

In *The Point of Christology*, I say that the usual account today provides "as reasonable an explanation as one can presently give of the origins of Christianity" (120). Why is this a justified statement?

It is justified because the usual account asserts nothing that it has good reason to deny and that it does not have good reason not to deny; and because it denies nothing that it has good reason to assert and that it does not have good reason not to assert.

Given the nature of our sources—all of which are secondary and (apart from a few references by Latin and Jewish authors confirming that Jesus lived and died) are witness of faith rather than historical reportage—no account could possibly assert only what it has good reason to assert and deny only what it has good reason to deny, since only primary sources or proper historical reports could possibly provide good reasons for doing that. But, then, what the usual account does is the most that a "reasonable" explanation of Christian origins could be "reasonably" expected to do.

21 February 2000