

JESUS' RESURRECTION

1. Biblical Account.

a. Simplified account.

- (1) Sunday morning.
 - (a) An angel rolled away the stone from Jesus' tomb before sunrise (Mt 28:2-4).
 - (b) Women who followed Jesus visited Jesus' tomb and discovered Him missing (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1-4; Lk 24:1-3; Jn 20:1).
 - (c) Mary Magdalene left to tell Peter and John (Jn 20:1-2).
 - (d) The other women, remaining at the tomb, saw two angels who told them about the resurrection (Mt 28:5-7; Mk 16:5-7; Lk 24:4-8).
 - (e) Peter and John visited Jesus' tomb (Lk 24:12; Jn 20:3-10).
 - (f) Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb, and Jesus appeared to her alone in the garden (Mk 16:9-11; Jn 20:11-18): his *first* appearance.
 - (g) Jesus appeared to the other women (Mary, mother of James, Salome, and Joanna) (Mt 28:8-10): his *second* appearance.
 - (h) Those who guarded Jesus' tomb reported to the religious rulers how the angel rolled away the stone. They were then bribed (Mt 28:11-15).
 - (i) Jesus appeared to Peter (1 Co 15:5): his *third* appearance.
- (2) Sunday afternoon.
 - (a) Jesus appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus (Mk 16:12-13; Lk 24:13-32): his *fourth* appearance.
- (3) Sunday evening.
 - (a) The two disciples from Emmaus told others they saw Jesus (Lk 24:33-35).
 - (b) Jesus appeared to ten apostles, with Thomas absent, in the upper room (Lk 24:36-43; Jn 20:19-25): his *fifth* appearance.
- (4) The following Sunday.
 - (a) Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles, including Thomas, and Thomas believed (Jn 20:26-28): his *sixth* appearance.
- (5) The next 32 days.
 - (a) Jesus appeared to seven disciples by the sea of Galilee and performed a miracle of fish (Jn 21:1-14): his *seventh* appearance.
 - (b) Jesus appeared to 500 (including the apostles) at a mountain in Galilee (Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:15-18; 1 Co 15:6): his *eighth* appearance.
 - (c) Jesus appeared to his half-brother James (1 Co 15:7): his *ninth* appearance.
 - (d) At Jerusalem Jesus appeared again to his disciples (Lk 24:44-49; Ac 1:3-8): his *tenth* appearance.
 - (e) On the mount of Olives, Jesus ascended into heaven while the disciples watched (Mk 16:19-20; Lk 24:50-53; Ac 1:9-12).

b. Detailed account.¹

- (1) Assumptions.
 - (a) It was one of the twelve who fled and hid at Bethany ([]).
 - (b) This young man, perhaps the son of Mary of Cyrene, was the owner of the upper room and perhaps the garden of Gethsemane.

¹ See John Wenham, *Easter Enigma* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984).

- (c) Peter witnessed some events alone.
 - (d) Luke was a Gentile researcher with access to many eyewitnesses.
 - (e) Joanna, Susanna, and Chuzas were members of elite Jerusalem society (Lk 8:2) and would have had access to what went on in the Jerusalem courts.
 - (f) Luke gives the perspective of the “Joanna-Susanna” group of women ([]).
 - (g) Because of his relationship to the high priest’s household, John had access to court proceedings (or access to those who were present).
 - (h) John wrote later, knowing what others said and deliberately supplementing their reports.
 - (i) Personal access to Peter, James (brother of Jesus), John, Luke, and numerous others is unnamed.
 - (j) Paul preserved well-known testimony in 1 Corinthians 15.
- (2) Sunday.
- (a) Just before dawn, while it’s still dark, Clopas escorts his wife Mary and Mary Magdalene on the two mile walk from Bethany to John’s house. They reach John’s house when it’s nearly dawn.
 - (b) Clopas stays at John’s house, but Mary Magdalene (Mt 28:1; Jn 20:1), Mary of Clopas (Mt 28:1), and Salome proceed to the tomb to meet Joanna and Susanna.
 - (c) While the women were still walking (Lk 24:1), an earthquake occurred (Mt 28:2), and Jesus was raised from the dead.
 - (d) An angel descended from heaven, rolled back the stone, and sat on it (Mt 28:2-3). This frightened away the soldiers, who fled through the garden gate, running noisily back to the high priest to report what happened (Mt 28:4).
 - (e) Not long afterwards, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Clopas, and Salome near the garden gate. It is now sunrise, and they discuss how they will remove the large stone (Mk 16:1-3).
 - (f) As they near the garden, they hear the commotion from the fleeing guards, find the garden gate open, and discover from a distance that someone has rolled the stone away (Mk 16:4; Lk 24:2).
 - (g) Mary Magdalene, jumping to the conclusion that the soldiers or others have taken away the body, rushes back to John’s house to tell John and Peter (Jn 20:2).
 - (h) Mary of Clopas and Salome remain at a distance to see if anything develops and to await either Peter and John or Joanna and Susanna.
 - (i) Joanna and Susanna arrive at the rendezvous spot agreed upon (likely the garden gate), and, being well-to-do women with connections, decide to investigate on their own.
 - (j) When Mary of Clopas, Salome, Joanna, and Susanna enter the tomb (Mk 16:5; Lk 24:3), two (Lk 24:4) men in dazzling white robes (Mk 16:5; Lk 24:4)—angels (Mt 28:3)—appear. The women fall on their faces (Lk 24:5).
 - (k) The angel on the right side (m) of the burial slab speaks to them and says, “Don’t be afraid. I know whom you are seeking: Jesus the Nazarene, the crucified one (Mt 28:5; Mk 16:5). Why do you seek the living among the dead (Lk 24:5)? He is not here, for he is risen, just as he said (Mk 16:5; Lk 24:6). Come, see the place where they laid him (Mt 28:6; Mk 16:6).

