



The Resurrection

How can we know
for sure that Jesus
was raised from
the dead?

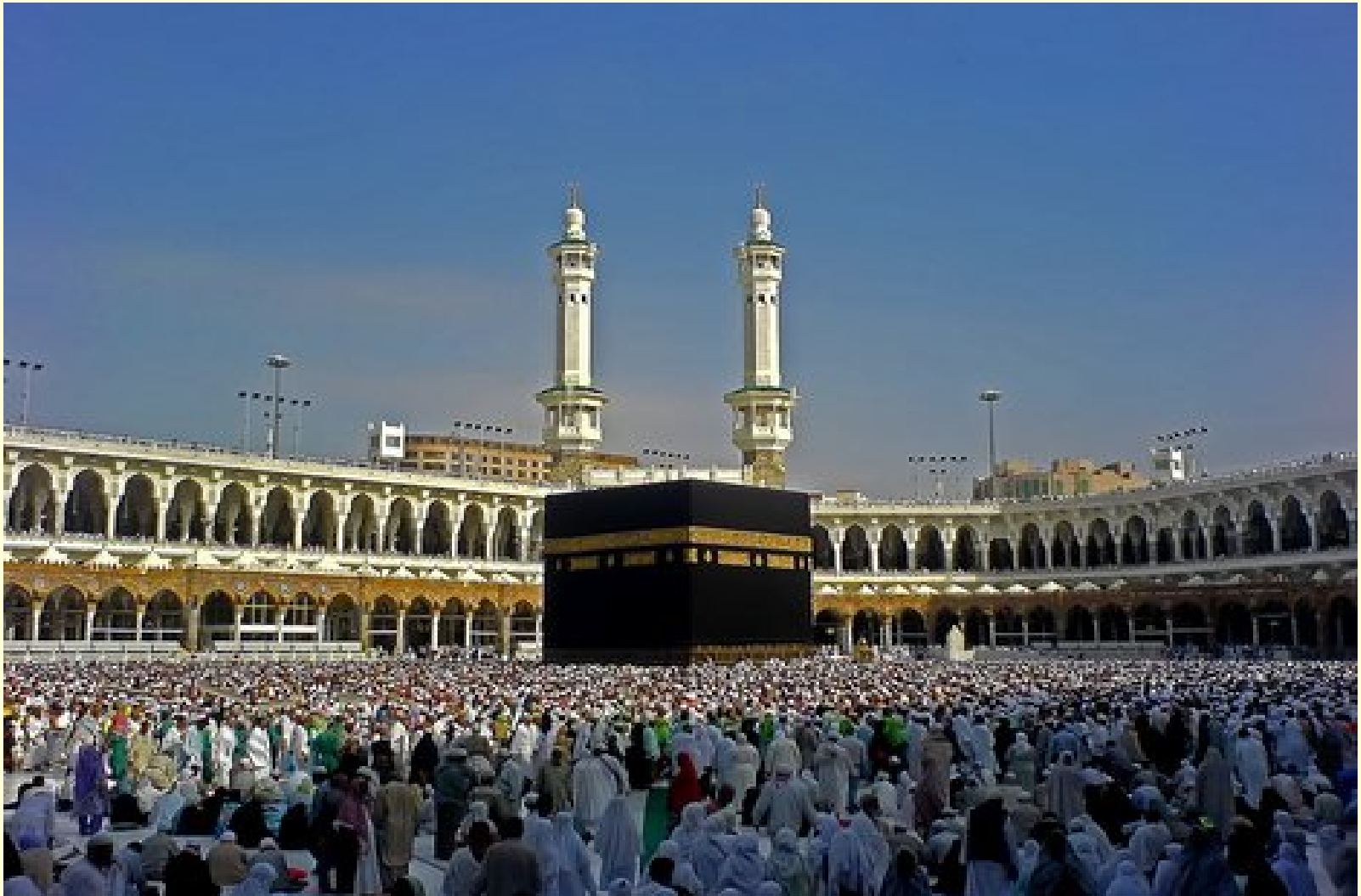
According to recent estimates, the top 4 religions in the world (based on number of followers) are:

- #1 – **Christianity** (2.4 billion followers)
- #2 – **Islam** (1.7 billion followers)
- #3 – **Hinduism** (1 billion followers)
- #4 – **Buddhism** (500 million followers)

Of those religions, only one claims that
its founder rose from the dead



Islam certainly doesn't make that claim. In fact, Muslims still worship at the mosque in Medina where Mohammed (who founded Islam) was (and still is) buried in 632 A.D.



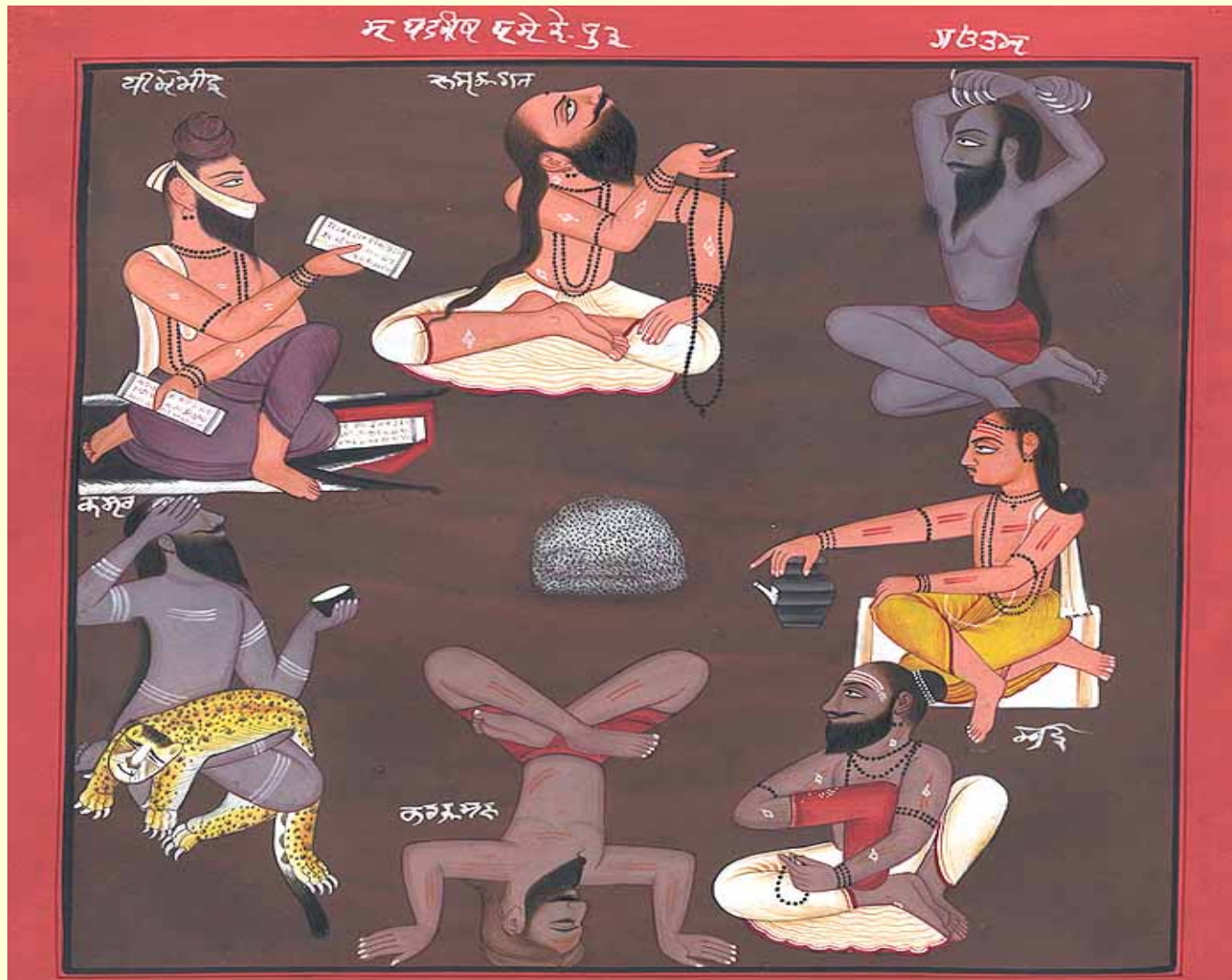
Buddhists don't make that claim either. Buddhists still worship at the stupa (a large religious mound) where Buddha (who founded Buddhism) was cremated in 483 B.C.



And Hinduism certainly
doesn't make that claim

In fact, Hinduism
doesn't even have an
individual founder

Rather, Hinduism emerged thousands of years ago in India when seven so-called wise men combined different religious beliefs into one belief system



And ended up with a religion that, at last count,
believes in thousands of gods



This makes Christianity unique among all world religions in claiming that its founder rose from the dead



Lunatic?

But why do we care if Jesus was raised from the dead? Well, what would you say about a woman who thought she was a cat. I think we can agree she would be a lunatic.



Liar?

And what would you say if someone told you they can dunk a basketball over the moon. Well, I think we can all agree that he would be a liar



Liar and Lunatic?

Then I think we can all agree that if someone claimed to be the Son of God, that maybe he would be both a liar and a probably a lunatic too, right?



Lord?

But that is exactly what Jesus himself claimed, that he is the Son of God, and he even told the disciples in John 14:6:



**"I am the way, and the truth, and the life;
no one comes to the Father but through
Me.**

John 14:6

So which is Jesus: Lord, liar or lunatic?

- But how do we know if Jesus was telling the truth? How do we know if Jesus was just a liar or a lunatic or if he was exactly who he claimed to be, our risen Lord?
- Well, would you agree that if Jesus really did rise from dead, then that would pretty much conclusively prove he was right and is not only the Son of God but also the only way to Heaven like he claimed
- Which by definition means all other religions claiming to show people the way to Heaven and how to get to God would have to be false
- And it would also mean that all other famous religious leaders throughout history were nothing more than misguided false prophets

*Which is why
whether Jesus was or was
not raised from the dead is
the most important question
we will ever ask, since all of
Christianity stands or falls
on the Resurrection*

In fact, the Apostle Paul knew how important the Resurrection was, which is why he wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:14:

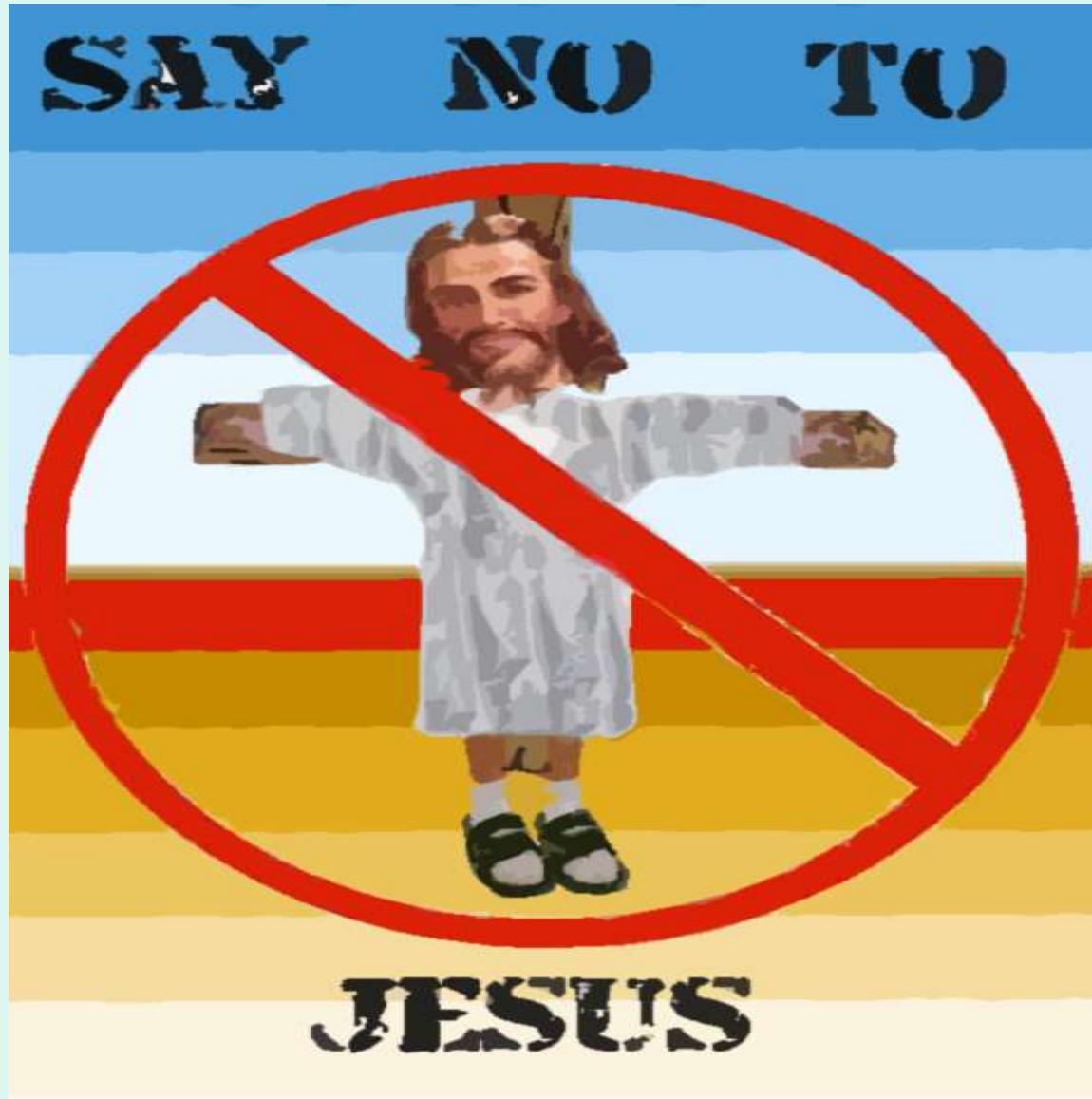
“And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.”

