

## EVIDENCE FOR THE LIFE OF JESUS

### 1. Witness of the Apostles

* Paul	1 Cor 15:1-8	A.D. 56
* Gospels	Four documents	A.D. 65-95

### 2. Witness of Jewish writers

* Josephus	<i>Antiquities of the Jews</i>	A.D. 90's
* Jewish Talmud	Many documents	A.D. 200-400's

### 3. Witness of Pagan Romans

* Pliny	Letter to Trajan	A.D. 112
* Tacitus	<i>Annals</i>	A.D. 115
* Suetonius	<i>Lives of the 12 Caesars</i>	A.D. 120

### 4. Witness of Critics

* Celsus	<i>True Discourse</i>	A.D. 175
* Lucian of Samosta	Books against Christianity	A.D. 200

### 5. Witness of Early Church Leaders

* Polycarp	Quoted by Ignatius	A.D. 150
* Irenaeus	Quoted Polycarp	A.D. 180

## ROMAN SOURCES

There are allusions to Christ in Roman times (see Bettenson, 1961, pp. 3-7).

- Pliny, governor of Bithynia, wrote the Roman emperor Trajan (c. A.D. 112), asking for advice about how he should deal with Christians who made it a practice to meet on an appointed day to sing a hymn "to Christ as if to God" (*Epist.* X.96).
- The Roman historian Tacitus, in his *Annals* (c. A.D. 115), referred to "Christus," who "was executed at the hands of the procurator Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius" (XV.44).
- Writing about A.D. 120, Suetonius, a popular Roman writer, declared that Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome because they "were continually making disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus" (*Vita Claudii* XXV.4). "Chrestus" is a corrupted form of *Christos* (Christ). Luke alluded to this situation in Acts 18:2.

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