

Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?

❖ What do scholars say?

- Jesus died by *Roman crucifixion.
- He was buried, most likely in a *private tomb.
- Afterwards the disciples were discouraged, bereaved, and despondent, having *lost hope.
- Jesus tomb was found *empty very soon after his burial.
- The disciples had experiences that they believed were actual *appearances of the risen Jesus.
- Due to these experiences, the disciples lives were thoroughly *_____ They were willing to die for their belief.
- The early sermons of the apostles *focused on the resurrection.
- Their preaching of the resurrection took place in the city of *Jerusalem, where Jesus had been crucified and buried shortly before.
- *Sunday was the primary day for gathering and worshiping.
- James, the brother of Jesus and a _____ before this time, was *converted when he saw the risen Jesus.
- A few years later, Saul of Tarsus (Paul) became a Christian believer, due to an experience that he also *believed was an appearance of the risen Jesus.

The Resurrection is the whole ball game.

1 Corinthians 15:14 (NIV) 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

Jesus_____His Resurrection

I came to pay the penalty for your sin and I'll prove it.

John 2:19 Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

Is the resurrection_____?

Objection: The Resurrection is more legend than it is history.

Answer: We have reports of the resurrection with specific eyewitnesses that dates back to within months of the resurrection.

The apostle Paul reported 500 people saw Christ.

Where the witnesses _____? (Favoritism in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another.)

You don't have to prove the resurrection. You just have to prove two things.

Jesus did actually die. People saw Him after His death.

Gary Habermas, NT scholar and historian.

Just the facts mam.

The proof of the resurrection. 4 words beginning with E.

E_____ - Jesus really died

"There is no case in all of recorded history of anyone ever surviving a full Roman crucifixion." Lee Strobel author of "A Case for Christ"

"Jesus' death as a consequence of crucifixion is indisputable."
Gerd Ludemann *The Resurrection of Christ*

(Atheist) NT scholar formerly from Vanderbilt

E_____

We have early reports of the resurrection shortly after the crucifixion itself.

Yet many believe the resurrection was a legend. So 100 a 150 years after the death of Jesus, because of wishful thinking, they claim that He rose from the dead.

We have, preserved for us, a creed from the early church based upon a conviction, that the new testament church would rally around, based upon facts which they knew to be true.

This creed contains the essence of Christian. 1 Corinthians 15:3ff

Can trace this creed to within 20 years of the event.

Paul

We know that one to three years after the crucifixion Saul, on the road to Damascus, had an encounter with Christ.

His name is changed to Paul and immediately he goes to Damascus and meets with some apostles.

Many scholars believe this is when he was given this creed that he wrote in the letter to 1st Corinthians.

But others argue it was three years later.

Three years later he goes to Jerusalem and meets with two people specifically named in the creed, who were eyewitnesses. Peter and James

Paul met with them for 15 days. And the Greek word he uses indicates it was an _____.

What do you know? What did you see?

He was checking them out. Others believe this is when he was given the creed by two people named in the creed.

It makes no difference. It means that from _____ after the crucifixion the creed was in existence.

Therefore the beliefs go back earlier than the creed virtually to the cross itself.

No 150 year time gap. This is a news flash going right back to the beginning.

This is so early that it _____ be legend, it cannot be mythology. It goes right back to the very beginning of the crucifixion and resurrection events.

"This tradition, we can be entirely confident, was formulated as tradition (creed)"

within _____ of Jesus death." James D G Dunn, NT scholar *Jesus Remembered*

E _____

The historical record tells us that Jesus body was placed in the tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea.

Matthew tells us it sealed and guarded and yet it's discovered empty that first Easter morning.

Three points proving the tomb was empty.

1st. The Jerusalem factor

Scholar William Ln. Craig tells us the site was known to Christians and non-Christians alike.

"The location of Jesus burial site was _____ to Jew and Christian alike."

William Ln., Craig, theologian and philosopher.

Craig goes on to say,

"It would have been highly difficult for a movement, based on the resurrection of Jesus, to spring into existence in the very city where Jesus had been executed just a few weeks before unless the tomb really was empty."