But how do we know it's true? How do we know if Jesus really was who he claimed to be, if he really was raised from the dead?

Are You Telling
The Truth.?

No
Lies!

After all, the world tells us that Jesus being raised from the dead is just an ancient myth



But the Bible stands firm in claiming that Jesus was raised from the dead and, in fact, **COMMANDS** us to defend our faith in him:

“Always be prepared to give a defense to everyone who asks you to explain the hope you have.”

(1 Peter 3:15)

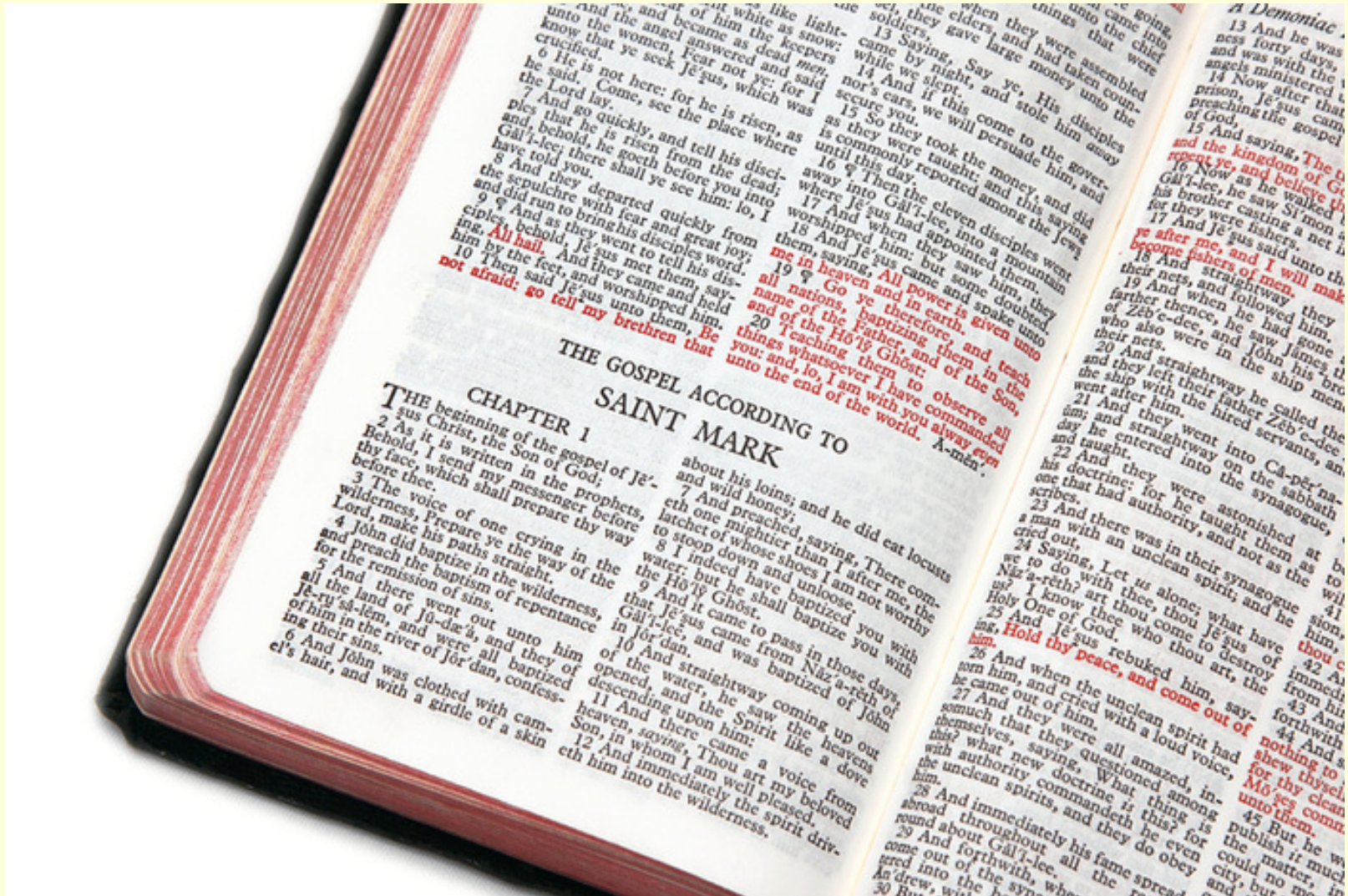
We are called to defend Jesus in this life, so that he will defend us in the next life



So let's pretend we are defense lawyers putting forth
the best evidence we have to defend our faith



Let's look first at the evidence from the Bible (especially the Gospels), which is by far the most reliable of all ancient writings



First of all, we know from the Gospels there really was a man named Jesus of Nazareth who lived 2,000 years ago, and that Jesus clearly claimed to be the Son of God



We know that early in the morning one Friday during Passover week, Jesus was falsely arrested and faced a sham (i.e., fake) trial by the Sanhedrin (the ruling Jewish authorities)



And was then ordered to be crucified by Pontius Pilate (the Roman Governor)



We know Jesus was severely scourged (i.e., whipped) and beaten before being crucified



Evidence for the Resurrection from the Bible:

- Crucifixion victims usually took two to three days to die
- But we know from the Gospels that Jesus was only on the cross for 6 hours (from 9 am to 3 pm) before he died
- We know the Roman soldiers thrust a spear into his heart to make sure he was dead
- And we know Pontius Pilate was so surprised when he heard Jesus had died so quickly (probably from being beaten so badly) that he summoned a Roman centurion to question him

While the dates range from 29 A.D. to 33 A.D.,
many historians believe that the crucifixion
occurred in April of 33 A.D.

A.D. 33

**THE YEAR THAT CHANGED
THE WORLD**

More Evidence from the Bible:

- After Jesus died, we know that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus asked Pontius Pilate for the body
- And they then buried Jesus in a new tomb that was owned by Joseph of Arimathea
- We know that a large stone was then rolled in front of the tomb
- Consistent with traditional Jewish burial practices, the disc-shaped stone would have been rolled into a deep groove to securely lodge the stone in place and seal the tomb

Jewish burial stones were massive (look how big the one below is compared to the tomb's entrance) and usually weighed between 2,000 to 4,000 pounds



We know the tomb was guarded by armed Roman soldiers (at least four and possibly as many as 16 or more guards)



More Evidence from the Bible:

- The Gospels also record that an official seal of the Roman Empire was placed across the stone (anyone who broke this seal would automatically be crucified upside down)
- We know that Jesus was wrapped head to toe in burial clothes (thick strips of linen) and 75 pounds of spices
- We know that Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses, who were both at the Cross, followed Joseph and Nicodemus to the tomb
- This means that they, along with Joseph and Nicodemus, knew with certainty the location of the tomb

And we know that the two women then went back to the tomb early on Sunday morning where they saw the large stone had been rolled away. They then looked inside



Only to be stunned to find an empty tomb, no body and burial clothes lying on the ground!



The Gospels record that the risen Jesus then appeared first to Mary Magdalene



After that, Jesus appeared to the disciples on several occasions and then he appeared to numerous other people



The Gospels record that after the resurrection appearances, Jesus then ascended into Heaven



What about the changed lives of the Disciples:

- All told, the New Testament records 12 resurrection appearances by Jesus, 11 of them over 40 days (including one appearance to over 500 people) plus a later appearance to the Apostle Paul
- Just a few years after Jesus, the Apostle Paul wrote that most of the 500 people were still alive and could dispute the claim of the resurrection if it were not true (but none ever did)
- To fully understand the impact of these resurrection appearances, take a look at the radically changed lives of the disciples (unlike us they were actually there, so they know what really happened!)
- The Jews have preserved their national identity despite over 3,500 years of persecution because of their incredible devotion to certain key social and religious structures

The foundation of their culture has obviously been the 10 Commandments given by God to Moses



The changed lives of the Disciples:

- And their religious and social rules also included:
 - animal sacrifices for the forgiveness of sin;
 - observing Saturday as the day of rest; and
 - the belief in God as one Person (not three Persons)
- In particular, to claim there is one God manifested in three Persons was the ultimate blasphemy, punishable by death

Jews were taught that abandoning these beliefs (especially that God was one Person) would get you an eternity in Hell, forever separated from God



The changed lives of the Disciples:

- Yet within weeks after the crucifixion, the disciples along with thousands of other Jews were willing to give up these beliefs to worship Jesus as Lord
- What else could have happened (besides them seeing the risen Jesus) that caused them to risk their eternal destiny and abruptly throw away everything they had ever believed in?
- When Jesus was crucified, only John was there. The other 10 disciples were hiding in shame, fearful they might be next
- But then after claiming to see the risen Christ, they were transformed from cowards to fearless defenders of the faith

Peter cowardly denied Jesus three times before the crucifixion



The changed lives of the Disciples:

- But after claiming that Jesus was alive, Peter (and the other disciples) began proclaiming boldly that Jesus was God
- They even fearlessly did this before the Sanhedrin Council, which had condemned Jesus to death just weeks earlier
- The change in the disciples was immediate too. They began publicly proclaiming that Jesus was Lord at the Feast of Pentecost, a mere 50 days after the crucifixion
- And it was not a temporary change either. Besides Judas (who hanged himself), 10 of the 11 disciples (except John) died defending their claim that Jesus rose from the dead

Now someone might die for what they mistakenly think is true (like the terrorists who died attacking the World Trade Centers)