Remember how he talked to you when he was in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and on the third day rise (Lk 24:6-7)? Go quickly, tell his disciples (Mt 28:7; Mk 16:7) and Peter (Mk 16:7) that he is raised from the dead and is going before you into Galilee. You will see him there, just as he said (Mt 28:7; Mk 16:7).”

- (l) The four women, led by Joanna, rush back to Jerusalem. Filled with both astonishment and joy (Mt 28:8; m) and likely fearing that the guards may still be lurking in the area or returning to the tomb, they take the long way to John’s house through the Ephraim gate to the east, avoiding crossing the path of returning soldiers. They say nothing to anyone along the way (m).
- (m) At the same time, some of the soldiers guarding the tomb are telling the high priest about the events. The high priest bribes them to spread a false story about the disciples stealing the body while they were asleep (M).
- (n) Meanwhile, Mary Magdalene has made it to John’s house to fetch John and Peter and others there, informing them that someone has “taken away” the body of the Lord (J), perhaps relaying that temple guards had been active in the area early that morning.
- (o) Upon hearing this, John and Peter run to the tomb straight north through the Gennath Gate. John outruns Peter and gets there first, but does not enter the tomb. Peter barges right in, then John follows into the tomb (J).
- (p) They find the linen wrappings neatly folded, but the body of Jesus is gone (J). Realising the improbability that a grave robber—or the temple guards—unwrapped the body and neatly folded the linens only to carry a naked, bloody corpse through town, John believes that Jesus has risen from the dead (J). Peter remains ambivalent (J). Both leave to their own homes (J).
- (q) Mary Magdalene, already tired from all this back-and-forth so early in the morning, hasn’t kept up with Peter and John. She arrives at the tomb alone as Peter and John are leaving and lingers outside the tomb, weeping (J). As she weeps, she finally brings herself to peer into the tomb for the first time.
- (r) The two angels reappear, sitting on the burial slab, one at the head, one at the foot (J). One angel comforts her: “Why are you crying?” (J).
- (s) It is now full morning, Sunday, and this is a walled garden of a wealthy ruler, so it is not strange that hired gardeners would already be working. Mary answers, “Because they [the guards?] have taken away my Lord and I don’t know where they’ve put him” (J).
- (t) Mary turns to leave, but she sees a man standing in her path. Through her tears she assumes he (as well as the “men” in the tomb) is a labourer for Joseph of Arimathea. The man says, “Lady, why are you crying? For whom are you searching?” Mary answers, “Sir, if you are the one who has taken the body, please just tell me where you’ve put him. I’ll take care of it from there” (J).
- (u) When the man responds by calling her by name—“Mary!”—she recognises him as the risen Jesus! (J). Mary cries out in her native tongue, “Rabboni!” (“My Master”) (J). She then embraces Jesus (J). Jesus tells her, “You needn’t keep holding me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father. But go, tell my

brothers that I am going to my Father and their Father, to My God and their God” (J).

