

Keavy Church Of Christ Beacon

We are located @ 21 Level Green Road, Corbin KY 40701, near the Keavy Elementary School. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 61 Keavy KY 40737. You can also reach us by text message or phone call @ (606)-216-1757, or by email at keavychurchofChrist@outlook.com. Visit us online @ www.keavychurchofChrist.com. We assemble Sunday mornings at 10:00 (Bible Study), 11:00 (Morning Worship), 5:00 (Evening Worship), and Wednesday evenings @ 5:00 (Bible Study). Free transportation to and from church is available upon request (as available). Free Bible studies through the mail are available upon request! Please come be with us: you will be our honored and welcomed guest!

Conspiracy Theories About Christianity: The Pagan Christ Theory

We live in the day and age of conspiracy theories. Let's talk about the Pagan Christ Theory. Several people that I have worked with throughout the years have believed that Jesus Christ was actually a collection of stories stolen from pre-Christian gods and goddesses in other religions.

What shall we say to these things?

First, Christianity is based on solid eyewitness testimony. The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) were written by those who knew and followed Christ. These facts may be demonstrated through many evidences, both biblical and non-biblical.

2 Peter 1:16 (ERV)-We told you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. We told you about his coming. The things we told you were not just clever stories that people invented. No, we saw the greatness of Jesus with our own eyes.

The findings of archaeology continually confirm the Bible.

“W. F. Albright of Johns Hopkins University states, “There can be no doubt that archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of Old Testament tradition.”[1] Likewise, Millar Burrows of Yale University offers this endorsement: On the whole, however,

archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the scriptural record. More than one archaeologist has found his respect for the Bible increased by the experience of excavation in Palestine. Archaeology has in many cases refuted the views of modern critics. It has shown, in a number of instances, that these views rest on false assumptions and unreal, artificial schemes of historical development. This is a real contribution and not to be minimized.”[2]”. (Paul E. Little, *Know Why You Believe*, 108 (Kindle Edition); Downers Grove, IL; InterVarsity Press)

Second, the majority of these alleged parallels come from sources that post-date the New Testament. In other words, if anyone “stole” anything, it was the pagans who stole from Christianity!

“A third fallacy is the chronological fallacy . In order for the copycat charge of borrowing to succeed, one needs to provide evidence that the parallel preceded the writing of the Gospel accounts and the letters of Paul— all written in the first century. However, this simply is not the case. First, as mentioned above, there is no evidence that there was any pagan mystery influence in first- century Palestine. 31 Second, the mystery religions evolved over time, and as they did, their beliefs and narratives changed. This results in several versions of the various pagan myths. Most of the evidence we have of their narratives comes from sources dated in the second and third centuries, a time when they were experiencing the peak of their influence in the Mediterranean world. We have little evidence of the beliefs of these religions from the first century.” (Mark W. Foreman, '*Challenging The Zeitgeist Movie: Parallelomania On Steroids*,' in Paul Copan & William Lane Craig, *Come Let Us Reason: New Essays In Christian Apologetics*, 3544-3562 (Kindle Edition); Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group)

Finally, many of the alleged parallels between Christianity and the pagan religions have been greatly exaggerated to try and make this false claim against Bible. Consider the virgin birth of Christ (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25) as noted above.

"What about the Mithras legend? The birth in a cave with shepherds in attendance? The birth of Mithras was, to say the least, very different from anything that's found in the New Testament. In the first place, Mithras was birthed from solid stone, and ... well ... he got stuck on the way through. (I guess you could say he got off to a rocky start.) So, some nearby folk who may have been shepherds intervened and pulled him from the stone.¹⁷ Yet some writers continue to connect his birth in a cave, assisted by some people who might have been shepherds, to the birth of Jesus in a stable with shepherds arriving soon afterward. A few critics even continue to call this birth of Mithras a "virgin birth"¹⁸...Parallels of this sort are simply too vague to support the claim that Christians borrowed their beliefs from pagans of previous generations." (Timothy Paul Jones, *Conspiracies And The Cross*, 2080-2100 (Kindle Edition); Lake Mary, Florida; FrontLine)

There is no truth to the Pagan Christ conspiracy theory.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.