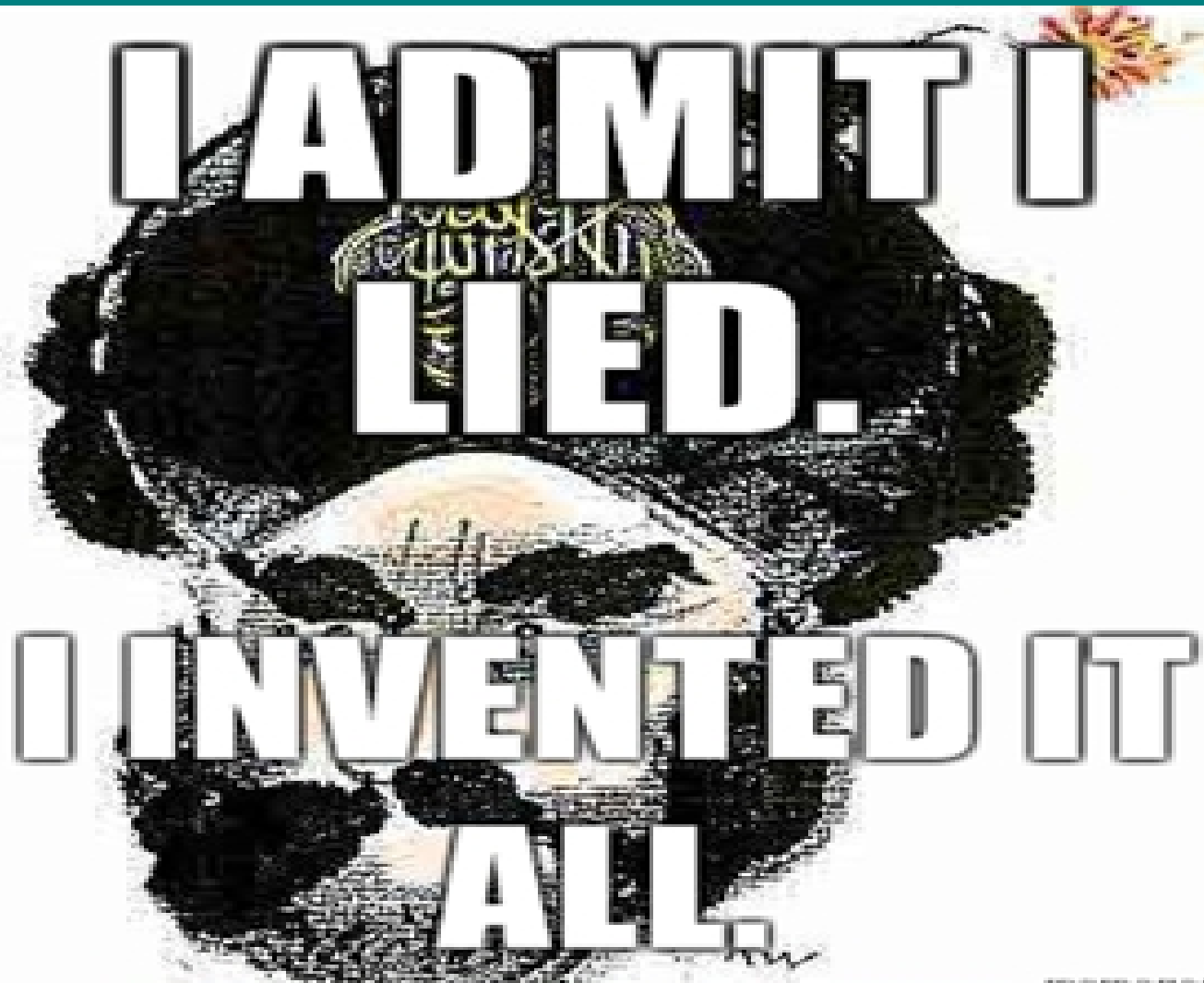
But no one dies for what they know is a lie. So while lots of people tell lies (especially if they get caught doing something bad), we know from personal experience they are never willing to die for that lie!



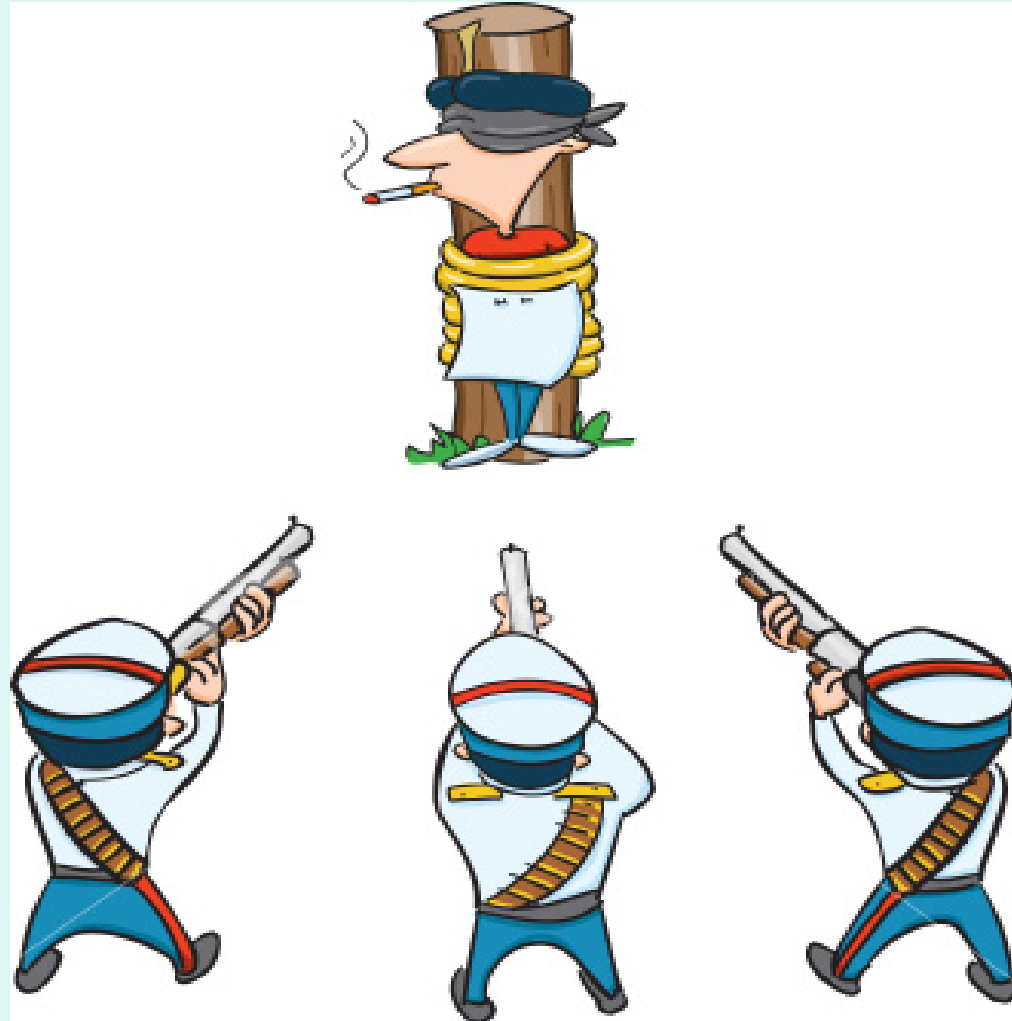
After all, if you were about to die for what you **KNEW** was a lie (not where you **mistakenly** thought something was true, but where you **knew** it was a lie), wouldn't you just ...



**Admit the lie and save your
life!!!!!!**



But what did the disciples do
when faced with death?



Did they admit it was a big hoax?

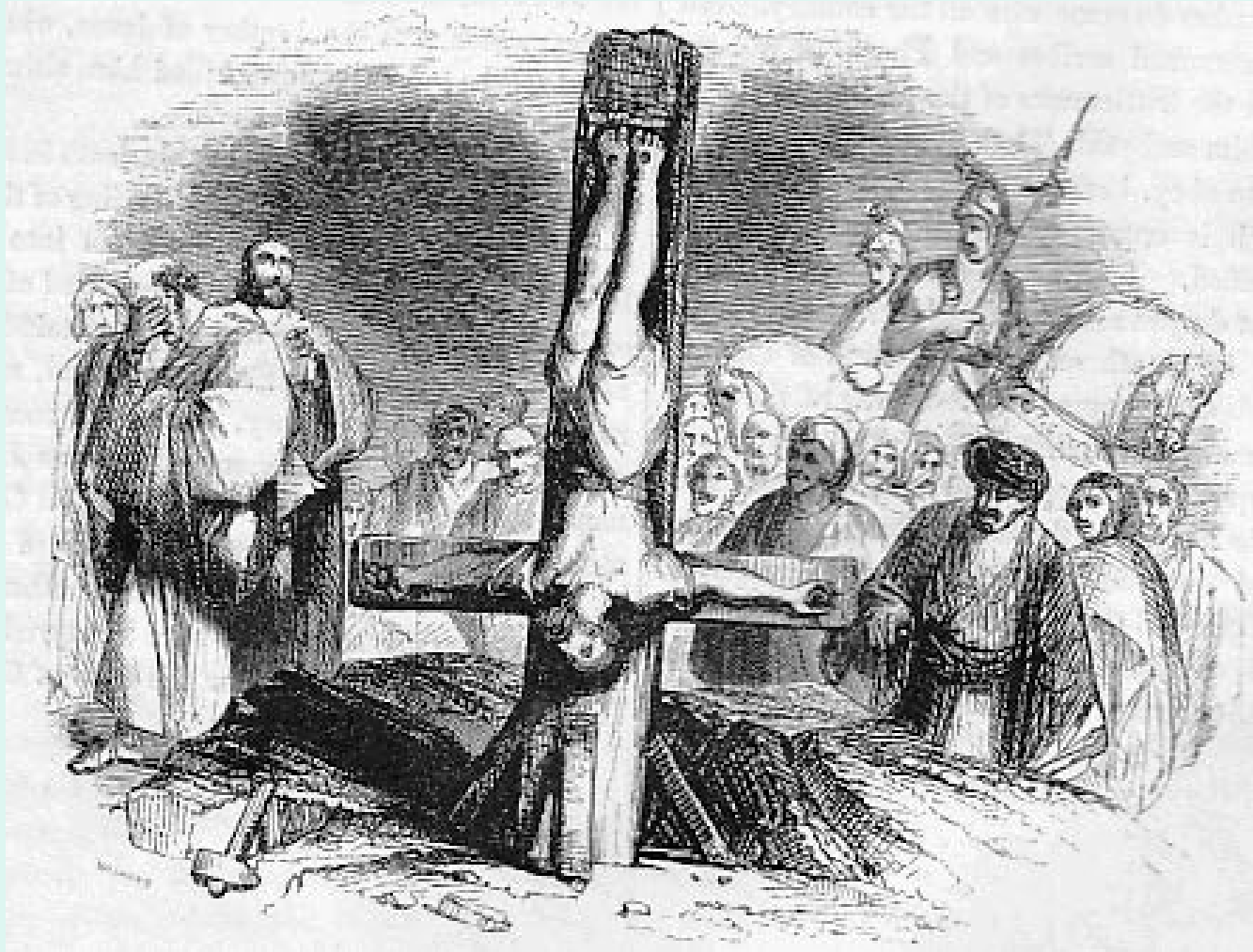
Did they say it was just a practical joke?

Did they turn their backs on Jesus?

Or did they say until the very end that they saw Jesus raised from the dead?

Well, let's find out

Peter never denied Jesus, and as a result he was crucified upside down by Emperor Nero in Rome



Andrew didn't deny Jesus either and he was crucified at Patras (a town in Greece) on a cross that was stationed on its side like a giant "X"



Bartholomew was crucified upside down in Allanum (a town near Russia), while James (the son of Alphaeus, pictured below) was stoned to death while preaching in Jerusalem



Thaddeus (also called Jude) was crucified in Edessa, and the other **James** (pictured below), who was John's brother, was beheaded by Herod Agrippa when preaching in Judea



John died a natural death, but only after being cast into a cauldron (or large pot) of boiling oil. After miraculously surviving, he was then banished to the Island of Patmos



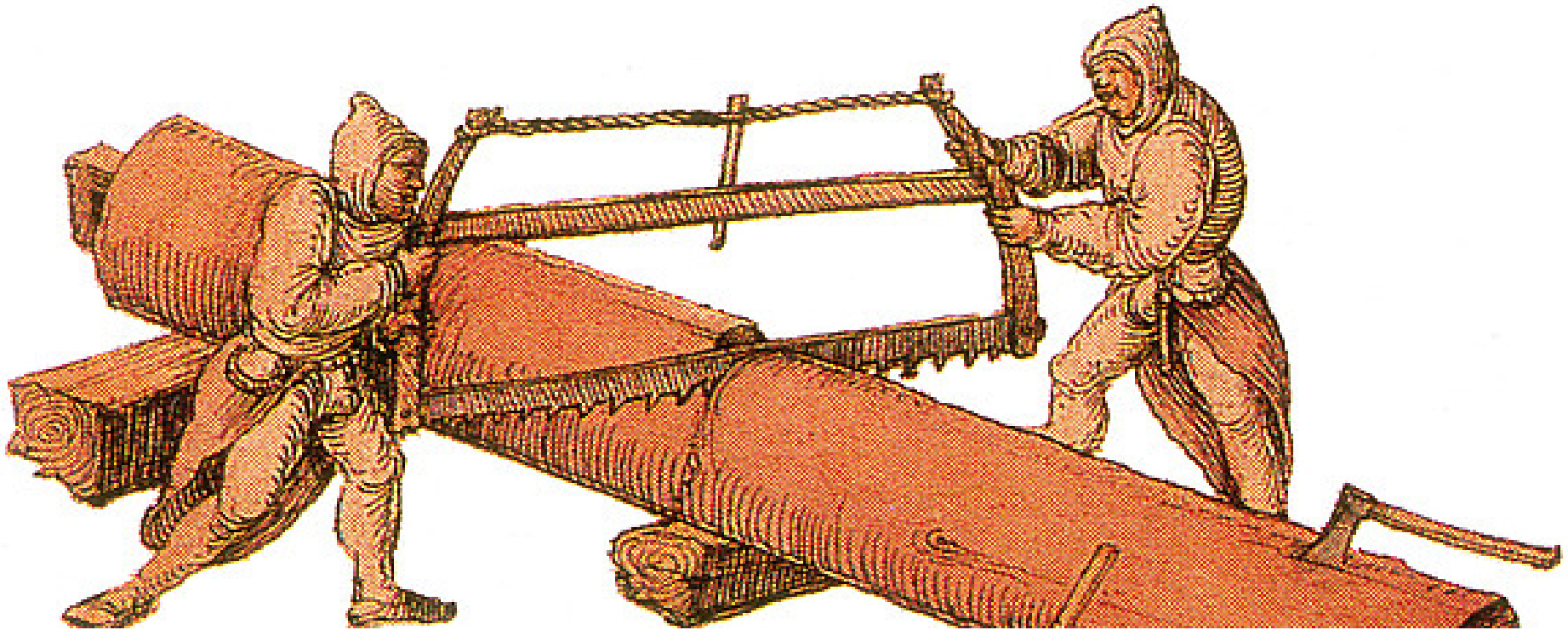
Philip was scourged and then crucified upside down in what is modern-day Turkey, while Matthew (pictured below) was slain by the sword in Ethiopia



