**The Jesus Of History**

**Reading – James 2:17-26**

The Christian faith is... AN OBJECTIVE FAITH -- A HISTORICAL FAITH -- AN INTELLIGENT, RATIONAL FAITH

THERE HAVE BEEN SKEPTICS WHO BELIEVED JESUS WAS JUST A "MYTH"... This concept was popular with some scholars of the 1800s'. It is rarely found today, except among those who are ignorant of the facts or who purposely suppress the evidence (e.g., as was done in formerly communist-dominated countries)

TODAY, NO SERIOUS HISTORIAN (EVEN THOSE WHO ARE ATHEISTS) DISPUTES THE FACT THAT JESUS EXISTED... 1. H. G. WELLS -- 2. WILL DURANT -- 3. ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA

**THE EVIDENCE FOR A HISTORICAL JESUS**

1. THALLUS (a Samaritan historian, ca. 52 AD)

2. LETTER OF MARA-SERAPION (written to his son, ca. 73 AD)

3. CORNELIUS TACITUS (Roman historian, ca. 112 A.D.)

4. PLINY THE YOUNGER

5. SEUTONIUS (Court official and annalist under Hadrian, 120 A.D.)

 **"As the Jews were making constant disturbance at the instigation of Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome."** Luke makes reference to this same expulsion in ***(Acts 18:1-2) After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; {2} And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.***

AMONG "JEWISH" SOURCES -- 1. THE TALMUD -- 2. FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS "...and brought before it the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ, whose name was James."

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS EVIDENCE**

WHAT IT "DOES" DO... It provides a solid basis for believing in Jesus as a person who actually existed in history

It requires everyone to give some sort of answer to the question posed by Jesus Himself: ***But who do you say that I am?*** - ***[Matthew 16:15]***

WHAT IT "DOES NOT" DO... prove Jesus to be the Son of God

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT JESUS, WE MUST LOOK ELSEWHERE... The Bible

Why can we consider the Bible to be accurate? Fulfillment of prophecy.

 Professor Stoner had his graduate students calculate the odds that any one person would fulfill forty-eight of the prophecies concerning Jesus. -- The odds in that case were one in 10 to the 157th power!.

333 prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus!

 **so what can we CONCLUde about Jesus? *"WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?"***

When it is all said and done it still becomes a matter of faith: (***John 20:24-31) Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. {25} The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe. {26} And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" {27} Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." {28} And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" {29} Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."{30} And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; {31} but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.***

**WHY PEOPLE REJECT CHRIST**

1. IGNORANCE - ***(John 7:40-43) Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. {41} Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? {42} Has not the scripture said, That Christ comes of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? {43} So there was a division among the people because of him.***

2. PRIDE - ***(John 12:42-43) Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: {43} For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.***

3. MORAL PROBLEM - ***(John 3:19-20) And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. {20} For every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.***