

Sources that can tell us about Jesus' life

The New Testament

The Synoptic Gospels: Mark, Matthew, Luke

Their sources: oral tradition and "Q"

The Gnostic Gospel(s): John, Thomas

Since its discovery at Nag Hammadi in 1945, The Gospel of Thomas is often given the same historical weight as the other gospels by historians trying to uncover the original sayings and teachings about Jesus. Its composition dates from the same period as the other gospels, and many historians consider it to be an independent tradition based on early collections of the sayings of Jesus.

The New Testament Apocrypha

Early Christian writings which were not accepted into the canon.

The Apostolic Fathers

Writings of the early church, they represent early church teaching and "orthodoxy."

Agrapha

Sayings of Jesus not contained in the canonical gospels.

Archaeological evidence

Discoveries about Judaism in the time of Jesus

Non-Christian sources about Jesus

Josephus: Jewish apologist to Rome

Roman sources

Rabbinic sources