Thomas was slain at Calamene, India by a lance thrust through his body (possibly through all of his legs and arms) while he was kneeling in prayer



And **Simon the Zealot** was sawed in half in Egypt or Persia (modern day Iran), something so gruesome you will just have to use your imagination to guess how painful that must have been



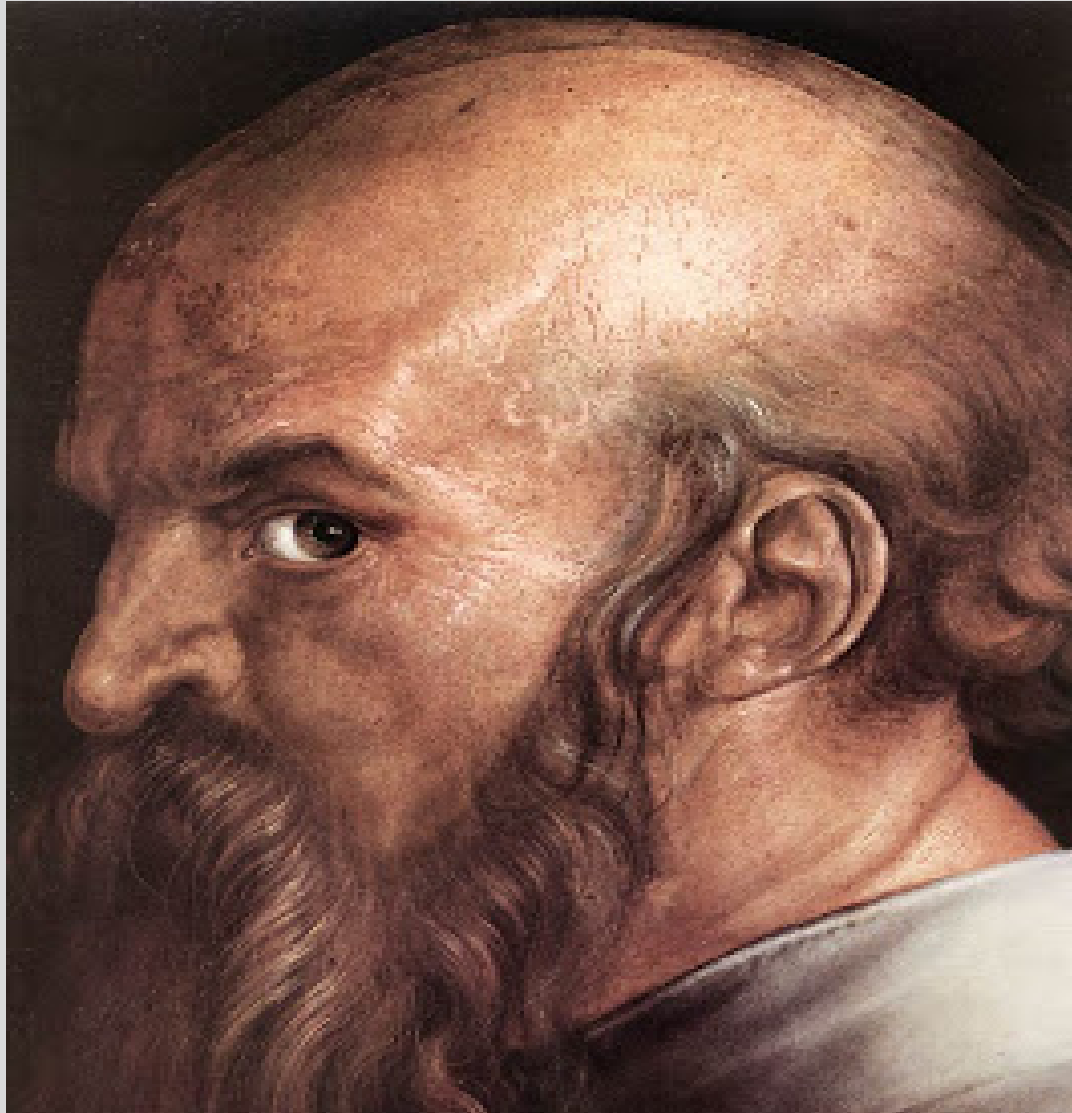
The only explanation that makes
any sense for the disciples
dying for Jesus is that

they **knew** (not mistakenly
believed, but **knew!**) that Jesus
was **raised** from the **dead**

How did they know? Because they saw him
alive and well after the crucifixion!!!!



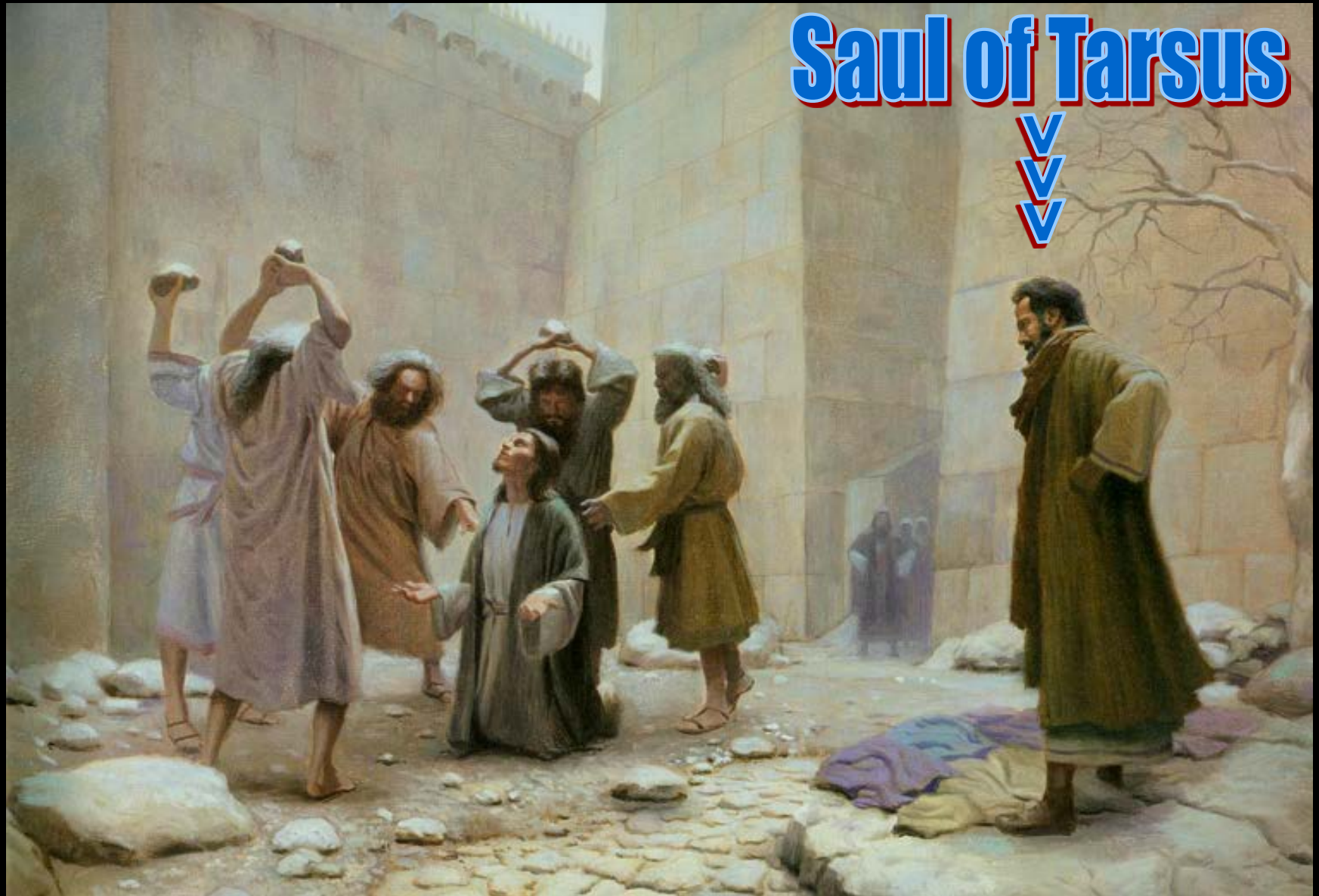
And how else can we explain the dramatic change in the life of the Apostle Paul, a highly-educated Jew who in his younger years was a zealous guardian of Jewish laws and customs



As a young up-and-coming Pharisee, the Apostle Paul (then called Saul of Tarsus) was the leading persecutor of the early church (not just men, but also women and likely children too)



In fact, he was there to oversee the stoning of St. Stephen, the first martyr in church history



And he was on the road to Damascus to round up more Christians as prisoners when he met the risen Jesus

"Saul, Saul,
Why do you persecute me?"



Conversion of the Apostle Paul:

- After meeting the risen Christ, Paul underwent one of the most dramatic transformations in history
- Paul, who was a Roman citizen as well as a Jew, started going by his Roman name of “Paul” instead of his Jewish name of “Saul”
- In other words, the man who was once considered himself a “Jew of Jews” no longer viewed being Jewish as important
- And, instead of persecuting Christians, he became the most staunch defender of Christianity in history

Over a 20-year period, he went on three missionary journeys throughout the known world to tell everyone about Jesus, before eventually ending up in Rome



During his missionary journeys, the Apostle Paul faced tremendous persecution:

“I have ... been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move.”

(2 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Despite all the physical beatings and hardships, the Apostle Paul stayed faithful enough to write half of the New Testament (13 of the 27 books)



And during 30 years of suffering for Jesus, the Apostle Paul never denied Jesus, and because of it he was beheaded by Emperor Nero in Rome in 68 A.D.



Why would Paul go from
having people who believe in
Jesus killed to he himself dying for
Jesus unless he knew (not mistakenly
believed, but knew) that he had met
the risen Christ on the
road to Damascus

Rapid Spread of Christianity:

- At the Feast of Pentecost, just **50** days after the crucifixion, the disciples went to the Temple and Peter boldly proclaimed that Jesus is Lord, that Jesus was risen
- **3,000** people trusted in Jesus that day (people who were in Jerusalem when Jesus was crucified). Why would they believe the disciples unless they also knew it was true
- As Christianity spread, first the Jewish leaders and then the Romans began persecuting them, often to the point of death
- Over a **million** Christians (possibly as many as **6 million** or more) were killed for their faith in the first 300 years

They chose death over denying Jesus. What did they know that so many people today don't know?



Rapid Spread of Christianity:

- The persecution has never stopped, with some estimating that between 40 – 70 million Christians have been killed over the last 2,000 years (more than any other group of people)
- Despite this persecution, early Christianity spread like wildfire across the Roman Empire
- In fact, within 300 years, as much as 25% of the Roman Empire was Christian
- In other words, in several hundred years, Christianity grew from 11 disciples to as many as 15 – 20 million people

And it has grown to 2.4 billion people in the world today. Does that sound like a fairy tale to you?



