

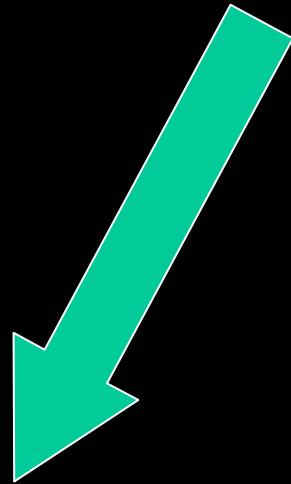
Lk 1:1-4. Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us. Just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Is This True?

True

OR

False



Intentional
Conspiracy Theory

Unintentional
Legendary Theory

1. No Evidence

2. No Motive

3. No Deserters

**4. The Counter-Cultural Dimension of
Their Gospel**

**5. If Lying, Their Message Could Be
Easily Falsified**

1. First Century Palestine Not a Conducive Environment for Legend-Making

2. If First Century Jews Were Going to “Evolve” a Legend, It Wouldn’t Have Looked Like THIS.

- * a cursed and crucified messiah**
- * Jesus’ divine claims and authority**
- * a man is worshipped!**
- * extraordinary dull disciples**
- * his own family doesn’t believe until *after* the resurrection!**

2. If First Century Jews Were Going to “Evolve” a Legend, It Wouldn’t Have Looked Like THIS.

- * role of women**
- * a messiah who attracts tax collectors, prostitutes and other “low lifes”**
- * a messiah who breaks all the rules**

3. There's Not Enough Time For Legendary Development

Mk 15:21. “They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.”

**4. How Could a Legend Develop
While Eyewitnesses – Friendly
and Hostile – Are Still Alive?**

5. The Gospels Claim to Write History and Read Like Sober History (not Legend).

C.S.Lewis: “I’ve spent my life studying legends, and if there’s one thing the Gospels aren’t, its legend.”

Lk 1:1-4. Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that *have been fulfilled among us*. Just as they were handed down to us *by those who from the first were eyewitnesses* and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have *carefully investigated everything from the beginning*, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may *know the certainty* of the things you have been taught.

I Jn 1:1-3. That which was from the beginning, which *we have heard*, which *we have seen* with our eyes, which we have *looked at* and our *hands have touched* – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared: we have *seen it* and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and *has appeared to us*. We proclaim to you what we have *seen and heard*, so that you also may have fellowship with us.

6. Gospels Give Evidence of Containing Eyewitness Testimony

“We cannot be other than captivated by the experiential vividness with which we are confronted [in the Gospels]... *I know of no other area of history writing, biography or poetry* where I encounter so great a wealth of material in such a small space.” Wolfgang Schadewaldt, “The Reliability of the Synoptic Tradition.”

2. If First Century Jews Were Going to “Evolve” a Legend, It Wouldn’t Have Looked Like THIS.

- * a cursed and crucified messiah**
- * Jesus’ divine claims and authority**
- * a man is worshipped!**
- * extraordinary dull disciples**
- * his own family doesn’t believe until *after* the resurrection!**
- * role of women**
- * a messiah who attracts tax collectors, prostitutes and other “low lifes”**
- * a messiah who breaks all the rules**