

## What is the Q Document?

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The Q document is a hypothetical collection of “the sayings of Jesus” that was supposedly written before the four Gospels. The Q hypothesis comes from the German word *quelle*, which means “source.” Some liberal theologians have alleged that the Gospel writers must have copied information from an earlier source document since several parables, sayings, and stories are very close in wording. However, there is not one shred of evidence that Q ever existed. No manuscript or version of it has ever been found, and no church father ever cited from it.

You would expect that if Q actually existed, it would have been referred to by the early church, but it isn't. The idea of an imaginary document didn't arise until the 18<sup>th</sup> century when Friedrich Schleiermacher, the father of modern liberalism, promoted the idea. Later, Christian Hermann Weiss claimed that Luke must have used a source document when compiling his Gospel. Others claimed that Mark was used as a source by Matthew and Luke.

Many biblical scholars rejected the idea of a source document from time it was first proposed. A former proponent of the hypothesis said, “This [Q document] is the stuff of fairy tales” (Linnemann, “Is There a Q?” p.19). Gregory Boyd has said, “We could account for similarities (in the Gospels) in other ways that don't require relying on a hypothetical document.”

For more information read *The Big Book of Christian Apologetics* by Norman Geisler, Baker Books 20012, pp. 464-467.

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