Evidence that Demands an Explanation:

- The Empty Tomb, the disciples claim of the resurrection, the radically changed lives and deaths of the early believers, and the rapid spread of Christianity are accepted facts of history
- These facts demand an explanation – you can't just ignore them. The evidence has been there for 2,000 years and it's not going away
- It is also a fact of history that from the beginning, Christians have given a simple explanation: Jesus rose from the dead
- You can disagree if you want to, but if you don't like the Christian explanation, then you need to find a better one

Your honor the defense rests. We have given what we think is the best explanation for the evidence we have presented. Now we'd like to hear what the prosecution has to say



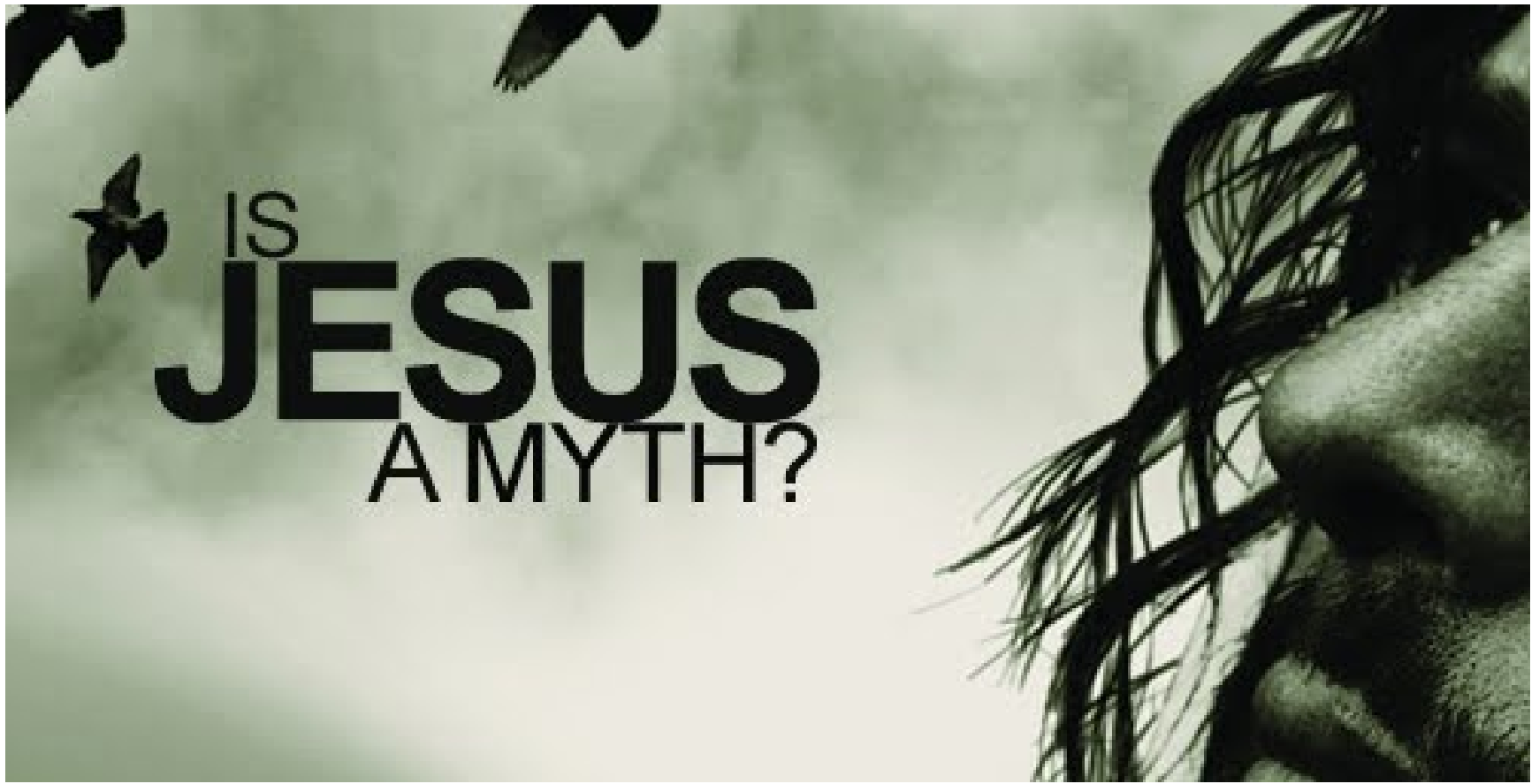
*Now it's time to
hear from the opponents
of Christianity, so let's take a look at
the best arguments against the Empty
Tomb and Resurrection (a total of
seven) that they have been
able to come up with
after 2,000 years*

Let's start with some common objections to the Empty Tomb (and see if they make any sense)



1. The Myth Theory:

This theory says that there was no empty tomb or resurrection because Jesus is a myth and never existed in the first place!



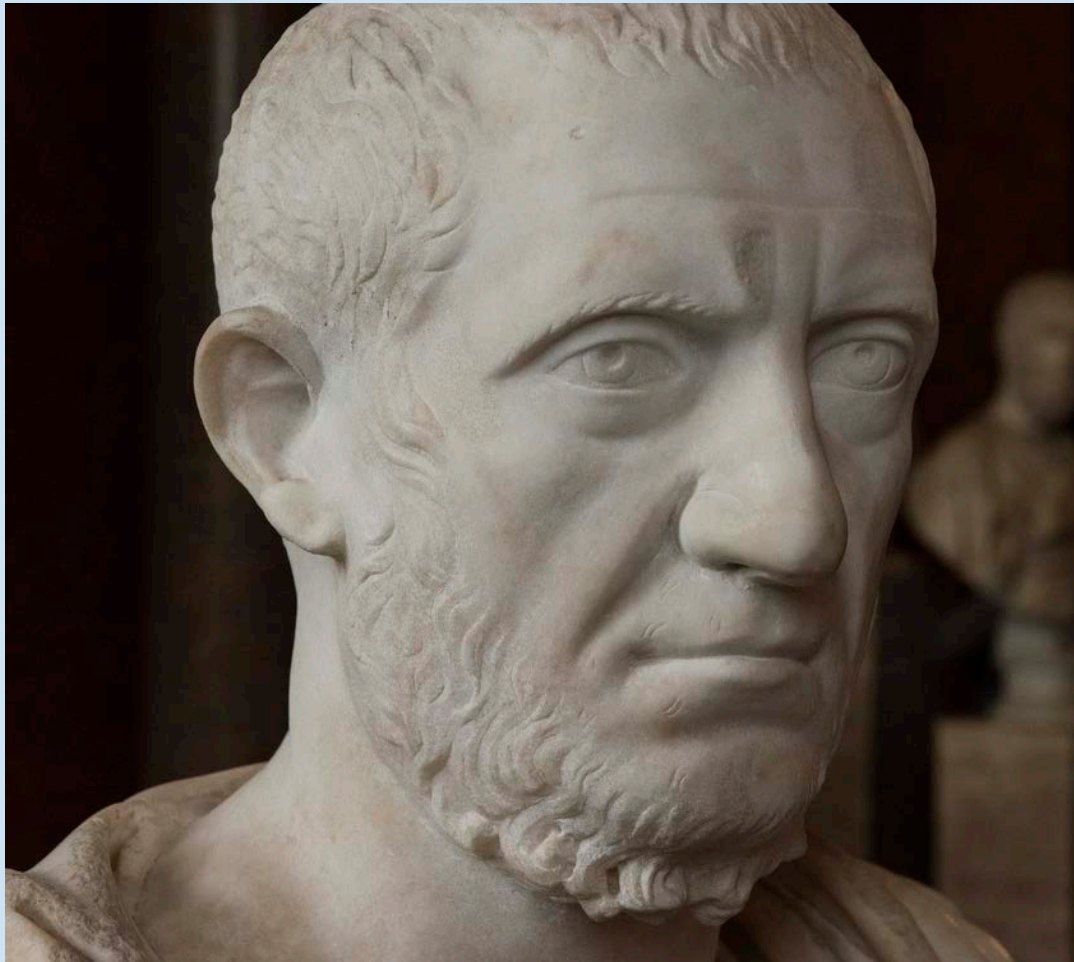
Why the “Myth” theory makes no sense:

- The Bible (especially the Gospels) is by far the most reliable of all ancient writings, and the Bible clearly records the life of Jesus
- And we also have many writings from the leaders of the early Church with voluminous references to Jesus
- This includes early Church fathers such as Ignatius (50-110 A.D.), Polycarp (69-156 A.D.), Justin Martyr (110-168 A.D.) and Irenaeus (120-202 A.D.)
- In addition to the Bible and the writings of the early Church fathers, there are also numerous ancient secular (non-religious) sources that refer to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus

For example, Flavius Josephus was a famous Jewish historian (and Roman citizen) who was born just a few years after Jesus (he lived from 37-100 A.D.) and he mentions Jesus twice in his works



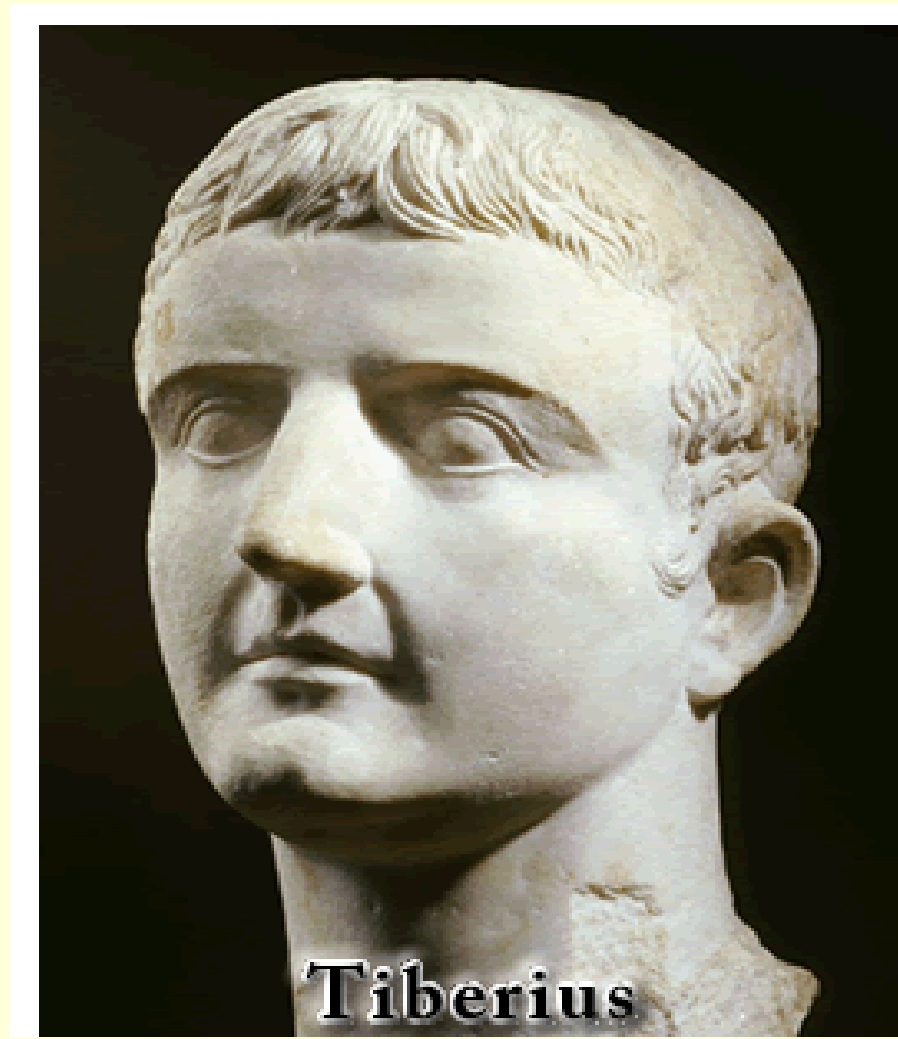
And there is also Cornelius Tacitus, a famous Roman historian and Senator who was born just a few years later (56-117 A.D.). In his writings, Tacitus mentions Christ, his execution by Pontius Pilate and the existence of early Christians in Rome



More problems with the “Myth” theory:

- Other well-known Roman historians and officials who mentioned Jesus include Pliny the Younger (who lived from 61-113 A.D.) and Suetonius (who lived from 69–122 A.D.)
- All told, Jesus is mentioned by at least 11 different non-Christian sources dated within 60 to 200 years after Jesus
- These non-Christian sources were either neutral or hostile to Christianity (Tacitus, for example, referred to Christians as a “disease”), making their testimony very meaningful since your enemies generally aren’t looking to do you any favors
- Plus, when you add 32 early Christian authors, it gives a total of 43 sources from the ancient world that refer to Jesus, making the life of Jesus one of the most mentioned lives of ancient times

In fact, there are only 9 ancient authors who refer to Tiberius (the Roman emperor during the time of Jesus), which means there is nearly five times as much evidence for Jesus than for Tiberius, but no one ever doubts the existence of Tiberius!



