

What Christians mean by the apostles are the first and foundational Christians. And what they mean by Jesus Christ is the decisively significant person-event whereby the community of the apostles, i.e., of these first and foundational Christians, first came into being—or, alternatively, the decisively significant person-event to which the faith and witness of the apostolic community and all succeeding communities in communion with it are the obedient response.

Therefore, the sufficient evidence both of the existence of Jesus Christ and of the complete harmony between his significance, on the one hand, and the faith and witness of the church, on the other, is simply the existence of this church itself. If the church exists, then Jesus Christ also had to have existed, provided that what one means by "Jesus Christ" is whoever-whatever it was—person-event—to which the church owes its existence as a community of obedient response to a foundation *extra se*.

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