- (v) Mary Magdalene rushes to John’s house (and perhaps Mark’s as well, if this is where Peter went). She reports to the disciples there what she has seen and they are filled with excitement, fear, and astonishment (MmLJ).
 - (w) Sometime after departing from the tomb and evidently going a different route from John (J), Peter wanders, perhaps back to the tomb or perhaps to Mark’s house (the upper room). In any case, Jesus appears to Peter, who was doubting (M; 1 Co 15:5). Peter returns to the Jerusalem group and relays his own experience.
 - (x) The women realise that they must go to Bethany and elsewhere to tell the disciples the news. A couple of them, perhaps Mary of Clopas and Salome, travel to Bethany to tell them. On the way, Jesus appears to them and says, All hail! They immediately bow before him and clutch his feet. Jesus instructs them to go on to tell his brothers to go ahead to Galilee and that he will see them there (M). They do so (Lk 24:10).
 - (y) During that day and prior to Peter’s return, Cleopas and another disciple head to Emmaus, perhaps to inform other disciples of Jesus what was happening.
 - (z) On the way, they are joined by Jesus, but they are mysteriously unable to identify him (L). Jesus explains to them the prophecies of the OT that relate to him (L). Jesus reveals himself to the two men as they sit to break bread (L). The two men rush back to Jerusalem to tell their friends what happened (mL).
 - (aa) By the time Cleopas and the other disciple arrive, everyone is excited and confused about the events. Some still don’t believe and Jesus rose from the dead, and Thomas is for some reason not present.
 - (bb) During the evening meal, Jesus appears to the disciples there (m; Lk 24:36; Jn 20:19; 1 Co 15:5). He shows them his hands and his side (Lk []; Jn 20:20). He rebukes the doubters for their unbelief (m; Lk 24:38-39). He eats with them to assure them that he’s not a ghost (Lk 24:41-43; Ac 10:41). Jesus re-commissions them as his representatives (Jn 20:21-22).
- c. A Week Later.
- (1) Thomas has rejoined them in Jerusalem, but he’s still unconvinced. Jesus appears to them all (Jn 20:26) and turns to Thomas, challenging his unbelief with proof of his resurrection (Jn 20:27). Thomas responds, “My Lord and my God!” (Jn 20:28). Jesus rebukes Thomas for having had to see to believe and He blesses those who do not have to see to believe (Jn 20:29).
- d. Weeks Following.
- (1) Jesus makes a private appearance to his brother James (1 Co 15:7). He forgives his brother for unbelief and places him in a position of leadership in the new body of believers, especially the church in Jerusalem. James becomes key in leading the rest of Jesus’s family to faith (Acts).
 - (2) In Galilee the seven disciples who were previously fishermen have run out of money and need to eat, so they go fishing (J).
 - (3) Jesus appears to them, repeating the miracle of the large catch of fish. Jesus talks and eats with them, talking with Peter and telling him to “feed My lambs” (J).

- (4) The disciples organise a meeting with Jesus of over 500 disciples in Galilee, the centre of his ministry (1 Co 15:6). Many of the Galilean disciples are still not believing in the resurrection (Mt 28:17; C). Jesus appears to them, talks with them, and teaches them (Acts). Jesus gives them the great commission on Mt. Arbel, overlooking the highway to the nations (Mt 28:18-20).
 - (5) Jesus leads them south to Bethany (L). There Jesus gave them the charge to return to Jerusalem and await the coming of the Holy Spirit. (Acts).
 - (6) Jesus then ascends from their sight into heaven in a cloud while angels appear, promising he will return in the same way he departed (L, Acts 1). They return to Jerusalem via the Mt. of Olives and wait together for the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- e. Summary.
- (1) The gospel accounts can be harmonised historically.

2. Historicity.

- a. Introduction.
 - (1) “Christianity never asks anyone to believe something that’s not true just for the sake of believing.”²
- b. *Four minimal facts* are substantiated by both friends and foes of Christianity.³
 - (1) Fact #1 - Jesus died on the cross and was buried.
 - (a) See *Jesus’ Death*.
 - (2) Fact #2 - Jesus’ tomb was empty, and no one ever produced his body.
 - (a) The Jews and Romans never produced Jesus’ body, even though it was in their best interest to do so.
 - (b) No one in the first century ever claimed to find Jesus’ body or decayed remains.⁴
 - (c) The Jewish leaders claimed the disciples stole Jesus’ body, not that Jesus’ body wasn’t missing.
 - (d) Joseph and Nicodemus couldn’t have gotten the wrong tomb. How could everyone go to the wrong tomb? Impossible!
 - (e) Summary.
 - 1) “The four Gospels are unanimous in reporting that on the Sunday after Jesus’ crucifixion and burial, his tomb was found empty by several women, Peter and another disciple.... This is reliable for several reasons. First, it is found in Mark, probably the oldest Gospel material. Second, it is assumed in Paul’s report in 1 Corinthians 15. Third, the stories are basic and lack fictional embellishments. Fourth, the fact that all four Gospel accounts mention that women beheld the empty tomb gives this story credibility, since the witness of women in that day was held in very low regard. If the Gospels invented convincing stories, they would not include women as primary witnesses. Fifth, the early Jewish polemic against the

² Andreas Kostenberger, Darrell Bock, and Josh Chatraw, *Truth Matters*, 174.

³ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 43.

⁴ Andreas Kostenberger, Darrell Bock, and Josh Chatraw, *Truth Matters*, 162.