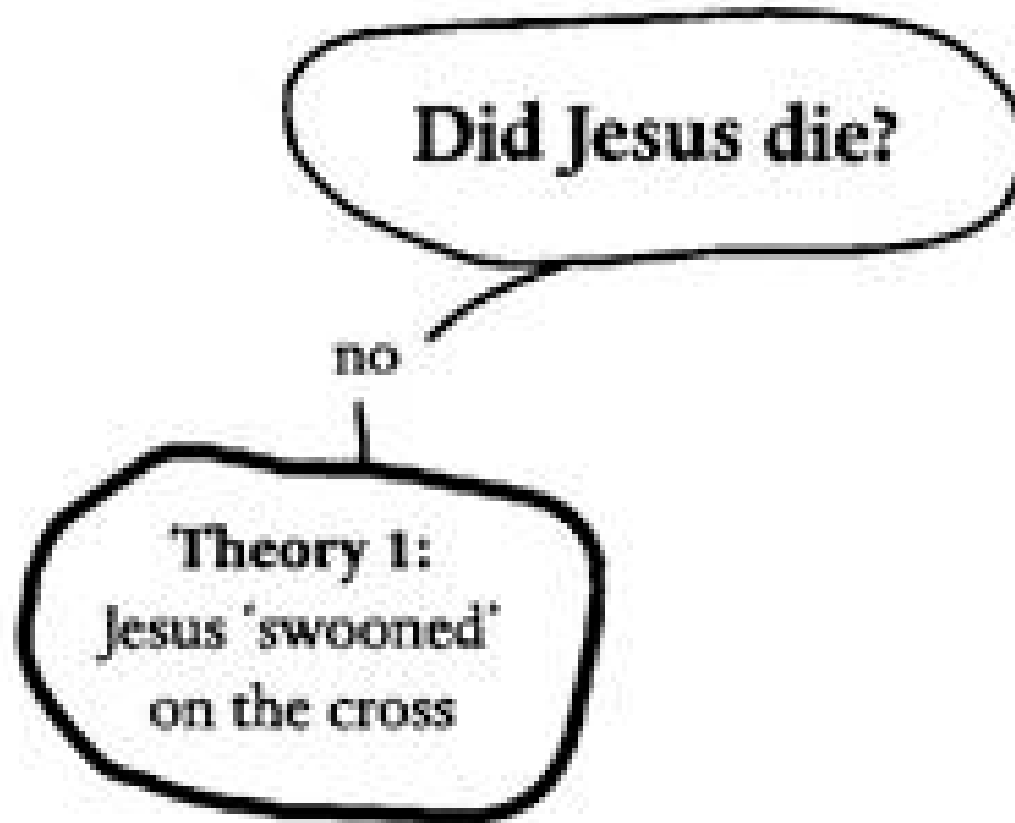
Tiberius

This is why the “myth” theory makes no sense – because even without the Bible, we know from ancient non-Christian sources that:

- Jesus lived, died, and was crucified
- his disciples claimed to have seen him alive after his death (i.e., the resurrection)
- the empty tomb was commonly accepted and not disputed even by the enemies of Jesus (the Jewish and Roman rulers)
- the number of believers spread rapidly and widely after the claimed resurrection appearances
- and believers from the very beginning worshipped Jesus as God

2. The Swoon Theory:

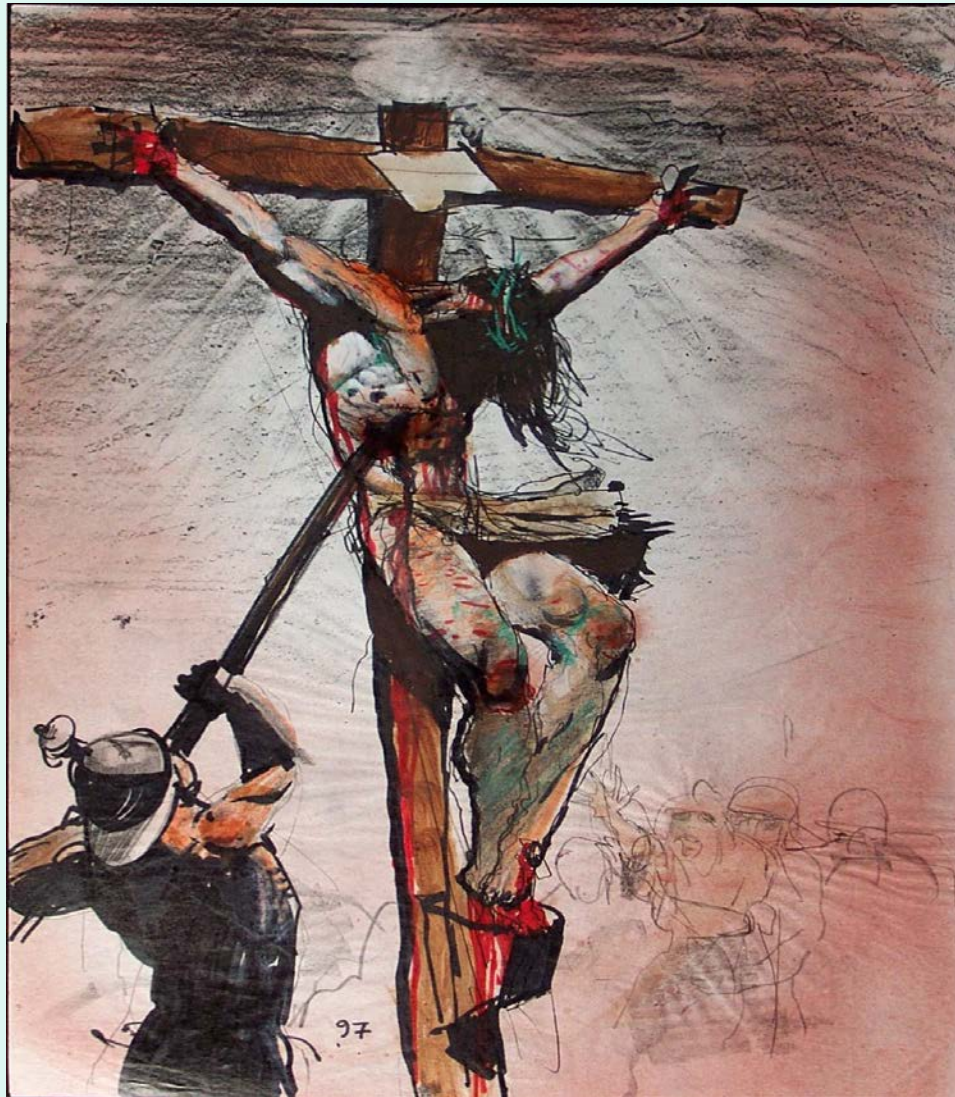
This theory says that Jesus didn't die but only passed out on the cross and was then revived in the tomb



Why the “Swoon” theory makes no sense:

- An American Medical Association study in the 1970’s concluded that a person could not possibly survive a crucifixion
- Jesus was severely whipped (i.e., scourged) and beaten beforehand, which makes surviving a crucifixion that much more impossible
- Under Roman law, if a soldier failed to kill his prisoner, then he himself would be put to death
- So the Roman soldiers wouldn’t have taken any chances and would have made sure that Jesus was dead

In fact, to be sure, the soldiers pierced Jesus' heart with a spear (John saw blood and water come out of the wound), which by itself would have killed him



More problems with the “Swoon” theory:

- The stones that were customarily put in front of burial tombs usually weighed 2,000 to 4,000 pounds. Who moved it?
- Jesus’s entire body was covered with burial clothes and 75 pounds of spices, which would have suffocated him
- The tomb was guarded by Roman guards (estimates are that there were as many as 16 or more guards), considered among the fiercest and deadliest soldiers ever known
- Given the severe beating and loss of blood, if Jesus did survive and wasn’t suffocated, then how did he remove the large stone and fight off the Roman guards?

A few more problems with the “Swoon” theory:

- Even if Jesus did all of that, how did he then appear so healthy to the disciples that they would call him their risen Lord and die for him?
- If he survived but showed up badly beaten (and not in his resurrection body), wouldn't they have just nursed him back to health, wished him luck and called it a day
- Finally, the death of Jesus is considered by many historians to be the single most recorded event in all of ancient history
- As a result, we know the “swoon” theory doesn't make any sense either

3. The Theft Theory:

This theory says that the disciples stole the body and then lied about seeing Jesus raised from the dead



Why the “Theft” theory makes no sense:

- First, anyone breaking the Roman seal placed on the stone would automatically be crucified upside down (which obviously served as a huge incentive for people not to mess with the Romans)
- Also, grave robbing was a crime punishable by death. If the disciples stole the body, why weren't they arrested for it?
- In addition, the Roman soldiers guarding the tomb were trained killers
- In fact, it only took 60,000 Roman soldiers to put down the Jewish rebellion in 70 A.D. during which they killed 1,000,000 Jews

So bottom line, it would have taken an extremely large group of well-armed and courageous men to have attacked and overpowered the Roman soldiers guarding the tomb



But when Jesus was crucified, none of his followers were there except the Apostle John along with a number of women including Mary (Jesus's mother), Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses



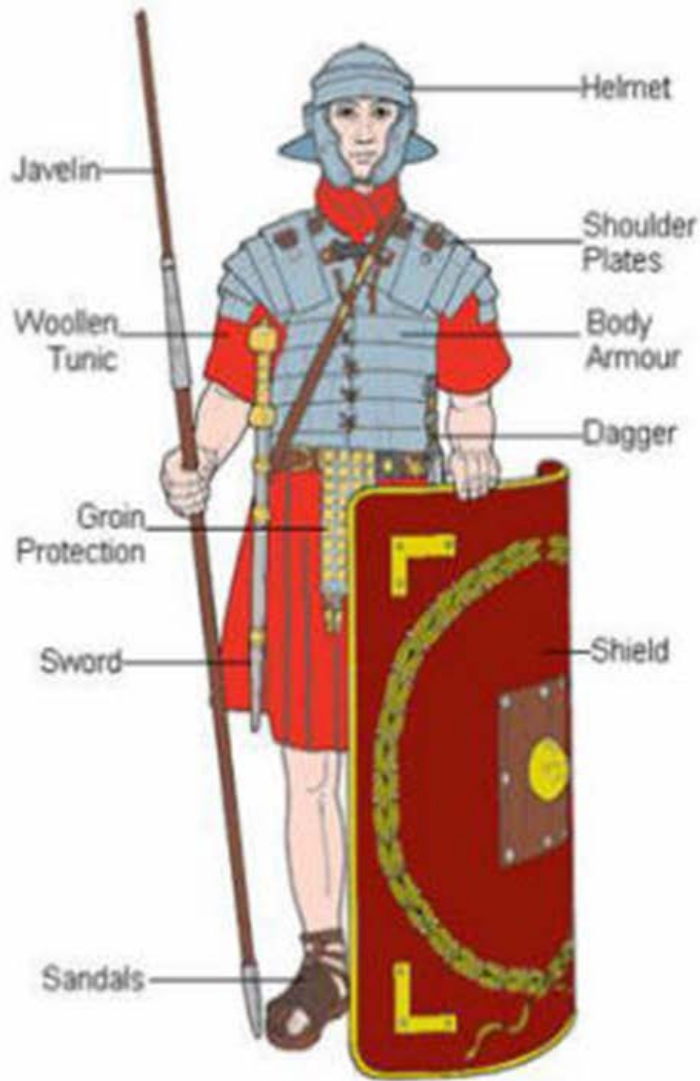
All of the other disciples (besides John) were cowardly
hiding, afraid they were going to be next



More problems with the “Theft” theory:

- They were hiding in disgrace too since their leader had just been crucified, and the Jews considered anyone who was crucified to be under a curse from God
- In fact, they were too afraid and ashamed to even ask for Jesus’s body to bury (Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did that)
- So on Friday afternoon, 10 of the 11 disciples are too afraid to stand with the women while Jesus is being crucified, and are too ashamed to even ask for the body afterward
- But now we are supposed to believe that at some point between Friday evening and Sunday morning, the disciples suddenly got a big dose of courage and said “hey, let’s go fight the deadly Roman guards, risk crucifixion ourselves and steal that body!”

