

Sky News
JESUS' WIFE
PAPYRUS FRAGMENT
"IS NOT FAKE"

Sky News

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<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/jesus-wife-papyrus-fragment-not-fake-164307787.html#KZWD2L1>

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A faded papyrus fragment, known as the "Gospel of Jesus' Wife" which the Vatican declares a fake, is most likely an ancient document and not a modern forgery, scientists say.



Jesus' Wife Papyrus Fragment 'Is Not Fake'

The tiny piece measuring 8cm by 4cm has been controversial because it contained the passage "Jesus said to them, 'My wife...' - a phrase never seen before in any scripture.

On the fragment, which emerged in 2012, there were also the words: "She will be able to be my disciple".

Never before has a gospel referred to Jesus having women as disciples and this caused a stir amid the debate in some churches over whether women should be allowed to be priests.

The fragment has been analysed by experts at Columbia University, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

And they concluded after carbon testing that the papyrus and ink used dated from between the sixth and ninth centuries.

The test results do not prove Jesus had a wife or disciples who were women.

But the fragment is likely to be part of an ancient manuscript rather than a fake, claim scientists.

They say it "belongs to early Christian debates over whether it was better for Christians to be celibate virgins or to marry and have children".

Also the piece is too small to know anything definite about who may have composed, read or circulated it, except that they were Christians.

Historian Karen L King from Harvard Divinity School gave the papyrus its name and said in a recent interview: "I took very seriously the comments of such a wide range of people that it might be a forgery.

"When you have all the evidence pointing in one direction, it doesn't make it 100%, but history is not a place where 100% is a common thing."

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