Christians was that Jesus' disciples stole the body of Jesus—an allegation that presupposes that Jesus' tomb was indeed empty...."⁵

- (3) Fact #3 - Over 500 people, including the apostles, believed they saw Jesus risen from the dead.
 - (a) The disciples could not have overpowered a squad of Roman soldiers without killing any of them. No Roman soldier died.
 - (b) The disciples were cowards. They fled when Jesus was arrested.
 - (c) The disciples did not expect Jesus to rise from the dead.
 - (d) Group hallucinations on multiple occasions simply don't happen. Anyway, hallucinations are either visual or auditory, but rarely both.
 - (e) The apostles physically touched Jesus and ate with them.
 - (f) Jesus was no longer suffering.
 - (g) The hallucination and conspiracy theories are not believable.
- (4) Fact #4 - The lives of Jesus' disciples, his brothers, and Paul were dramatically transformed as a result of their observations.
 - (a) Jesus' disciples.
 - 1) During Jesus' ministry, James, Jude, and Jesus' other brothers thought he was crazy or insane. They were very skeptical about their brother Jesus.
 - 2) James and Jude must have seen their brother risen from the dead.
 - (c) Saul/Paul.
 - 1) Saul was very intelligent and probably the next great Jewish rabbi after Gamaliel.
 - 2) Saul wanted to destroy the Christians. He was the arch-enemy of Jesus and his followers.
 - 3) Once converted, Saul, now Paul, immediately began defending Jesus' resurrection.
 - 4) On many occasions, Paul claimed to have seen the risen Jesus.
 - 5) Paul was severely persecuted for years for preaching Jesus' resurrection.
 - 6) Paul died preaching Jesus' resurrection.
- c. The apostles' eyewitness testimony of Jesus' resurrection is credible.
 - (1) The apostles were not lying about the resurrection (conspiracy theory).
 - (a) The Jewish leaders had the tomb sealed and guarded (Mt 27:62-66).
 - (b) People local to the alleged resurrection would have known it was a lie (1 Co 15:3-8).
 - (c) The disciples lacked a motive to lie about the resurrection.
 - (d) The disciples' transformation is inconsistent with the claim the appearances were a lie.⁷
 - (2) The apostles did not steal Jesus' body (hoax theory).
 - (a) "The Gospels report that the disciples could not stay awake for one hour of prayer on the night before Jesus' arrest; one of their own betrayed him (Judas), and they fled when he was arrested (Mark 14:32-50). Jesus' disciples

⁵ Douglas Groothuis, 544.

⁶ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 43.

⁷ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 43.

failed to pray faithfully for Jesus shortly before his resurrection, Peter denied his master, and the disciples were shocked and incapacitated at Jesus' arrest. Peter later disowned Jesus publicly (Mark 14:66-72). Besides some of Jesus' female followers, only John was at the crucifixion. Further, the male disciples refused to believe the women's early report that Jesus was raised from the dead (Mark 16:11; Luke 24:11)."⁸

- (3) The apostles' testimony is not a conspiracy theory.
 - (a) A successful conspiracy requires: (1) a small number of conspirators; (2) thorough and immediate communication; (3) a short time plan; (4) significant relational connections; and (5) little or no pressure.⁹
 - (b) This doesn't fit the apostles' testimony of Jesus' resurrection.
 - 1) They kept their account intact for many decades. None of them recanted.
 - 2) All twelve, except John, died for the claim Jesus rose from the dead
 - a) "While it's reasonable to believe that you and I might die for what we mistakenly thought was true, it's unreasonable to believe that these men died for what they definitely knew to be untrue."¹⁰
- (4) The apostles were not delusional about the resurrection (hallucination theory).
 - (a) There are no historical examples of large groups of people having the exact same hallucination, especially long, sustained, detailed ones.
 - 1) "...I've never encountered loved ones who have collectively imagined an identical set of fictional events involving the victim."¹¹
 - 2) "The more witnesses who are involved in a crime, the less likely that all of them will be influenced by any one eyewitness, regardless of that witness's charisma or position..."¹²
 - (b) Jesus was seen on multiple occasions by different people (1 Co 15:5-8) over a period of forty days (Ac 1:3).
 - (c) The disciples did not expect Jesus to come back to life (Mk 16:11; Lk 24:11).
 - (d) Even when ten other disciples told Thomas of Jesus' resurrection, he still did not believe (Jn 20:25).
 - (e) This explanation fails to account for the empty tomb and Jesus' missing corpse.¹³
- (5) The apostles were not fooled by an imposter regarding the resurrection (hoax theory).¹⁴
 - (a) The disciples knew the topic of the "con" better than anyone who might con them.

⁸ Douglas Groothuis, 551.

⁹ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 112-14.

¹⁰ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 118.

¹¹ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 47.

¹² J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 47.

¹³ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 47.

¹⁴ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 47-48.