Even if they did have the courage to try to steal the body, how did they overpower as many as 16 or more heavily armed Roman guards?



A few more problems with the “Theft” theory:

- If the guards were asleep (which was extremely unlikely since falling asleep on duty was punishable by death), how did the disciples then move a rock weighing **thousands of pounds** without waking the guards?
- And if the disciples did steal a dead body, why would they then **lie** and tell everyone Jesus was raised from the dead?
- What did they have to gain from that? After all, keep in mind we have **strong evidence** that the disciples faced severe consequences for claiming Jesus was risen, with **10** of the **11** dying horrible deaths
- In fact, let's take a closer look at that **evidence**. First, because the Roman Empire had over **50 million people**, only the rich and famous made the news back then (there weren't exactly CNN and Fox News camera crews in every town), so it shouldn't be a surprise that we don't have much evidence for the disciples' deaths from Jewish and Roman historians

How do we know the disciples were martyred?

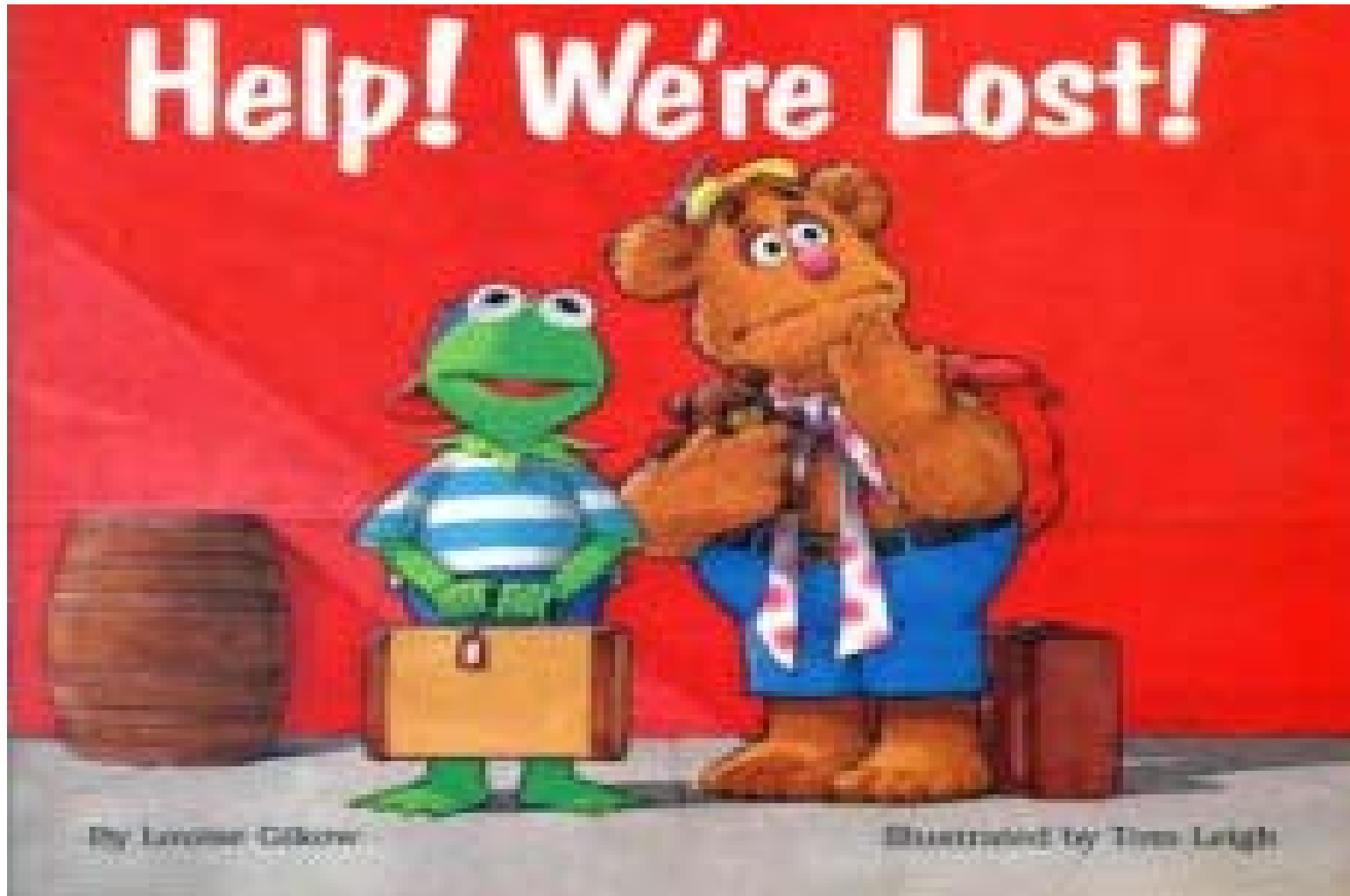
- But one thing we definitely do know from Jewish and Roman historians (along with the Bible and the writings of the early church leaders) is that the widespread persecution of Christians at that time is a fact of history
- For example, Tacitus and Suetonius (Roman historians) record the persecution of Christians under Emperor Nero (around 64 A.D.), while Josephus (a Jewish historian) records the death of James (Jesus's brother)
- And the Bible records that John the Baptist was beheaded, Stephen was stoned to death and Herod Agrippa had James (the brother of John) killed
- As for the evidence for the disciples' deaths, we get that from the writings of early church fathers such as Clement of Rome (approx. 35-100 A.D.), Clement of Alexandria (150-215 A.D.), Hippolytus (170-235 A.D.), Origen (185-254 A.D.) and Eusebius (260-341 A.D.)

How do we know the disciples were martyred?

- In fact, one scholar, after evaluating the evidence from the early church fathers (along with other Church traditions), gave the following grades to the **quality** of the evidence (**9** of the **12** grades were a “B” or better):
 - **Who got A’s:** Peter, Paul, John, and James (the brother of John)
 - **Who got B’s:** Andrew, Thomas, Matthew, James (the son of Alphaeus), and Simon the Zealot
 - **Who got C’s:** Philip, Bartholomew, and Thaddeus
- And there are **no** historical records or traditions that contradict the deaths of the disciples (for example, there are no ancient accounts saying the disciples lived leisurely lives along the Mediterranean coast)
- So we have **strong evidence** the disciples really did die for Jesus. Since **NO ONE** dies for what they know is a lie, we know they weren’t lying and didn’t just steal a dead body, so the **theft** theory doesn’t make any sense either

4. The Wrong Tomb Theory:

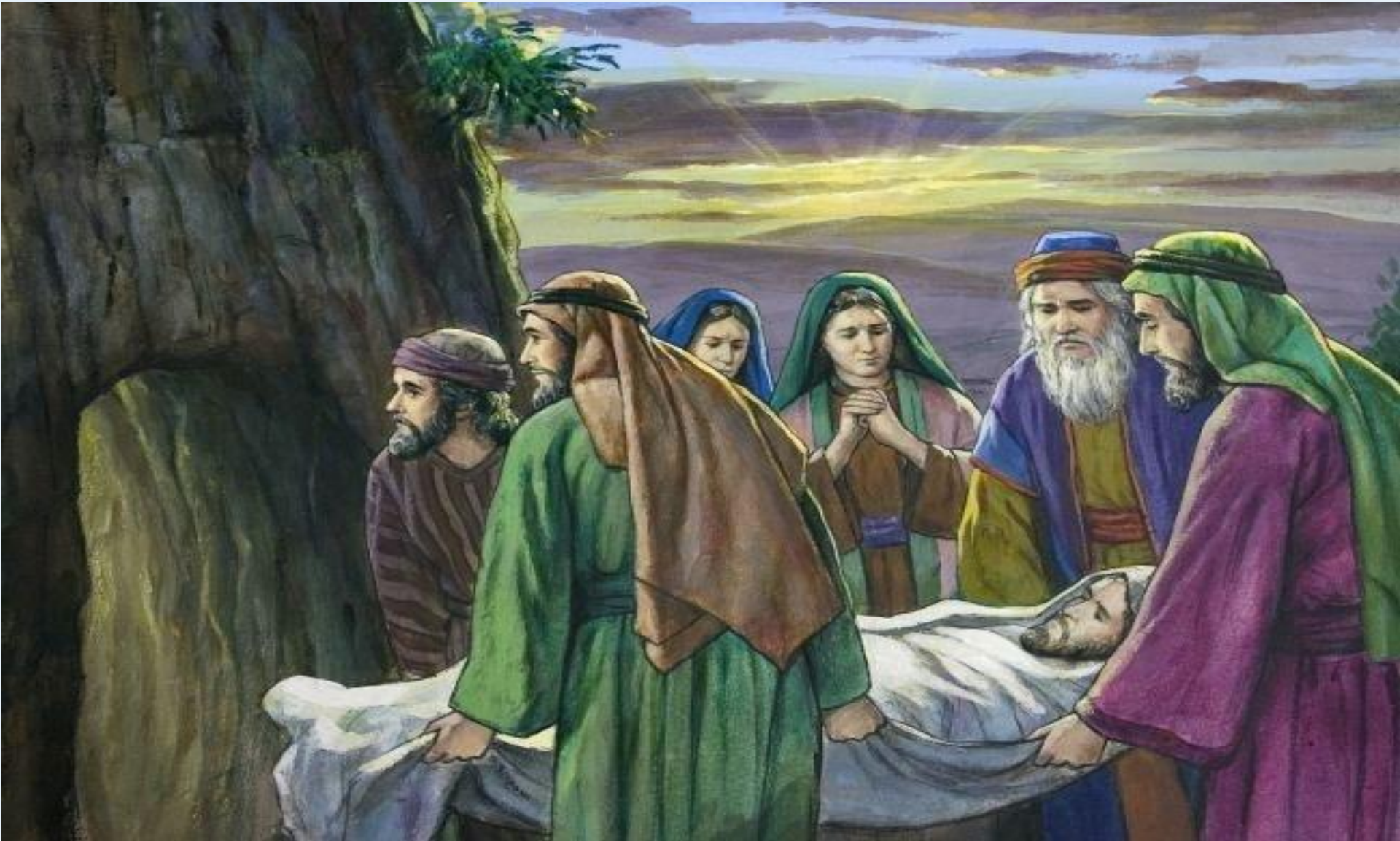
This theory says that the disciples went to the wrong tomb, and that Jesus's tomb was in fact not empty



Why the “Wrong Tomb” theory makes no sense:

- First off, the Jewish and Roman leaders knew the location of Jesus's tomb because they had posted guards there
- Despite that, there is no historical evidence that the Jewish or Roman authorities ever denied that the tomb was empty
- The clearest reason for this is that they knew where the tomb was, so they obviously knew it was empty
- Mary Magdalene and the other Mary also knew where the tomb was since they saw where Jesus was buried

And Joseph of Arimathea (who owned the tomb) and Nicodemus knew where the tomb was since they buried Jesus there



If the disciples went to the wrong tomb, why didn't Nicodemus and the others tell them the right location, especially when the disciples and other Christians were being killed for claiming Jesus was alive



More problems with the “Wrong Tomb” theory:

- After all, keep in mind that well over 1,000,000 Christians were killed for their faith during the first 300 years of Christianity
- The persecution began when the Jewish leaders and the Roman Empire started killing Christians for saying that the risen Jesus was their Lord
- If the tomb wasn't empty and the Jewish and Roman leaders knew the location of the tomb, then instead of killing Christians, why didn't they just go to the right tomb and produce Jesus's body?
- Since they didn't, we know the “wrong tomb” theory (along with the other theories trying to explain the empty tomb) makes no sense

That's it for the objections to the Empty Tomb.
The prosecutor sure looks frustrated. Let's see if he
can do better with the Resurrection



5. The “Disciples Lied” Theory:

This theory says that the disciples either lied about the resurrection to start a new religion or created a legend or myth not intending it to be taken literally



***Liar, liar
Pants on fire!***

Why the “Disciples Lied” theory makes no sense:

- This theory claims that simple men with no reason to lie were actually incredibly deceitful, which strains the imagination
- Also, what did the disciples have to gain from lying except a lifetime of persecution and, in the end, very painful deaths
- And despite what some skeptics say, we know the disciples worshipped Jesus as Lord from the very beginning, and this was not just some mischievous story made up by later generations
- For one, we have good historical evidence that Paul’s conversion when he was on his way to Damascus to persecute more Christians occurred within 18 to 24 months after the crucifixion