2nd The criteria of _e_____

When historians evaluate ancient documents they asked, "Does this statement embarrass the writer?"

Does a statement embarrass them or hurt their case? If it does it's probably true.

If they were going to make something up they wouldn't make something up that would hurt their own cause.

They would want to look good.

But . . .

Who discovered the empty tomb of Jesus first?

Women!

First century the testimony of women was not considered to be credible.

They could not testify in a court of law. If they were making up the story why didn't they say John discovered the empty tomb?

That would have strengthened their credibility. Saying women discovered the empty tomb hurts their case.

3rd Enemy _____—provide or serve as clear evidence of

3. Enemy attestation- provide or serve as clear evidence of.

What were the enemies of Jesus saying?

We know from sources inside and outside the New Testament that the opponents of Jesus were saying the disciples stole the body.

That's a cover story. They were conceding the tomb was empty.

Like a student says the dog ate my homework.

He's are admitting they don't have their homework. Trying to explain why.

The question of history has never been was the tomb of Jesus empty?

The question of history has always been how did it get empty?

The Romans wouldn't steal the body they wanted Jesus dead.

The Jews wouldn't want to steal the body they wanted Jesus dead.

The disciples weren't going to steal the body and lie about it. (Roman Guards)

Why? So they could live a life of depravation,_____ and execution claiming he had risen.

The best explanation for the empty tomb is that Jesus physically rose from the dead.

He is not here. **He IS risen!**

4th E _____

Not only was the tomb found empty but Jesus appears a dozen times to over 515 people.

Indoors, outdoors, nighttime, daytime, they touched him, they talked with him, they ate with him.

Most of the facts we know from ancient history are from one or two sources.

Because of their conviction that they had seen the risen Jesus, we have no fewer than nine sources inside and outside the NT confirming their conviction that they had encountered the risen Christ.

The encounter with Christ transformed the disciples.

Seven different sources inside and outside the New Testament tell us that the disciples lived a life of deprivation and they were willing to die for the fact that they had seen Jesus Christ risen from the dead.

"It may well be taken as historically certain that Peter and the disciples had experiences after Jesus death in which Jesus appeared to them as the risen Christ." Gerd Ludemann *What Really Happened?*

He says it was a hallucination. But the body would still be in the tomb.

Execution, Early accounts, Empty tomb, Eyewitnesses

Clear proof that Jesus did rise from the dead.

❖ What is the best explanation of the evidence? What is the evidence to be explained?

- Facts to be explained

1. Jesus' tomb was found empty by a group of women followers on the first day of the week following His crucifixion
2. Various groups and individuals at varying times and under varying circumstances experienced appearances of Jesus alive after His crucifixion.
3. The first disciples came to believe in Jesus' resurrection.

❖ The Empty Tomb

- Burial is reported in *early, independent sources Mark 15:37-16:7 & 1 Corinthians 15:3-5.
- As a member of the Sanhedrin, Joseph of Arimathea is unlikely to be a later Christian invention
- Internal Evidence
 - The simplicity of Mark's account.
 - Style was simple and alive.
 - Disciples faults (hiding) point to accuracy
 - No anachronisms (not belonging)
 - Discovered by women
 - Legal status of women – Josephus
- Earliest Jewish response presupposes that the tomb was *empty.
- Matthew 28:11-15 – “this story has been spread _____ among the Jews to this day” (Body stolen by disciples)
- In a survey of 2,200 publications on the resurrection since 1975, Gary Habermas, *75% of scholars accept the historicity of the empty tomb.