- (b) The disciples were skeptical (Jn 20:25) and displayed none of the naivety required for a con to succeed.
 - (c) Jesus' resurrection is the only thing that could have led his brother, James, to believe in him.
 - (d) The impersonator would have to possess miraculous powers.
 - (e) Someone would have to be motivated to impersonate Jesus.
 - (f) This theory fails to account for the empty tomb and Jesus' missing body.
- (6) The apostles' observations were not distorted later.¹⁵
- (a) In the earliest accounts of the apostles' activity, they cite Jesus' resurrection as their primary piece of evidence (Ac 2:24-32; 3:15; Ac 4:2, 10, 33; 5:30; 1 Co 15:5).
 - (b) Jesus' resurrection continued to be a key component of the apostles' testimony (Ac 10:40-41; 13:30-31; 17:31; 25:19; 26:22-23; Ro 1:4).
 - (c) The apostles consistently claimed to be eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection.
 - (d) Jesus' resurrection is a key component of the earliest Christian creed (1 Co 15:4).
- d. Summary.
- (1) What objections to Jesus' resurrection amount to are a rejection of anything supernatural. Because miracles *can't* happen, *this* miracle never happened. Because *I've* never seen anyone rise from the dead, it is *impossible* for anyone to rise from the dead, including Jesus. The fallacy is apparent.
 - (a) At the heart of the claims against Christianity is a "baseline skepticism against all things supernatural."¹⁶
 - (2) "[W]e have very good grounds for affirming that this man [Jesus], after being executed by crucifixion, was buried in a tomb by the named individual, that His tomb was then found empty by a group of His women followers, that various individuals and groups on multiple occasions and under different circumstances saw appearances of Him alive, and that His disciples, against every predisposition to the contrary, suddenly and sincerely began to proclaim that God had raised Him from the dead. I can think of no better explanation for these facts than the one the disciples gave."¹⁷
 - (3) "The only possible explanation for the rise of Christianity and for its taking the shape it did was that Jesus of Nazareth, three days after being very thoroughly dead (Roman executioners were professional killers and didn't let would-be rebel leaders slip out of their clutches), was found by his followers to be very thoroughly and very bodily alive again. His tomb was empty; had it not been, his followers would have believed they were seeing some kind of an apparition. Such things were well known in the ancient world, as in fact they are today. Equally, they really did see, touch, and share food with Jesus as a real, bodily presence; had they not, they would have concluded that an empty tomb meant that the grave had been robbed. ... The combination of empty tomb and definite,

¹⁵ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 50-51.

¹⁶ Andreas Kostenberger, Darrell Bock, and Josh Chatraw, *Truth Matters*, 169.

¹⁷ William L. Craig, *Reasonable Response*, 233-34.

solid appearances is far and away the best explanation for everything that happened subsequently.”¹⁸

- (4) “The final explanation accounts for all of the evidence most simply and most exhaustively, and it is logically consistent (if we allow for the existence of God in the first place). The final explanation is also superior to the other accounts.”¹⁹
- e. Skeptics turned believers.
 - (1) Simon Greenleaf (1783-1853), one of the principle founders of the Harvard Law School and the author of books on evidence in the courtroom, was challenged by a student to put the resurrection on trial using the principles of his three volume work on courtroom evidence. Greenleaf was certain a careful examination of the internal testimony of the gospels would dispel all the myths at the heart of Christianity. But he came to the conclusion the witnesses were reliable, and that the resurrection did in fact happen. He became a Christian and wrote The Testimony of the Evangelists (1846).²⁰
 - (2) C. S. Lewis.
 - (3) Sir Lionel Luckhoo was a famously successful defence trial lawyer. The Guinness Book of Records (1990) cites him for having the most successive acquittals (245) in murder trials. He was raised in a nominal Christian setting. However, at age 64, he experienced a profound [religious conversion](#) at a meeting in 1978. Thereafter, he actively participated in the [Protestant Evangelical](#) movement of Christianity. He established Luckhoo Ministries in [Fort Worth, Texas](#), and became an itinerant speaker about his Christianity in Guyana, England, Australia, and the U.S. He wrote several booklets such as *What is Your Verdict?* and *The Question Answered: Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?*. He also co-wrote an apologetics-based novel, *The Silent Witness*. He said: “I have spent more than appearing in many parts of the world and am still in active practice. I have been fortunate to secure a number of successes in jury trials and I say unequivocally the evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is so overwhelming that it compels acceptance by proof which leaves absolutely no room for doubt.”²¹
 - (4) Lee Strobel.
 - (5) J. Warner Wallace.
- f. See Mike Licona, Risen Jesus.

3. Prophecies and Types.

- a. Jesus himself.
 - (1) Jn 2:19.

4. Aftermath.

¹⁸ N. T. Wright, [], Kindle Locations 3277-3283.

¹⁹ J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity*, 52.

²⁰ Douglas O. Linder, “Testimony of the Evangelists by Simon Greenleaf (1783-1853).”

²¹ Sir Lionel Luckhoo, *The Silent Witness* (1995).

