

Knowing the Resurrection is True – April 7, 2021

Some believe. Some doubt. Let's examine the arguments for why the Resurrection is not true.

Here is how you can have confidence in the Resurrection. 5 ways -

1. Jesus wasn't really dead

- **Mark 15:44-45** – Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for Jesus' body. “44 Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. 45 When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.”
 - Centurion verified Jesus had died.
 - Centurions know how to kill you when carrying out crucifixion.
 - Witnesses were also present & saw Him die - religious leaders, Mary Magdalene, Mary (mother of James), Salome, John & Joseph.
 - **Luke 23:46-49** - “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last. The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.” When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.
 - Jesus was pierced to ensure He was dead: **John 19:31-35** - “Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. 32 The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. 33 But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. 35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.”
 - **John 19:38-40**- Joseph & Nicodemus carried the body to the tomb. They touched it. Wrapped it in linen & spices.
 - **Mark 15:46-47** – “[Joseph] rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.”

- Timing is important. If Jesus had died on Saturday & not Friday, Jewish law forbid doing work on the Sabbath, so Joseph could not have taken the body to bury it. Jesus' body would've been taken by the Romans, and we would have had great difficulty confirming His resurrection.

○ Theory that He wasn't really dead doesn't add up.

2. Empty Tomb, but... Stolen.

- Biggest proof of the Resurrection - Empty tomb. Maybe body stolen??
- No body was found elsewhere... if those against Jesus stole it, they would've presented it as proof He was a fake.
- Disciples did it? Where would they put it? Not from Jerusalem. No tomb.
- Remember - Disciples ran; hid in fear w/doors locked. Risked arrest & death by overtaking guards & removing seal to take Jesus' body?
 - Stealing the body was impossible - **Secured w/ Stone, Seal, & Guards - Matt. 27:62-66** – “The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.” 65 “Take a guard,” Pilate answered. “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.” 66 So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.”
 - Where did this Rumor come from? Jewish leaders.
 - **Matt. 28:11-15** – While the women were on their way (after the angel speaks to them at the tomb), “some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. 12 When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, 13 telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ 14 If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” 15 So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.”
 - Theory of a stolen body doesn't add up.

3. It's all just a Lie. Ask - were the Disciples willing to die for a lie?

- Jesus was crucified for blasphemy. Disciples would face same penalty if they persist in saying Jesus was the Son of God.
 - a. **This doesn't make sense.** They ran away & deserted Jesus; Peter denied knowing Jesus 3 times.
 - b. People lie to save themselves, not put themselves in danger.
 - c. This is a conspiracy with many members. Nobody has recanted.
 - d. If no resurrection, they wouldn't have had the courage to speak up.
 - e. Disciples live new lives after the Resurrection. That truth changed everything for them. They were bold. Spoke up. New practices.

4. Can't ignore the supernatural events. (darkness, noon til 3)

- a. **Matt. 27:50-53** – “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. 51 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split 52 and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. 53 They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.”
- b. **Acts 1:3** says “After His suffering, He presented Himself to them (the disciples) and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of 40 days and spoke about the kingdom of God.” Jesus is seen alive.
- c. **And – Jesus said it would happen. In 3 days, raised.**

5. Witness' testimony confirms the Resurrection happened.

- **Ways we evaluate with test: present, personal knowledge, consistent w/ other test or evid, bias, motive, any benefit?**
 - a. Stories were consistent. Always remained the same. Present.
 - b. Stories were corroborated by others. Match Jesus' predictions.
 - c. Motive to lie to say He was resurrected? Bias, yes; but motive is absent due to danger. Witnesses lie to save themselves.
 - d. First witnesses were women. If you were making up a story, you wouldn't have women as the first eyewitnesses.

- e. This isn't just 1 or 2 people. **1 Cor. 15:5-8** – “Jesus appeared to Cephas (Peter), and then to the twelve. After that, He appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, tho some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all He appeared to me also (Paul).”

- **1 Cor. 15:14** – “If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith...” V. 17 – “And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.”
 - The resurrection is the center of Christianity. Must have confidence in it; be able to explain it. Jesus conquered death.

- **1 Pet. 3:15** – “Always be ready to give an answer when someone asks you about your hope.”

Song of the week – “We Believe” by the Newsboys