Post-Mortem A_____

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of *whom are still living*, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. *1 Corinthians 15:3-8*

- Multiple Attesting - The appearance to Peter is attested by Paul and Luke (1 Cor. 15:5; Luke 24:34).
- The appearance to the Twelve is attested to by Paul, Luke and John (1 Cor 15:5; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-20).
- The appearance to the women is attested to by Matthew and John (Matt. 28:9-10; John 20:11-17).
- The appearance to the disciples in Galilee is attested to by Mark, Matthew and John (Mark 16:7; Matt. 28:16-17; John 21).
- Paul implied that Jesus' post-mortem appearances were physical.
- He conceived of the resurrection of the body as physical resurrection (1 Cor. 5:42-44)
- He and other New Testament writers distinguished between visions occurring in one person's mind (such as Stephen's vision in Acts 7)
- Appearances that took place in the external world (such as Paul's vision on the road to Damascus that also affected those traveling with him).
- The Gospel accounts show the resurrection was physical. All of the Gospel accounts present the resurrection as physical.
- If the original appearances were not physical, it would be highly unlikely for the oral

tradition of Jesus' appearances to become corrupted (changed to physical appearances) so quickly and so completely – especially with eyewitnesses still alive.

- Moreover, if the resurrection appearances were not physical, how did the Gospel accounts arise?
- If the appearances were visions, Jews and Gentiles would have considered them to be visions of someone who had died, a ghost, and not the Risen Lord.

❖ The Disciples b_____ in the Resurrection

- Origin of the Disciples' Belief in the Resurrection
- Disciples believed the resurrection occurred.
- How can this be explained? - *Pagan Influences? - *Jewish Influences?
- No parallels to the resurrection in pagan religions.
- Many of the alleged parallels are stories of the divinization and assumption into heaven of the hero (Hercules, Romulus); Stories where the hero vanished into a higher sphere (Apollonius of Tyana, Empedocles); or seasonal crop cycle symbols (Tammuz, Osiris, Adonis)
- Further, the disciples as first century Palestinian Jews would have found these pagan myths abhorrent. Jews were aware of seasonal deities and found them abhorrent (Ezek. 8:14-15).
- No evidence of cults of rising and dying gods in first century Palestine..
- Neither did the disciples' belief in the resurrection come from Jewish sources.
- Jews believed that the resurrection would come at the end of history. When Jesus told Martha that Lazarus would rise again, she thought Jesus was referring to the end of the world. (John 11:23-24).
- Disciples could not understand Jesus' predictions about His death and resurrection.
- Jews also believed in a resurrection of all the righteous and not one particular individual.

❖ Explaining the Evidence

- The hypothesis, together with other true statements, must imply further statements describing present, observable data.
- The hypothesis must have a greater explanatory scope than rival hypotheses.
- The hypothesis must have greater explanatory power than rival hypotheses.
- The hypothesis must be more plausible than rival hypotheses.
- The hypothesis must be less ad hoc (for this, signifies a solution designed for a specific problem, not intended to be adapted to other purposes) than rival hypotheses.
- The hypothesis must be disconfirmed by fewer accepted beliefs than rival hypotheses.
- The hypothesis must so exceed its rivals in fulfilling conditions 2-6 that it is unlikely that a rival hypothesis, after further investigation, will exceed it in meeting these conditions.

❖ C_____ Theory - The disciples*stole Jesus' body and lied about it.

- Could the despondent disciples have overcome the Roman Guard? Highly trained killing machines.
- Why would the disciples claim he had risen from the dead if they knew the exact opposite was true?
- Since they were proclaiming the resurrection in the very city where Jesus died, it would have been impossible to fabricate the event. People could have easily checked out the story.
- The dramatic change in the disciples proved they had seen the risen Lord. Died for their conviction.

❖ William Paley

- Would men in such circumstances pretend to have seen what they never saw; assert facts which they had no knowledge of, go about lying to teach virtue; and, though not only convinced of Christ's being an imposter, (pretending to be someone else to deceive) but having seen the success (result) of his imposture in his crucifixion, yet persist in carrying on; and so persist, as to bring upon themselves, for nothing, and with full knowledge of the consequence, enmity and hatred, danger and death?. *Craig, William Lane. The Historical Argument for the Resurrection of Jesus during the Deist Controversy, 1985*

❖ A _____ hypothesis – Jesus only *appeared to be dead.