- a. The explosion of the early church in the Roman empire can only be explained by Jesus' actual resurrection.
- b. "These men [the apostles] went from dejected, dispirited and grieving followers of a crucified rabbi to apostles, those who had beheld the risen Christ and who, on that basis, preached him as the Lord of life and the Judge of history" (D. Groothuis, 551).

5. Agents

- a. The Father raised Jesus from the dead.
 - (1) Ps 16:10-11; Ac 2:24-32; 13:30; Ro 6:4; Eph 1:19-20
- b. Jesus raised himself from the dead.
 - (1) Jn 2:19; 10:17-18
- c. The Spirit raised Jesus from the dead.
 - (1) Ro 8:11
- d. Summary.
 - (1) "Like other important acts of God foundational to the Christian faith, the resurrection of Christ is related to each Member of the divine Trinity. God the Father is said to have raised Christ from the dead in numerous passages. ... In other important works of God, such as the creation of the world and the incarnation of Christ, a similar participation of each Member of the Trinity can be observed. ... It is indeed the work of the triune God."²²

6. Validation.

- a. That the God of Israel, Yahweh, is the true God.
 - (1) "... [I]f God has raised Jesus from the dead, then we have very good grounds for thinking that the God of Israel revealed by Jesus of Nazareth is the true God."²³
- b. That Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.
 - (1) Jn 20:30-31
- c. That Jesus' substitutionary death atones for sins.
- d. The coming bodily resurrection of all believers (1 Cor 15:20-28; 2 Cor 5:1-10; 1 John 3:1-3).
- e. Summary.
 - (1) "As the sequel to the crucifixion, Christ's resurrection and exaltation forms the central event of Christian history and New Testament theology.... Without this reversal of the ignominy of the cross, Jesus' death would have atoned for nothing. The resurrection demonstrates Christ's vindication by God, who reestablishes him in heaven as Lord of the cosmos. It is the most spectacular of all the biblical miracles and from a human perspective the most incredible of Christianity's claims. If it is false, Christians are of all people most to be pitied (1 Cor 15:19). If it is true, it guarantees the coming bodily resurrection of all believers (1 Cor 15:20-28; 2 Cor 5:1-10; 1 John 3:1-3)."
 - (2) If Jesus rose from the dead, it's all true. If he didn't rise from the dead, it's all a lie.

²² J. Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord*.

²³ William L. Craig, *Reasonable Response*, 233-34.

7. Importance.

- a. “If Jesus rose from the dead, then you have to accept all that he said; if he didn’t rise from the dead, then why worry about any of what he said? The issue on which everything hangs is not whether or not you like his teaching, but whether or not he rose from the dead.”²⁴
- b. Jesus’ death and resurrection must be kept together.
 - (1) “The single most important week in the history of the world since creation week was the seven days between Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and His literal, physical, bodily resurrection early Sunday morning. The Resurrection was God the Father’s ‘seal of approval’—His Divine ‘Amen!’—to the atoning sacrifice Jesus made on the cross on Friday. Jesus said the work of redemption for the salvation of sinners was ‘FINISHED!’ By raising Jesus from the dead, God the Father emphatically said, ‘Yes, it is!’ ... The Crucifixion and the Resurrection are the twin ‘Everests’ of this most important of weeks, and nothing except the Incarnation, when God became man 33 years earlier (Jn 1:14) is of so great importance (and it, too, is inseparably tied to these two great events). The crucifixion without the resurrection would be futile. The resurrection without the crucifixion would be pointless.”²⁵
 - (2) *Jesus Christ Superstar* abruptly ends with the crucifixion, omitting the resurrection that is at the heart of Christianity itself.
 - (3) By denying Jesus’ death, Mohammed could deny Jesus’ resurrection.
- c. Jesus’ resurrection holds the highest place in Christian apologetics.
 - (1) There are two things it is essential for Christians to be able to prove: the existence of God and the resurrection of Jesus. These two facts are the bedrock of Christianity.

²⁴ Timothy Keller, quoted in Bobby W. Harrington and Josh R. Patrick, *The Disciple Maker’s Handbook*, 95.

²⁵ Doug Kutilek.

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Notes

The swoon, conspiracy, hallucination, and myth/legend hypotheses have been rejected by contemporary scholarship because they do not adequately explain the known facts.

Minimal fact Christianity started in Jerusalem and spread like wildfire throughout the Roman empire, especially among Gentiles.

In Acts 2, 3,000 were saved. In Acts 3, 5,000 were saved.

The church was founded by Jewish men who were up to then strict monotheists. Think about the radical change in outlook they were making....

BEFORE RESURRECTION	AFTER RESURRECTION
Animal sacrifices	Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice
Binding law of Moses	Christ's life
Strict monotheism	Trinitarian
The Sabbath	Sunday worship
Conquering messiah	Sacrificial "servant/ lamb" messiah
Circumcision	Baptism and communion

What would motivate the Jewish disciples to abandon their age-old beliefs, practices and traditions other than an "impact event" which permanently impacted their beliefs and perceptions?

