



Resurrection/The Church

Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

1. What were the Jews expecting and how did Jesus somehow make sense of that?

- Resurrection
- New creation
- Life after death
- Kingdom of God
- Eschatology; apocalyptic (Role/Expectation of the Temple)
- Messiah (What does it mean?)
- Prophecy
- God and Man - Greek idea?
- How much Hellenization In Christianity?
- Overthrow of Rome?
- Peace on earth?
- End of exile mentality?



Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

2. Did Jesus really exist?

- It was a legend made up years later
- It was created as a future hope/spiritual/political reawakening (metaphorical)
- It was simply a good story (fiction)



Jesus Was A Product Of Legend

- 99% of all historical scholars believe that Jesus really did exist, in fact, it is so assumed to be a fact that questioning Jesus' existence is not even an question worth entertaining among scholars.
- Claiming that a lack of Jesus being mentioned by any writers of the day is evidence against his existence is poor reasoning.
 - a) Very few people from this time and place were mentioned in any of the literature, including Pontius Pilate and Josephus.

Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

3. Did Jesus really do what is written about him in the Gospels (not miracles)

- Disciples made it up
- Paul made it up - Took a political figure and made him into a spiritual leader
- Jesus' actions were sensationalized



Disciples Made It All Up?

The integrity of the NT is upheld by the eyewitnesses to the events described.

- The life, death, and resurrection of Christ was witnessed by many, and written down by several of these eyewitnesses (Matthew, John, Peter, James, etc.)
- After his resurrection, Christ appeared to and spent time with over 500 people at different times, negating the notion of mass hallucination.
- The accounts of the resurrection appearances are divergent enough to draw the allegation of contradiction (though, they can be reconciled), meaning they didn't get together and make up the whole thing.
- They were honest men who did not tolerate lying (Acts 5:1), being bought with money (Acts 8:18), or giving false testimony under extreme persecution (II Cor. 11:23)
- No one creates and dies for a lie that would gain them nothing.

Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

4. Was the oral tradition corrupted before the text was written?

- Was the ancient methodology of oral traditions even a valid way of knowledge transmission?
- Even if the methodology is valid, why would uneducated and poor disciples be able to successfully employ it?
- Were the correct texts chosen based upon the oral tradition (Gnostic Gospels, etc)?
- Was the information written in the texts simply written incorrectly?



Does The Ancient Oral Tradition Work?

Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

5. Did the Disciples and Apostles actually believe Jesus raised from the dead physically?

- Are we as Americans reading the texts correctly?
- Is the culture/language of the day so lost to us that there is no hope of correctly discerning intentions/beliefs?
- Could it have been a “spiritual resurrection”?



Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

6. Was the text corrupted after being written down (between the time of original creation and Canonization)?

- Does the text line up with the early Church?
- Did the scribes infuse their own meaning/language in the text?



Was The Text Corrupted?

There is more abundant and accurate manuscript evidence for the NT than any other book in the ancient world

The following is a list of some of the NT manuscripts we have:

- The John Rylands Fragment (John 18:31-33; 37-38) (100-150 AD)
 - The Bodmer Papyrus II (Luke, John, Jude, 1 & 2 Peter) (200 AD)
 - Codex Vaticanus (Bible) (325-350 AD)
 - Codex Sinaiticus (Bible) (340 AD)
 - Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus (Bible) (350 AD)
 - Codex Alexandrinus (Bible) (450 AD; representing in part or whole an Alexandrian text dating back to 100-150AD)
 - Codex Bezae (Gospels, Acts, and Part of 3 John) (400 AD)
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- TOTAL NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS =
5,300 GREEK MSS, 10,000 LATIN VULGATES, 9,300 OTHERS = 24,000 COPIES
 - TOTAL MSS COMPILED PRIOR TO 600 AD = 230

Was The Text Corrupted?

There are roughly 32,000 quotations from the New Testament found in writings from before the council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

The quotations of scripture in the works of the early church writers are so extensive that the New Testament could be almost completely reconstructed from them without the use of New Testament manuscripts.

Was The Text Corrupted?

Author	Date	Earliest Copy	Number of Copies	Accuracy of Copy
Caesar's <i>Gallic War</i>	1st Century BC	900AD	10	?
Livy (142 Books on Roman History)	1st Century BC	300AD	20	?
Tacitus (14 Books on Roman History)	100AD	1100AD	4 1/2	?
Thucydides' <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i>	5th Century BC	900AD	8	?
Herodotus' <i>The Histories</i>	5th Century BC	900AD	8	?
Suetonius' <i>The Twelve Caesars</i>	1st Century AD	850AD	?	?
Pliny the Elder's <i>Natural History</i>	1st Century AD	850AD	7	?
NT	50-100 AD	130AD	5,000	97-99%

Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

7. Did contemporary secular sources support what is written in the texts?

- Josephus
- Roman Authorities
- Other Historians and Officials
- Geographic/Archeological Support



Archeological Support

- More than 25,000 sites within the region of Palestine, dating back to OT times, in their broadest sense have been found.
- No archeological find has ever been made that contradicts the history of the Bible.

Secular Testimony

- Jewish historian, Josephus (37-100 AD)
- Samaritan-born historian, Thallus c. 52 AD)
- Roman historian, Cornelius Tacitus (c. 55-117 AD)
- Letter of Mara Bar-Serapion (after 73 AD)
- Greek Satirist, Lucian (2nd Century AD)
- Roman historian, Pliny the Younger (c. 112 AD)
- Suetonius (c. 120 AD)
- Jewish Talmud (completed by 500 AD)

Secular Testimony

The following secular testimony emerges:

- 1) Jesus was crucified under Pilate at Passover time.
- 2) His disciples believed he raised from the dead three days later.
- 3) Jewish leaders charged Christ with sorcery and believed he was born of adultery.
- 4) Christianity could not be contained and spread through Rome.
- 5) Nero and other Roman rulers persecuted and martyred early Christians.
- 6) These early Christians denied polytheism, lived dedicated lives according to Christ's teachings, and worshiped Christ.

Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

8. Do the Creeds represent authentic Christianity or do they represent a corruption of the actual historical Jesus?

- Trinity
- Deity/Humanity of Christ
- Baptism
- The Atonement



Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

9. Is it necessary to believe the historical theology in order to be a Christian"?

- Deity/Humanity of Christ
- Trinity
- Atonement of sin (Salvation and why does it matter?)
- The fall of humanity
- Baptism
- Lord's Supper
- Resurrection of the dead (Heaven/Hell)



The Niceno-Constantinople Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Resurrection/Christian Plausibility Questions

10. What about the Influence of Paul?

- Who was Paul and why was he relevant?
- Did Paul invent Christianity?
- Did Paul change Jesus and the Church into what he wanted?



