

Is Jesus *Really* God?

Arbor Oaks Bible Chapel
Apologetics Series

1. New Testament Teaching on the Person of Christ

a) He is called God

Titus 2:13 “waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of *our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*”

b) He is given divine titles

Phil. 2:9-11 “...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that *Jesus is Christ is Lord* to the glory of God the Father.”

1. New Testament Teaching on the Person of Christ

c) He does works only God can do

Col. 1:16 “For by him all things were created...all things were created through him and for him.”

d) He possesses the attributes of God

John 8:58 “Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.’”

1. New Testament Teaching on the Person of Christ

e) He is worshipped as God

Rev. 5:11-12 “Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!’”

2. The “Trilemma” Argument for the Deity of Christ

- a) Jesus knew he really wasn't God, but claimed to be God → Liar
- b) Jesus mistakenly *thought* he was God, but really wasn't → Lunatic
- c) Jesus was really God as he claimed to be → Lord

2. The “Trilemma” Argument for the Deity of Christ

- But does the Bible present us with a *legend* and not the true Jesus of history?
 - a) First, it’s extremely unlikely that Jews would invent a story where God became man.
 - b) Second, the Gospels do *not* bear the marks of legend

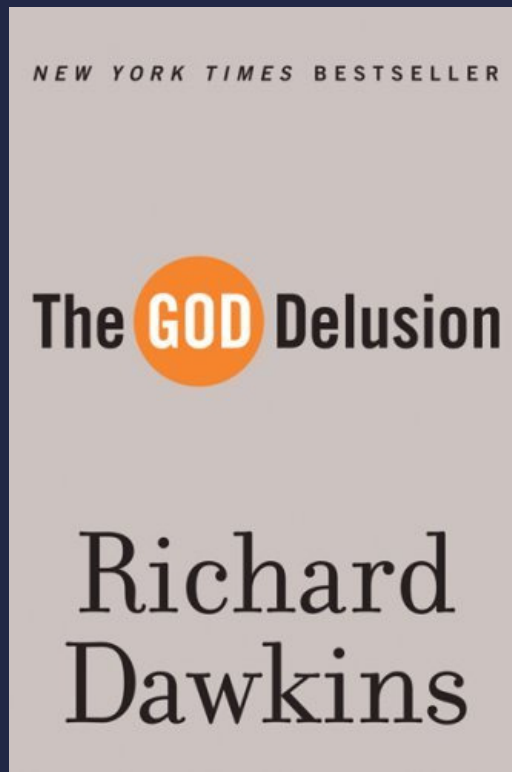
Is the story of Jesus a legend?

- C. S. Lewis on the Gospel of John:

“I have been reading poems, romances, vision-literature, legends, myths all my life. I know what they are like. I know that no one of them is like this.”



3. Is the Story of Jesus Taken from Pagan Myths?



“All the essential features of the Jesus legend, including the star in the east, the virgin birth, the veneration of the baby by kings, the miracles, the execution, the resurrection and the ascension are borrowed—every last one of them—from other religions already in existence in the Mediterranean and Near East region.”

The God Delusion, 119-120.

Is the Story of Jesus Take from Myths?

1. Virgin Births

- **Mithras** is born out of a rock
- **Adonis** is born out of a myrrh tree
- **Dionysius** is produced from incest
- **Osiris** is the product of an affair of the gods

Is the Story of Jesus Take from Myths?

2. Death Stories

- **Adonis** dies while hunting
- **Osiris** is killed by his brother
- **Dionysus** is killed by attackers
- **Mithras** has no recorded death

Is the Story of Jesus Take from Myths?

3. Resurrection Stories

- Popular account of Osiris...brought back to life in the underworld
- Different accounts about Dionysus...tied to crop cycles or goddess love

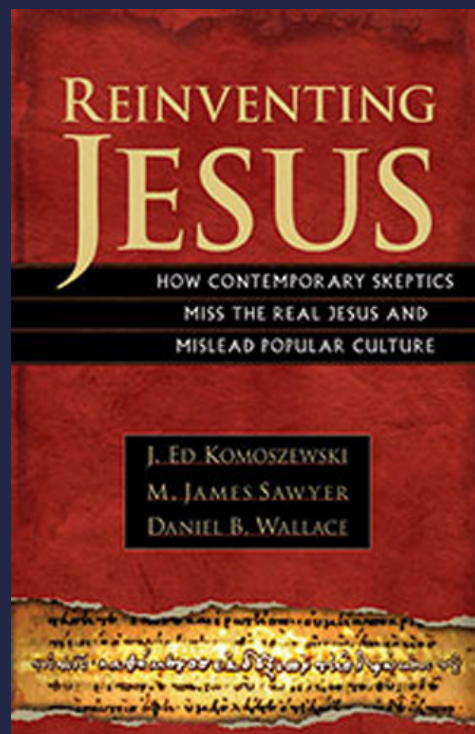
Is the Story of Jesus Take from Myths?

“There is no precedent for telling a story of a supposed dying and rising god *in identifiable history*, let alone in *recent identifiable history*, let alone in a *Jewish environment* that was intrinsically hostile to such stories.”

Gregory Boyd & Paul Eddy, *Lord or Legend?*, p. 54.

Is the Story of Jesus Take from Myths?

- Mystery religions after the 1st cent. were influenced by Christianity
 - E.g. Mithraism (develops after the NT)



“Only after the rise of Christianity did mystery religions begin to look suspiciously like the Christian faith. Once Christianity became known, many of the mystery cults consciously adopted Christian ideas so that their deities would be perceived to be on a par with Jesus. The shape of the mystery religions prior to the rise of Christianity is vague, ambiguous, and localized. Only by a huge stretch of the imagination, and by playing fast and loose with the historical data, can one see them as having genuine conceptual parallels to the Christian faith of the first century.”

Ed Komoszewski, James Sawyer, Daniel Wallace,
Reinventing Jesus, p. 234.