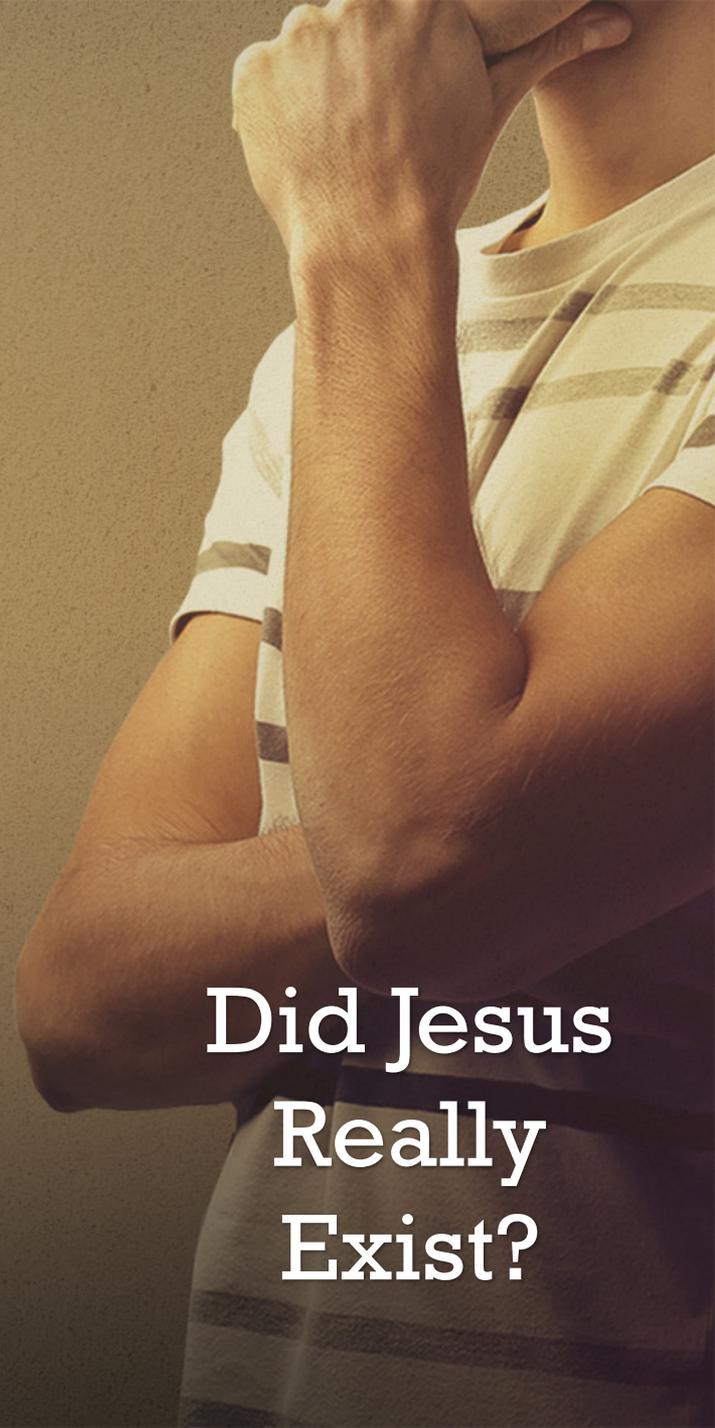
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## II. Corroborating Evidence

### 1. Josephus

Did Jesus  
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A photograph of a person's torso and arms, wearing a white t-shirt with horizontal stripes. The person's right hand is resting on their chin, suggesting a state of deep thought or contemplation. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

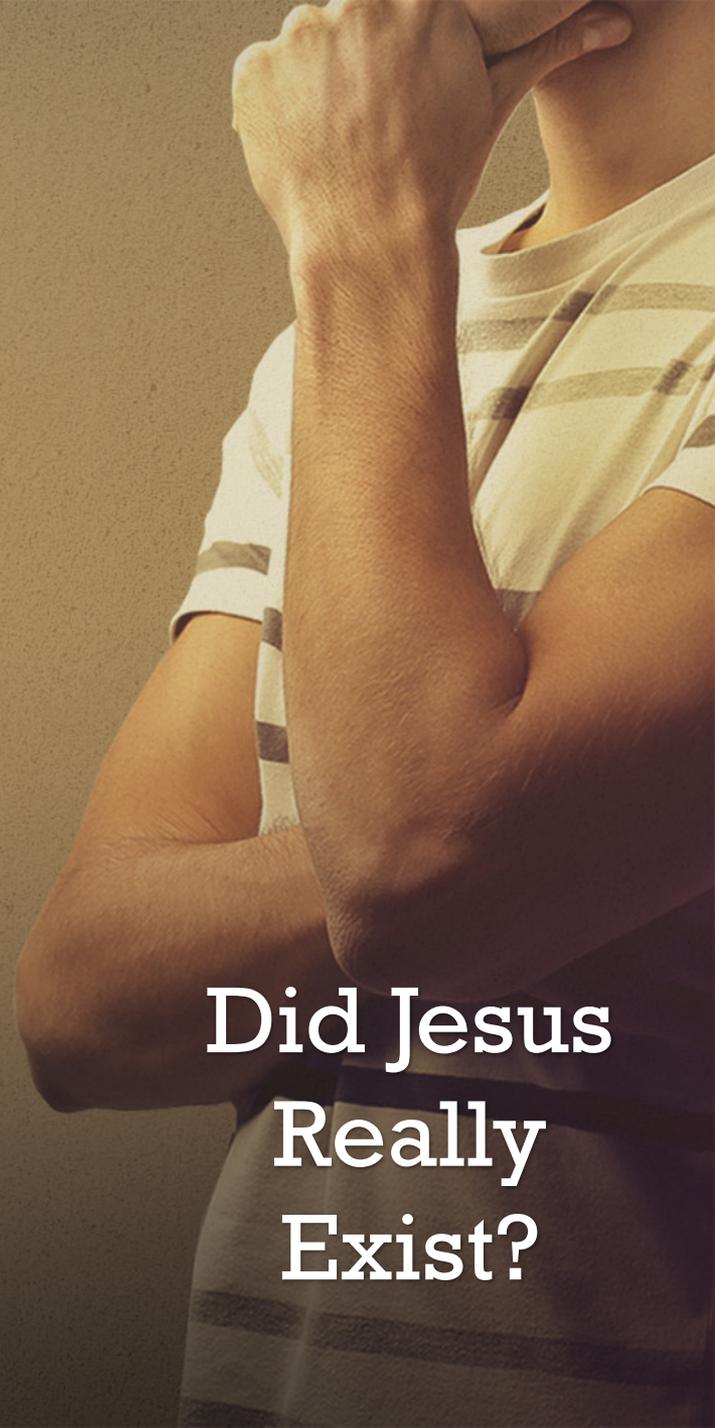
“A bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed; when therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the Sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others...he delivered them to be stoned.” *Antiquities 20.200*