What did the disciples have to gain by making up a new religion?

They were excommunicated from the synagogue, beaten, tortured and killed
 They had more reason to deny the resurrection than to affirm it.

Jewish priests were getting saved!

Ac 6.7

Six options: conspiracy, swoon, hallucination, hoax, myth/legend, resurrection

The resurrection hypothesis is the only one that explains all the facts.

The hypothesis God raised Jesus from the dead does not in any way conflict with the accepted belief that people don't usually or naturally rise from the dead.

Problems with the Swoon theory:

The swoon theory claims that Jesus was only injured up there on the cross. Later when he was taken down, he was in a swooning state of semi-consciousness, and only appeared to be dead. He came back to his senses later and appeared to the world, not as a man who had come back to life, but as a man who had recovered from his injuries!

Roman Soldiers

They NEVER bungled executions of this nature, and history verifies this truth. There was a tremendous penalty to be paid by Roman soldiers if they allowed a capital criminal to either escape or avoid the penalty to which they were sentenced.

The soldier himself would have to take the punishment. It would be a death sentence for the soldier to bungle the execution.

For this reason, Roman soldiers were brutal and meticulous, executing their orders with precision to make sure that they did not find themselves on the cross.

Didn't Break His Legs

The Gospels tell us that the soldiers came to break Jesus' legs, but saw that he was already dead. We can be certain from the Gospel record that Jesus was dead when he was taken off the cross.

For the above-mentioned reason, the soldiers always confirmed that the executions were complete by assuring that each man on the cross was dead before taking them off. If they were not, the soldier would use a club to break their legs so that their own body weight would suffocate them. Unable to push themselves up with their legs to take a breath, and unable in weakness to continue to pull themselves up with their arms, the victims would simply suffocate under their own weight, unable to breath.

John Saw Blood and Water

The gospels also tell us that one of the soldiers stabbed Jesus in the heart area with a spear and that water and blood rushed from the opening. That's not uncommon for someone who has been dead for a while. The body cavity begins to fill with clear liquid, water drawn from the body itself. Blood in this situation appears watery and this is consistent with someone who is already dead.

There is evidence from Scripture that Jesus experienced hypovolemic shock as a result of being flogged. As Jesus carried His own cross to Golgotha (John 19:17), He collapsed, and a man named Simon was forced to either carry the cross or help Jesus carry the cross the rest of way to the hill (Matthew 27:32–33; Mark 15:21–22; Luke 23:26). This collapse indicates Jesus had low blood pressure. Another indicator that Jesus suffered from hypovolemic shock was that He declared He was thirsty as He hung on the cross (John 19:28), indicating His body's desire to replenish fluids.

Prior to death, the sustained rapid heartbeat caused by hypovolemic shock also causes fluid to gather in the sack around the heart and around the lungs. This gathering of fluid in the membrane around the heart is called pericardial effusion, and the fluid gathering around the lungs is called pleural effusion. This explains why, after Jesus died and a Roman soldier thrust a spear through Jesus' side, piercing both the lungs and the heart, blood and water came from His side just as John recorded in his Gospel

Where Did He Go?

If he didn't rise from the dead and then ascend into heaven, where did he go? There is no historical document that even attempts to account for a recovered Jesus, who lived after the recovery in some far away land. UCI professor proposed twin "the prestige" style How would they have not known?

It's ridiculous to think that somehow all the disciples of Jesus who took his grotesquely beaten body off the cross, wrapped it in linen, scented it with spices and prepared it for burial would not have noticed that he was still alive. You have to think this through. It makes no sense.

A swooned Jesus would not evoke worship

Imagine a “saviour” who narrowly escaped death with a natural recovery. Why would anyone be inspired to live, lie and die for this man?

Problems with the Hallucination theory:

The hallucination theory claims that the disciples, in their incredible grief and wishful thinking, imagine the entire resurrection as a sort of hallucination.

No Group Hallucinations

Imagine yourself having a hallucination or dream and then snapping out of it only to discover that your best friend had the exact same hallucination or dream, down to every detail! That’s just not going to happen. Hallucinations are personal. There is no such thing as a group hallucination. And that would have to be the case here.

There are no records of this in medical/psych journals...anywhere!

The biggest problem with the hallucination theory is that it does not account for the group sightings of Jesus in which everyone, including doubters like Thomas, got the chance to eat with, speak to, touch and be touched by Jesus himself.

Stuck Around Too Long

Jesus appeared to his followers for 40 days. If all of the disciples hallucinated this, their hallucinations would have had to last for weeks on end.

There are no medical/psychiatric records of this ever happened before but would have been the case here if you are to believe that the resurrection was just a hallucination.

What about the Corpse?

