

John 20:24-31 “What evidence would convince you of Jesus’ resurrection?”

“Now Thomas (also known as Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.’ ²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’ ²⁸ Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’ ³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written

that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

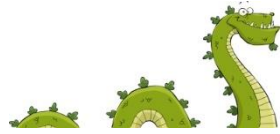
Jesus personally proved God’s power over death.

Getting people to believe in God and his working, however, proves difficult. Recent polls show increasing doubt among younger people.

A connection likely exists between unbelief and the depression many young people currently experience.

An Iowa atheist spent tranquil day fishing on Loch Ness in Scotland. Suddenly the Loch Ness monster attacked his boat. In one graceful flip, the legendary beast tossed the atheist high into the air. The monster opened its mouth ready to swallow both the man and the boat. As the man sailed head over heels, he cried out, **"Oh, God! Help me!"** Immediately, the ferocious attack scene froze, leaving the atheist hanging in midair. Then a booming voice came out of the clouds. **"I thought you didn't believe in me!"**

"Come on, God, give me a break," the man pleaded. "A minute ago I didn't believe in the Loch Ness monster, either!"¹



Both testaments of the Bible relate how often skepticism and atheism arise.

In the midst of this doubt and cynicism, we need something positive.

Nothing equals Jesus' resurrection news.

Yet, as with the atheist before his Loch Ness event, the positive message falls mostly on deaf ears.

Only at Easter-time do many churchgoers think about resurrection.

The invasion of bunnies, eggs, peeps, and other fertility symbols, however, gives Jesus' resurrection second billing.

Some believers question whether Jesus actually returned from death.

The apostle Thomas became and remains one of history's most famous doubters.

If you count yourself an active member of the Doubting Thomas Club, what evidence would convince you of Jesus' resurrection?

Preachers share some of the blame for all the skepticism.

They often garble the resurrection story or promote themselves so much no one hears it.

Jesus' remains resurrection the greatest, most significant event since creation.

Nothing on CNN, Fox News, NBC, CBS, ABC, ESPN, or on the Internet contains the slightest % of its magnitude.

Sportscasters often use the word "huge" to describe certain events in games.

"That play was huge," sportscasters often say.

Compared to the resurrection, the most outstanding sport's play compares to this: **Imagine removing one grain of sand from a five mile stretch of gravel road.**

The significance on human history made by any play in sports amounts to removing that one speck of road grit.

¹ Adapted from *World's Greatest Clean Jokes*, P -191

Without Jesus’ resurrection, no road to the future exists.

It’s as though you enjoy driving a scenic highway in your SUV.

On a bright warm, sunny day, life is good.

You listen to your favorite music channel or talk about your dinner plans, business deal, or the property you want to buy.

Without warning the road curves and you find yourself in zero visibility fog.

Tentacles of cold moisture creep across you.

With your vehicle stalled; you can’t see the ground, let alone, forward or backward.

Sudden death stuns us like that, doesn’t it?

That’s why the prophet Isaiah called death the

“Shroud that enfolds all people.”



Why raise this subject on Easter Sunday?

Because Jesus’ Resurrection is so vital.

Remember what went through your mind when you stood at the grave of a loved one?

He/She was a crucial part of your life.

You ate popcorn, listened to music, laughed, watched movies and sporting events together.

Life suddenly ended for your loved one.

In numbness and tears, you tried to come to grips with this realization: you’ll never talk with your loved one again.

Never see that unique smile, distinctive walk, and one-of-a-kind voice, never again feel the assurance of his/her presence.

That loss resembles the numbing, paralyzing fog we described, doesn’t it?

While we’re grounded in the fog, let’s take a few minutes to look at Jesus’ resurrection.

“After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.”²

Early Sunday morning the two Marys and their friend Salome wanted take care of unfinished business.

Jesus died Friday afternoon.

² Matthew 28:1 NIV

Once Pilate confirmed Jesus’ death, he released Jesus’ body to Joseph of Arimathea, who wrapped and placed Jesus’ body in his own unused tomb.

Jewish days start at sunset, so in a few hours, Sabbath began.

No person or animal worked on the Sabbath.

If you think Sundays are dead in Kingsley, think what it would be like if even the C store were closed.