- Historical Background (Could apostles be wrong about His actual death?)
- The gospels are authentic. (apostolic authorship, uniform testimony of textual critics)
- The text of the gospels is pure. (because of the vast number of copies we can recreate the original)
- The gospels are reliable. (historically accurate 124)
- The apostles were neither deceivers nor deceived. (nothing to gain)
- This theory does not have greater explanatory power than an actual resurrection.

❖ Jesus was not _____ dead.- He revived in the tomb.

- Problems
- How would a severely wounded have moved a huge stone?
- The disciples were energized because they had seen Jesus who had clearly risen from the dead.
- If they had seen a half-dead man in need of medical attention would they have gone about saying He had risen from the dead?

❖ _____ hypothesis - The women got *lost

- The empty tomb is based on a simple mistake.
- The women got lost and a caretaker of an unoccupied tomb told them Jesus was not here.
- Problems
- Why were they so unnerved that they fled?
- What about all the postmortem appearances?
- The site was known to Jews and Christians alike.

❖ _____ - Body was *moved & disciples didn't know.

- Joseph placed the body in his tomb temporarily they moved to corpse to a criminal's graveyard.
- Problems
- Fails to explain postmortem appearances.
- Since Joseph would have known where the body was taken it fails to explain why the disciples error was not corrected.
- Jewish practice was to bury criminals on the day of their execution.

❖ _____ Hypothesis - The disciples hallucinated Jesus' post-mortem appearances

- The disciples were hallucinating.
- Problems
- They would have to deny the empty tomb and the burial.

- The bereaved do not conclude the deceased has returned to life physically. He is seen in the afterlife.
- Jesus did not just appear one time but many times.
- The disciples touched his physical body.
- Hallucinations come to individuals rather than groups.

***The _____ - someone who looked like Jesus died by crucifixion.**

❖ _____ **Hypothesis - God raised Jesus supernaturally from the dead**

- Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?.
- The Promise of the Resurrection
- John 14:19 (NKJV) "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also."

❖ **One solitary life**

- He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant. He grew up in another village, where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30. Then for three years, he was an itinerant preacher.
- He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned home. He didn't go to college. He never lived in a big city. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.
- He was only 33 when the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied him. He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial.
- He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his garments, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave, through the pity of a friend.
- 20 centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race. I am well within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned – put together – have not affected the life of man on this earth as that one, solitary life.
- Adapted from "Arise, Sir Knight," a sermon by James Alan Francis, in *The Real Jesus and other Sermons*, 1926, pages 123 - 120

❖ **Call to Action**

- Become a two decision Christian.
- 1st. Make a decision to believe what the New Testament writers are telling you and place your faith in Christ and His finished work. (3 parts of saving faith-Blondin)
- 2nd. Make a decision to become a defender of your Christian faith. Prepare a defense for what you believe.

❖ **Defenders Training Continued – Part TWO "What is the Gospel?"**

- The Gospel is a message about God.
- The Gospel is a message about God's Holiness.
- The Gospel is a message about sin.
- The Gospel is a message about Jesus.
- The Gospel is a message about repentance and faith.

- The Gospel is a call to obedience and holiness.

❖ Defenders Training Continued – Part THREE

- Who did Jesus claim to be?
- Is Jesus the only way to heaven?
- What is pluralism and how do we know Christianity is the true religion?
- How do we know evolution is an unreasonable theory?

❖ Defenders Training Continued – Part FOUR “The Big Eight”

1. If there is a loving God why does this pain wracked world groan under so much suffering and evil?
2. If God is morally pure, how can he sanction the slaughter of innocent children as the Old Testament says he did?
3. If the miracles of God contradict science then how can any rational person believe that they are true?
4. If God really created the universe, why does the persuasive evidence of science compel so many to conclude that the unguided process of evolution accounts for life?
5. If Jesus is the only way to heaven, then what about the millions of people have never heard of him?
6. If God cares about the people he created, how could he consign so many of them to an eternity of torture in hell just because they didn't believe the right things about him?
7. If God is the ultimate overseer of the church, why has it been rife with apostasy and brutality throughout the ages?
8. If I'm still plagued by doubts, then is it still possible to be a Christian?