



*Anno Domini* inscription at Klagenfurt Cathedral, Austria

Should we use the BCE/CE or the BC/AD dating system? There are many Christians who perceive the BCE/CE dating system to be an affront to Christianity. **They see the system as an attempt to eliminate “Christ” from the calendar**, just as many reject the expression “x-mas” for removing “Christ” from Christmas. Some simply appeal to arguments of tradition and familiarity with the system. For these reasons, they insist on using the BC/AD dating system.

Why do we use BCE and CE at this website rather than BC and AD? First of all, just to clarify, we want to say that we, at this website, are not in any way promoting the ungodly secularism of the world. We also want to make clear that using either one of these dating methodologies is not a matter of right or wrong. The scriptures make clear that everything is not a matter of faith:

**“Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand. One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind”---Romans 14:4,5 NIV**

Thus, the Bible is clear that different Christians can legitimately hold different views about the same subject. Where did the two dating systems come from. Why are they used? What is the history?

The BC - AD calendar era takes as its **epoch** the traditionally reckoned year of the **birth** of Jesus. Years *AD* are counted forward since that epoch and years *BC* are counted backward from the epoch.

However, the facts are that Jesus was not born in the year 0, as common sense would have it, because there was no zero year. Thus the year **AD 1** immediately follows the year **1 BC**. However, Jesus was actually born in about 4 BC, or BCE, and there is considerable evidence for the year 4 B.C.E. as the date of Jesus' birth.

The Roman Catholic monk, Dionysius Exiguus who set up the BC - AD dating methodology in 525, miscalculated the time of Jesus' birth. The BC - AD calendar wasn't widely used until about the **9th century**

AD means "Anno Domini", "in the year of our Lord", and BC means "Before Christ". These are misleading and inaccurate misnomers, since we know there was no zero year, and that Jesus was actually born about 4 BCE.

CE means "Our Common Era", and BCE means "Before Our Common Era". These are accurate scholarly designations for the two major periods of time, or epochs, for our calendars today. Using this dating methodology does not denigrate, or deny, **"Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1)** in any way! It is simply a more accurate dating methodology.

The title "Christ" means "Anointed One." Contrary to popular thinking, Jesus did not become the Messiah, or Christ, when he was born. He didn't become the Christ until he was anointed with God's spirit at the time he was baptized in about 26 CE (**Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21,22**). So, anyone who thinks the BCE/CE dating system denies the birth of Christ doesn't know what he/she is talking about.

**"Why, then, do you judge your brother or sister? Why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat"—Romans 14:10 NIV**

In conclusion, should we use the BCE/CE or the BC/AD dating system? While the BCE/CE dating system is a more accurate system to use, there is nothing wrong with someone using

the BC/AD dating system.