Are we to believe also that after having experienced this hallucination that the disciples would not have checked the tomb? Eventually they would have discovered the corpse, and realized that the hallucination was just that. But, of course, the corpse was not there to be found. JOKE wake up from vivid dream to check if you really did win the lotto or....

Problems with the Conspiracy theory:

The conspiracy theory claims that the Resurrection is a lie... that the disciples made it all up. It’s all fiction and the disciples conspired to fool the world. They are consummate liars.

JW Wallace: for any conspiracy to have any chance at all needs 3 things:

1. very small # conspirators
2. very short time over which to keep story
3. good motive

The Disciples Could Not Have Removed the Body

The biggest problem with this theory is the fact that there would be no way for the disciples to get the body out of the tomb without alerting the guards. They guarded the tomb with the same intensity with which they confirmed Jesus’ death.

They Jews knew that they would have to guard the body in order to prevent its theft. They wanted to hang on to the body to show that Jesus was just a man. And they convinced authorities to place a Roman Attachment at the tomb.

Locals Would Have Known It

They would have seen the lie and written about the fact that all of it was untrue. Yet nothing exists to expose the resurrection as a lie.

It would be impossible for the disciples to perpetuate a lie in the relatively small environment in which Jesus was said to have walked and appeared to more than 500 people according to Paul.

small town jokes your town is so small:

You don't signal turns because everyone knows where you're going, anyway.

There is no point in high-school class reunions because everyone knows what everyone else is

doing anyway

You call a wrong number and they supply you with the correct one.

They Had No Motive

The disciples had no motive to make up this lie and, in fact, they put their very lives in danger by holding to the truth of the resurrection. The disciples would ALL have to be crazy to hold to a lie that eventually killed them all.

WHAT MOTIVES COULD THEY HAVE? Ex Auck Uni debate answer

To propose that these men were conspiring to perpetuate the biggest lie ever told in the history of man simply does not make any sense.

One expert says they could not have pulled it off.... Andre' Cole video

Problems with the Myth theory:

The myth claims that He Never Existed. The claim is that the whole resurrection account was a legend that was developed over time by people other than the disciples, people who heard stories and twisted them or misinterpreted them or invented them in order to create the faith system that we have today.

Non-Christian Records of Jesus

The first big problem is the existence of non-Christian historical records of Jesus. These historians had no reason to perpetuate the mythology and attest to the fact that something did in fact happen here on planet earth 2000 years ago.

Including Josephus, there are 10 known non-Christian writers who mention Jesus within 150 years of his life.

By contrast, over the same 150 years, there are 9 non-Christian sources who mention Tiberius Caesar, the Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus. So discounting all the Christian sources, Jesus is actually mentioned by more sources than the Roman emperor.

If you include the Christian sources, those mentioning Jesus outnumber those mentioning Tiberius at 43 to only 9.

These sources include Celsus, Tacitus, and the Jewish Talmud ...which could be considered anti-Christian sources.

Women Witnesses

The first witnesses to the resurrection were women which is recorded clearly in all the Gospels. Women at this time had very low social status. They were not even allowed to testify in court. They were not considered to have status that would make them trustworthy witnesses. Yet these stories are brutally frank in the way that they describe women as the first witnesses.

If someone was trying to establish the validity of a legend and give it credence, they would never have chosen women as the first witnesses. As a matter of fact, they would have made the first witness a man of considerable status.

But that is simply not how it happened, and the truth was recorded in scripture regardless of the impact that it might have on early readers.

This little detail is incredibly important and testifies to the reality of what happened.

Not Enough Time (we will pick this up later)

Aside from that, there is not nearly enough time for this type of legend to develop. This myth theory requires several generations to pass so that there are no remaining eyewitnesses of the real events left to dispute the mythology.

But the first Christian documents recording the life of Christ appear on the scene within the first generation of the eyewitnesses.

They were able to review the stories and testify to their validity. No one could have started the mythology without their knowing it.

NT Wright He is the most prolific biblical scholar in a generation. Some say he is the most important apologist for the Christian faith since C. S. Lewis. He has written the most extensive series of popular commentaries on the New Testament since William Barclay

The apostles lived as unknown yet well known as dying in yet behold we live etc second Corinthians chapter 6 verse 9 in 10 if the disciples and Apostles were lying for financial gain their lies did not seem to be working very well see also 1st Corinthians chapter 4 verse 11

“Without the resurrection, the cross is meaningless.”²⁶

“...[I]f Jesus predicted he would die and rise again three days later—and then he did it—that would be pretty good evidence he was telling the truth about his identity. ...No miracle means more than the atoning death of Jesus on the cross—and his resurrection from the dead, by which he proved his identity as the unique Son of God.”²⁷

The empty tomb is for unbelievers. Jesus himself is for believers only.

²⁶ Billy Graham.

²⁷ Lee Strobel, quoted in Graham Ashby, *An Unexpected Life*, 385.