- You can’t drive your car.
- You can’t talk on your cell phone.
- Cannot use an ATM or the Post Office.

There wasn’t time on Friday afternoon for the women to buy spices and prepare his body in the way they wanted.

They rested on Saturday, but planned to hurry to the grave as daylight dawned Sunday morning.

The Gospels tell us they faced a problem. Joseph had placed a huge stone at the entrance to Jesus’ tomb.

The women weren’t capable of moving that stone, and didn’t know how they’d remove it.

That seemed to be their major concern that morning as they walked to the tomb:

“How are we going to move that huge stone?”



You and I know that they weren’t going to face that problem. Matthew 28:2-4 NIV:
“(2) There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. (3) His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. (4) The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.”

Before that happened, the question loomed:
“How are we going to move that huge stone?”

That’s where you and I and the world usually are; we fret about a lot of things.

While we worry and stew, we leave lots of things undone.

For example:

Consider all the talk, speculation, and opining the past two+ years by self-declared experts on the Russian collusion topic or any other news event.

Has any information you have gained from the news on that issue given an insight into humanity’s death problem?

Has any of the news helped you escape the shroud that envelopes all human beings?

Let me share some facts few folks consider.

We’ll connect some dots that have always been there concerning Jesus’ family.

After Jesus’ birth, Mary and Joseph had at least seven children.

That Jesus had half-brothers and sisters amazes many people.

The Bible gives compelling evidence of Jesus’ four brothers; Matthew 13: 53-56 names them: “When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. ⁵⁴ Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed.

“Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?’ they asked. ⁵⁵ ‘Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ Aren’t all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?’”

Mark likely got his info from Peter, and wrote this vital tidbit:

“Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. ²¹ When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, ‘He is out of his mind.’”³

“He is insane.” said his brothers, the World English Bible translates.

In verses 31 & 32, Mary and Jesus’ brothers arrive at the house.

The term “brothers” does not refer to Jesus’ disciples as some claim.

That the “brothers” came with Jesus’ mother indicates that they were Jesus’ siblings.

³ Mark 3: 20, 21 & 31, 32.

The disciples were with Jesus in the house.

” 31 Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. 32 A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, ‘Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.’” (Mark 3: 31, 32)

Note this in the Gospel of John 7:1-5

“After this, Jesus went around in Galilee... 2 But when the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, 3 Jesus’ brothers said to him, ‘Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. 4 No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.’ 5 For even his own brothers did not believe in him.”

They grew up with Jesus, played with him as children do, likely worked with him until he reached the age of 30, and wondered:

“How could he be the Messiah?”

The brothers were not at the cross; they were probably ashamed of Jesus, wanting no part of him.

Note another fact in Matthew 28:

5 The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.

7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.” 8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. 9 Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.’”

Jesus met his brothers in Galilee and proved to them who he was, possibly showing them the same evidence he presented to Thomas. Can you imagine what it was like for Jesus’ younger brothers at that Galilee meeting?

Their shame and regret because of their earlier accusations and unbelief?

Jesus told the disciples that he had to fulfill everything about him written in the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms.⁴

He likely told his brothers the same thing perhaps emphasizing this from Psalm 69:8:

“I endure scorn for your sake and shame covers my face. I am a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother’s sons.”

A few days later, the disciples and Jesus’ family are back south in Jerusalem. **Had Jesus not come back from the dead, the brothers’ shame would have increased.**

“All these with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer and supplication, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.”⁵

Galatians 1:19 says Paul met with **“James, the Lord’s brother.”**

James began his epistle circa 48 AD:

“James, a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The youngest brother Jude started his epistle: **“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and a brother of James.”**

Neither James nor Jude claimed a physical family connection.

I don’t see them referring to themselves as slaves of their brother unless God raised him from death proving to them that he was God’s Christ, His Only Son.

Do you?

To me, here is the most convincing proof of Jesus’ resurrection:

Commit to Jesus’ way and His Word, light will enhance life as it never has before.

- He invites you to taste and see that the Lord is good.
 - He will raise you at his appearing and his kingdom.

Happy Resurrection Day!

Bob Blair

PO Box 176

Cleghorn, IA 51014 www.robertblairbooks.com

⁴ Like 24:44

⁵ Acts 1: 14 WEB