

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville church of Christ
36364 Chestnut Ridge Road
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

www.nrcoc.net

Times for Meeting

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)
10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

Elders

Bruce Dean
Mark Ullman

Evangelist

Steven Wallace

THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

January 29, 2023

“Was the Story of Jesus’ Resurrection Borrowed from Other Ancient Accounts of a Dying and Rising God?”

Don Stewart

One way for critics to view the New Testament story of Jesus’ resurrection is to accuse the gospel writers of borrowing the idea from other popular stories that were circulating in the Roman Empire. At the time of Jesus, there was widespread worship of gods who died and then rose again.

For example, in Mesopotamia, the god Tammuz was said to have died and then rose again. In Egypt, Osiris is alleged to have died and then come back to life. In Syria, the name of the dying and rising god was Adonis and in Asia Minor his name was Attis. Thus, Jesus is merely the Judean version of a common belief in the ancient world. This is a common accusation.

Response to the Comparison between Jesus and the Mystery Religions

While this argument used to be popular as an objection to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in recent years, this theory has been seen for what it is; a totally invalid comparison. There are a number of reasons as to why this is the case. They are as follows.

1. There Is No Real Comparison between Jesus and the Mystery Religions

The most basic problem in the comparison between Jesus and the gods of the mystery religions concerns their historical reality. Jesus was a historical person while the heroes of the story in the mystery religions were not.

Jesus lived at a certain time in history. The New Testament records scores of historical details about Him. We know when He lived, who was ruling Rome at the time, the Jewish and Roman leaders in His region, as well as many other historical facts about His life and the people with whom He associated. This is not true of any of the heroes of these mystery religions. Therefore, in one sense, there is no comparison between them and Jesus Christ.

2. Many of the Stories Came after the Time of Christ

There is something else. Many of the stories of a god who died and then came back to life were actually composed after the time of Christ, not before. In fact, most, if not all of them, can be traced to the time after Jesus lived. Therefore, any borrowing that may have occurred was from the story of Jesus and not the other way around.

3. There Is a Logical Fallacy Involved in This Comparison

The rejection of Jesus' resurrection, because it may be similar to accounts of certain dying and rising gods in the ancient world, is actually a logical fallacy. Whether or not there were

similar incidents or similar claims by other religious figures, really has nothing to do with Jesus and His claims. What He said and did must be viewed on its own. It does not matter if there were one thousand similar claims. We need to examine the evidence of the New Testament and see if it stands up to the most rigorous of historical tests. In fact, it does.

Stewart, Don. "Was the Story of Jesus' Resurrection Borrowed from Other Ancient Accounts of a Dying and Rising God?" Blue Letter Bible. 6/9/2020. Web. 7 Dec, 2022. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart_don/faq/objections-to-the-resurrection-of-jesus-christ/06-was-the-story-of-jesus-resurrection-borrowed-from-other-ancient-accounts.cfm>.

“Many gods”

1 Corinthians 8:4-6 (NKJV)

“Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* no other God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we *live*.

Although the world has embraced and propped up many gods over time, there is only one true God. It seems erroneous to believe that the idea of monotheism arose from polytheistic beliefs. Rather, it makes more sense that a monotheistic view was corrupted by legendary material and superstition so as to create the idea of other gods. Mixing truth and error results in many. Staying with the original results in ONE. The same thing has happened with the church. Jesus built only one church. It was His church (Matt. 16:18). Man added their ideas and traditions to make “many churches.” As Paul said about gods, so we can say about churches. For those of us who are content to stay with the original plans of the New Testament, there is only one church (Eph. 4:4-6; 1:22, 23).