

Dear Alyssa,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know how you were to respond to those who say, "There are five other people that have the same story as Jesus." You also wanted to respond to those who questioned the authenticity of the Bible, stating that the Bible had been rewritten many times.

Regarding the authenticity of the Bible: The Bible was written in three different languages over a period of approximately 1500 years by more than 40 authors. Nonetheless, the Bible is unique in its unity of theme (man's fall and ultimate redemption) from beginning to end. This unity is an internal evidence of the Bible's Divine origin as God moved men to record His word. Another internal evidence is seen in its detailed prophecies relating to the nation of Israel, the future of mankind, the date when Messiah would first appear, where he would be born, what family he would come from, and how he would die and rise again on the third day. There are over 300 prophecies alone concerning Jesus Christ. For example, Daniel 9:24-27 pinpointed when Messiah would appear: seventy weeks (490 years) after the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. The book of Micah disclosed that Messiah would be born in David's town of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Isaiah foretold that he would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). The prophet Malachi predicted that Messiah's coming would be heralded by someone like Elijah (Malachi 4:5-6). That person was John the Baptist.

Daniel, just as all the prophets before him, received his gift of prophecy directly from God. Critics of the Bible say that Daniel's prophecies must have been written much later after the fact because their accuracy is so precise. For example, beginning with his dream of the image in Chapter 2, Daniel distinguishes four kingdoms. Later, in Chapter 8, he identifies the third kingdom by name as Greece and tells that the Grecian empire would be split into four parts. It would have been impossible to account for this understanding approximately 150 years prior to the event, except to acknowledge Divine inspiration.

History also supports the authenticity of the Bible. Archaeological discoveries and manuscripts have proven time and time again the accuracy of the Bible's historical accounts, making it the best-documented book from the ancient world. Nelson Glueck, former president of the Jewish Theological Seminary in Cincinnati and world famous archaeologist wrote, "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever [been found to be contrary to] a biblical reference." Referring to the New Testament, William F. Albright, one of the world's leading biblical archaeologists, commented, "We can already say emphatically that there is no longer any solid basis for dating any book of the New Testament after about A.D. 80." The reason this statement is so critical is that some of Jesus' opponents were still alive when the New Testament books were written. Their presence would have prompted the NT writers to give careful attention to the truthfulness of each statement. The late Sir Frederic Kenyon, former director and principal librarian of the British Museum and one of the leading authorities on the reliability of ancient manuscripts, drew this conclusion:

"The interval then, between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both

the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established."

For more detailed information on the Bible's integrity, we would urge you to go to our web site: www.christianquestions.net and click on Program #513 (July 20, 2008) "Does the Bible have Integrity?"

You mentioned five other people having the same story as Jesus. Because the prophet Daniel predicted when Messiah would appear (490 years after the decree to rebuild the temple), many men claiming to be the Messiah were on the scene just prior to and after Jesus. Today we also have false Messiahs who claim to be Christ in the flesh at his second appearance. Jesus warned of such an occurrence. "At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time." (Matthew 24:23-25)

We believe that there is ample proof that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. We also believe that there was only one Messiah, Jesus Christ, God's only Son, who willingly came to earth to die, thereby paying the ransom price for Adam and his progeny, so that all the human race will be freed from the curse of death and have the opportunity to be together with our Lord in heaven or, after a period of judgment, have life everlasting on earth.

We hope we have answered your question. Out of curiosity, we would like to know the names of those five people that have the same story as Jesus. Please write us again.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio