

Fifteen Points from the Historical Record

Different witnesses. Different motives. The same Jesus.

OUTSIDE the Bible	INSIDE the Bible
1. Jesus lived in the time of Pontius Pilate and the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Tacitus).	1. <i>"In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea..." (Luke 3:1; Matthew 27:2)</i>
2. Jesus lived a moral, upright life (Josephus).	2. <i>"He committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth." (1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:15)</i>
3. Jesus was regarded as a wonder worker (Josephus).	3. <i>"Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs..." (Acts 2:22; John 20:30)</i>
4. Jesus had a brother named James (Josephus; the James Ossuary inscription, though its authenticity is debated).	4. <i>"Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?" (Matthew 13:55; Galatians 1:19)</i>
5. Jesus was acclaimed to be the Messiah (Josephus; Mara bar-Serapion).	5. <i>"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16; John 4:25–26)</i>
6. Jesus was handed over by leaders of His own people (Josephus).	6. <i>"Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me." (John 18:35; Matthew 27:1–2)</i>
7. Jesus was brutally executed (Mara bar-Serapion; the Alexamenos Graffito).	7. <i>"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." (Isaiah 53:5; Mark 15:15–20)</i>
8. Jesus was crucified under Pontius Pilate (Tacitus; Josephus; the Yehohanan ossuary, which shows the reality of Roman crucifixion).	8. <i>"...Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate." (1 Timothy 6:13; Matthew 27:24–26)</i>
9. Jesus was crucified in Judea (Tacitus; Josephus).	9. <i>"And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him." (Luke 23:33)</i>
10. Jesus was crucified around the time of Passover (the Babylonian Talmud).	10. <i>"Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover." (John 19:14; 1 Corinthians 5:7)</i>
11. Darkness and an earthquake were associated in later historical traditions with His death (Thallus; Phlegon; Julius Africanus).	11. <i>"Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land... and the earth quaked." (Matthew 27:45, 51; Luke 23:44–45)</i>
12. Jesus' disciples believed that He had risen from the dead (Josephus).	12. <i>"He is not here; for He is risen, as He said." (Matthew 28:6; 1 Corinthians 15:3–8)</i>
13. Jesus' disciples were persecuted for their faith (Tacitus; Suetonius; Pliny).	13. <i>"At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem." (Acts 8:1; John 15:20)</i>
14. Christianity spread rapidly, even as far as Rome (Tacitus).	14. <i>"You shall be witnesses to Me... to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8; Acts 28:14–16; Romans 1:8)</i>

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15. Jesus' disciples rejected the Roman gods and worshiped Jesus as God (Pliny the Younger; Lucian; the Megiddo church mosaic inscription).	15. <i>"You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."</i> (1 Thessalonians 1:9); <i>"My Lord and my God!"</i> (John 20:28)