“At this time there appeared Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one should call him a man. For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Christ. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing among us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love Him did not give up their affection for Him. On the third day he appeared to them restored to life, for the prophets of God had prophesied these and countless other marvelous things about Him. And the tribe of Christians, so called after Him, has still to this day not disappeared.” *Antiquities 18.63*

## II. Corroborating Evidence

1. Josephus
2. Tacitus

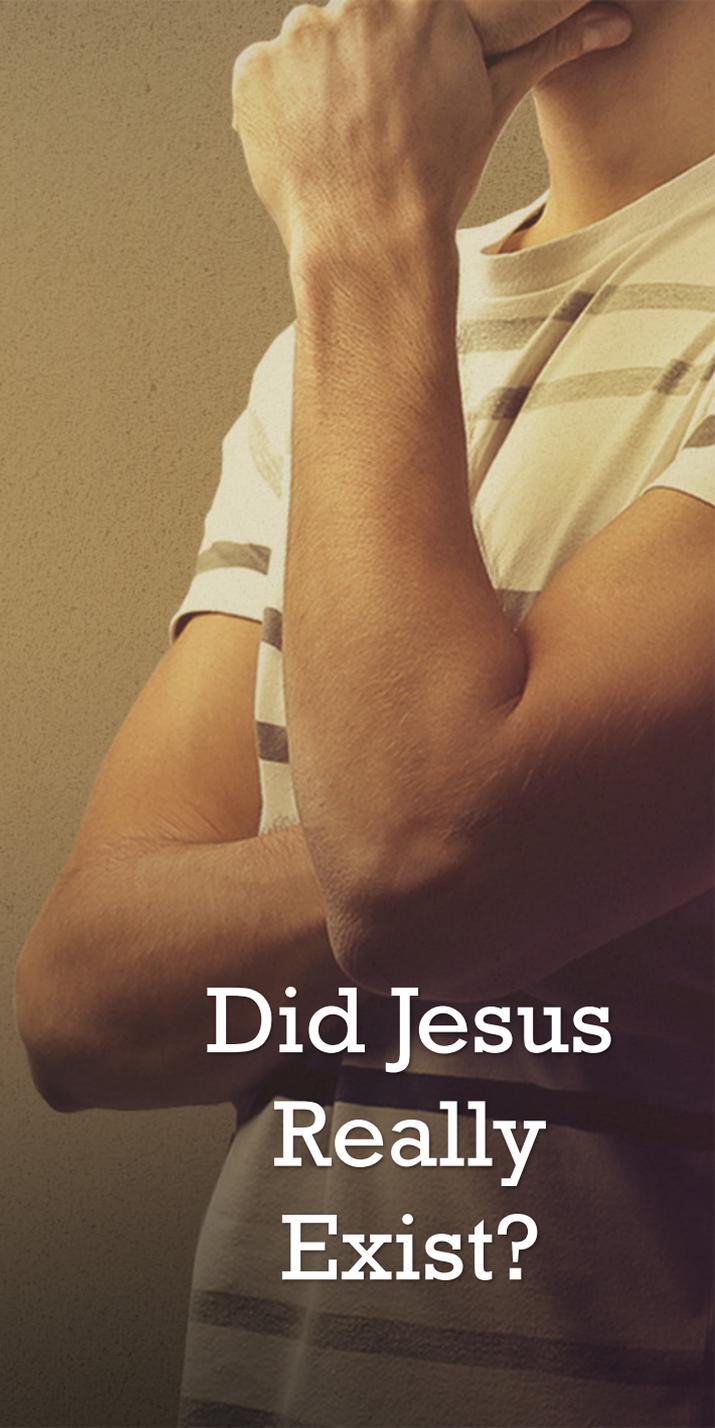
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“Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite torture on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil but even in Rome...Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty: then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind.” *Annals 18.44*

## II. Corroborating Evidence

1. Josephus
2. Tacitus
3. Pliny the Younger



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“I have asked them if they are Christians, and if they admit it, I repeat the question a second and third time, with a warning of the punishment awaiting them. If they persist, I order them to be led away for execution; for, whatever the nature of their admission, I am convinced that their stubbornness and unshakable obstinacy ought not to go unpunished...They also declared that the sum total of their guilt or error amounted to no more than this: they had met regularly before dawn on a fixed day to chant verses alternately among themselves in honor of Christ as if to a god, and also to bind themselves by oath, not for any criminal purpose, but to abstain from theft, robbery, and adultery.” *Letters 10.96*

Q & A