

Eyewitness

Our accounts of Jesus come from eyewitnesses who recorded their own encounters with him. Luke one of the writers of the four gospels, however, did not see Jesus – very little is known about Luke. We know he was a physician, a highly learned man, a close friend of Paul's, and that he wrote two New Testament books (Luke and Acts). We know nothing of his early life, or his conversion. But we do know that he researched thoroughly the eyewitness accounts of Jesus and was convinced that they were true.

When writing to Theophilus he said: “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding [“having traced out carefully”] of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightiest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed” (Luke 1:1-4).

The eyewitness accounts and testimony about Jesus is vast and compelling. Thousands heard Him teach and saw His miracles; hundreds saw Him die and saw His resurrected body. But are these witnesses credible? What were their motives?

I say that the witnesses were credible and their motives pure. For example, consider for just a moment the outcome of their commitment to Jesus Christ. They had been called frauds. Yet, as far as we can tell from history, all the original Twelve except John gave their lives for believing that Jesus was who He said He was. And a fraud would not die for something that he knew was a lie.

Also, we must remember all the New Testament writers except Luke were monotheistic Jews, believers in one God and that He is one. Yet, these same writers' ascribed powers to Jesus that only God possesses: creating the universe, raising the dead, and forgiving sins. In Paul's defense before King Agrippa he said: “For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner” (Acts 26:26). Even Agrippa could not deny Paul's words concerning Jesus.

Scripture: King James Version: Matthew 9:2; Mark 2:5; Luke 7:28; John 11:38-44; Acts 26:1-26; I Corinthians 15:6; II Corinthians 13:14; Colossians 1:16.

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