And while the early Christians did a great job showing God's love to others, we know Paul wasn't persecuting them for being nice to everyone but because they claimed Jesus was Lord



So it's not like the disciples just sat around thinking up a story; rather, the Bible clearly records the disciples claimed Jesus was risen within weeks after the crucifixion (at the Feast of Pentecost)



More problems with the “Disciples Lied” theory:

- And they would not have been believed by 3,000 people at the Feast of Pentecost or by thousands of others later on who knew Jesus had been crucified unless other people also saw the risen Jesus
- Also, we need to remember the disciples were actually there, so they (unlike us) were in a position to know with 100% certainty whether or not they were telling the truth
- Since they knew what happened, they could not have just been mistakenly deceived – they were either telling the truth (that Jesus was alive) or they were lying
- And as we’ve already seen, no one (that means NO ONE!) dies for what they know with 100% certainty is a lie

Finally, all the Roman or Jewish leaders had to do was go to the tomb and produce the body to put an instant end to the lie (of course, despite all their searching, the Jewish and Roman authorities never did find or produce Jesus's body)



But that shouldn't be a surprise since they weren't exactly looking in the right place, which is why we know the "disciples lied" theory makes no sense



6. The Hallucination Theory:

This theory says that the disciples suffered group hallucinations when they thought they saw the risen Jesus (i.e., they wanted Jesus to rise from the dead so badly that they caused themselves to “see” or have visions of Jesus)



Why the “Hallucination” theory makes no sense:

- There were too many eyewitnesses (over 500 one time) who saw Jesus on 12 different occasions, and many of them were simple fishermen and farmers not prone to hallucinations or visions
- Hallucinations and visions are individual in nature like dreams (and we all know that two people can't be in the same dream). In other words, there is no such thing as group hallucinations
- Except for the appearance to the Apostle Paul several years later, the resurrection appearances all occurred during a 40-day period
- However, hallucinations or visions usually last a few seconds or minutes, not 40 days

In addition, the Gospels record that Jesus ate with the disciples during one of his resurrection appearances, and we know hallucinations don't eat!



More problems with the “Hallucination” theory:

- The disciples also touched and talked with Jesus, which you can't do in a hallucination or a vision
- Hallucinations usually happen only once and usually only to mentally unstable people; but here there were numerous normal people who saw the risen Jesus more than one time
- If Christianity started because of group hallucinations, all the Roman or Jewish leaders had to do was produce the body, which would have ended Christianity pretty quickly
- But as we have already seen they never did that, which is why we know the “hallucination” theory makes no sense

7. The Hypnotism Theory:

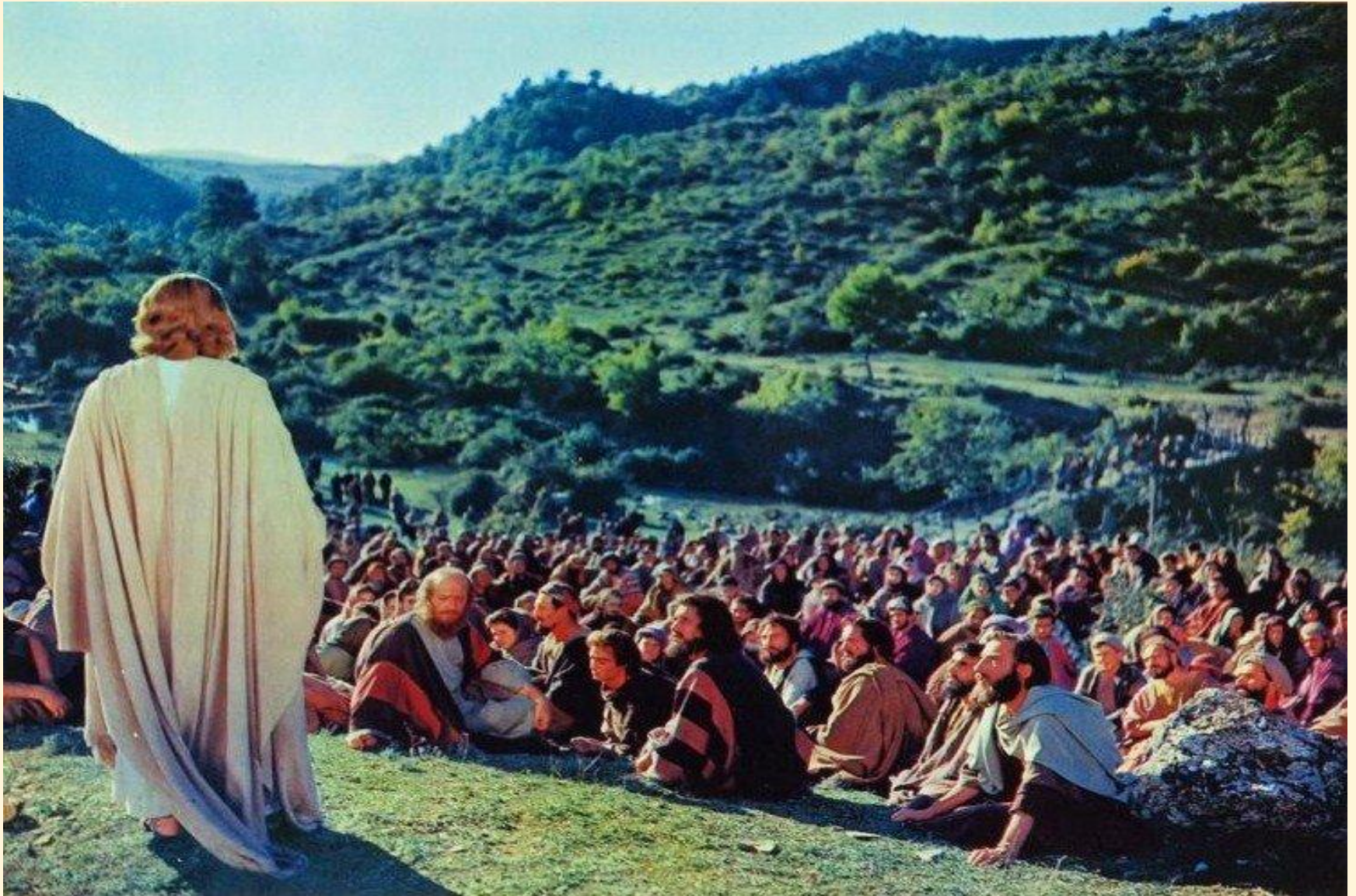
This final theory says that Jesus hypnotized the disciples and planted a post-hypnotic suggestion in their minds so they would see him raised from the dead (i.e., have visions of him)



Why the “Hypnotism” theory makes no sense:

- This theory is similar to the Hallucination Theory (both claim that the disciples had visions or were “seeing things” when they saw the risen Jesus), so this theory fails for the same reasons
- As we have already seen, if Christianity started because of hypnotism or visions, all the Roman or Jewish leaders had to do was produce the body, which they never did
- Also, this theory claims that Jesus was a deceiver, but all four Gospels show he was the most moral person who ever lived
- And people touched Jesus and ate with him during the resurrection appearances, which you can’t do in a vision

Moreover, a trained hypnotist needs perfect conditions to hypnotize just one person; it would be impossible to hypnotize 500 people on a mountainside (where one of the resurrection appearances occurred)



Also, while it's certainly true that a well-trained hypnotist can get people to do funny things



More problems with the “Hypnotism” theory:

- It's also true people under hypnosis aren't under a spell or mind “control” (they are just open to suggestions), so hypnotism **cannot** force someone to **act against their will** (such as willingly die for a false belief)
- Since the disciples would have died for a **false** belief (i.e., they would have died for nothing) if Jesus was not raised from the dead, this means the Hypnotism Theory makes no sense either
- So as we finish looking at the objections to Christianity, remember **two** things: **First**, the objections to the resurrection make no sense since the disciples say they saw Jesus, and no one dies for a lie
- **Second**, as for the empty tomb objections, the reason no one ever found the body is simple: there was **no** body, just an **empty tomb**

And that's the last objection. That's pretty much all the opponents of Christianity have to offer



SOME PEOPLE SAY IT TAKES A "LEAP OF FAITH" TO BELIEVE IN JESUS



LEAP OF FAITH

YOU'RE GONNA NEED IT TO GET INTO HEAVEN.

Others even go so far as to say it takes “blind faith”



But I look at it differently. I think when you consider the amount of evidence for the Resurrection

EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE

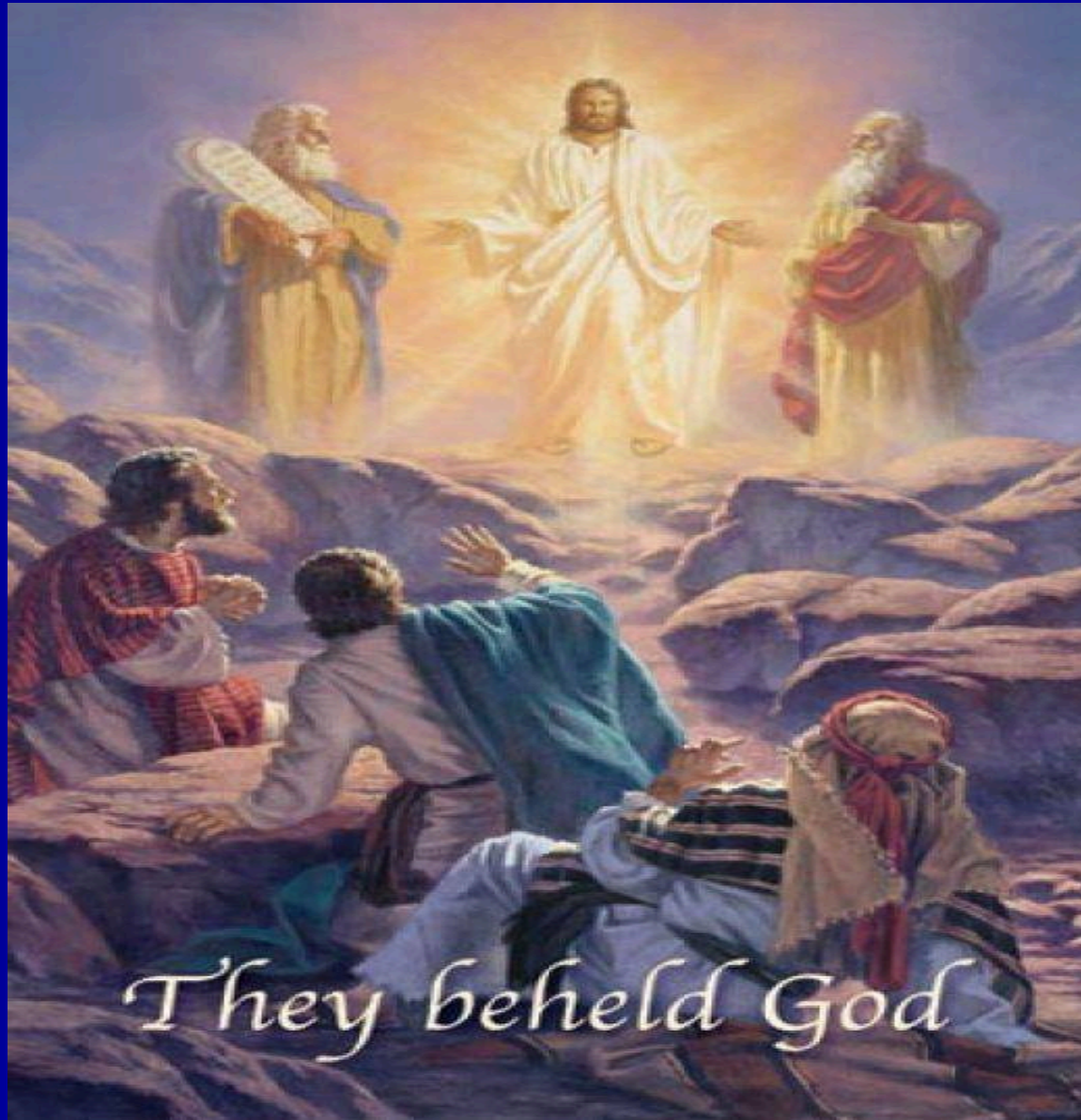
EVIDENCE



And realize the arguments against the Resurrection completely collapse when you take a closer look at them



then believing in Jesus doesn't require anything more
than just opening your eyes to the Truth

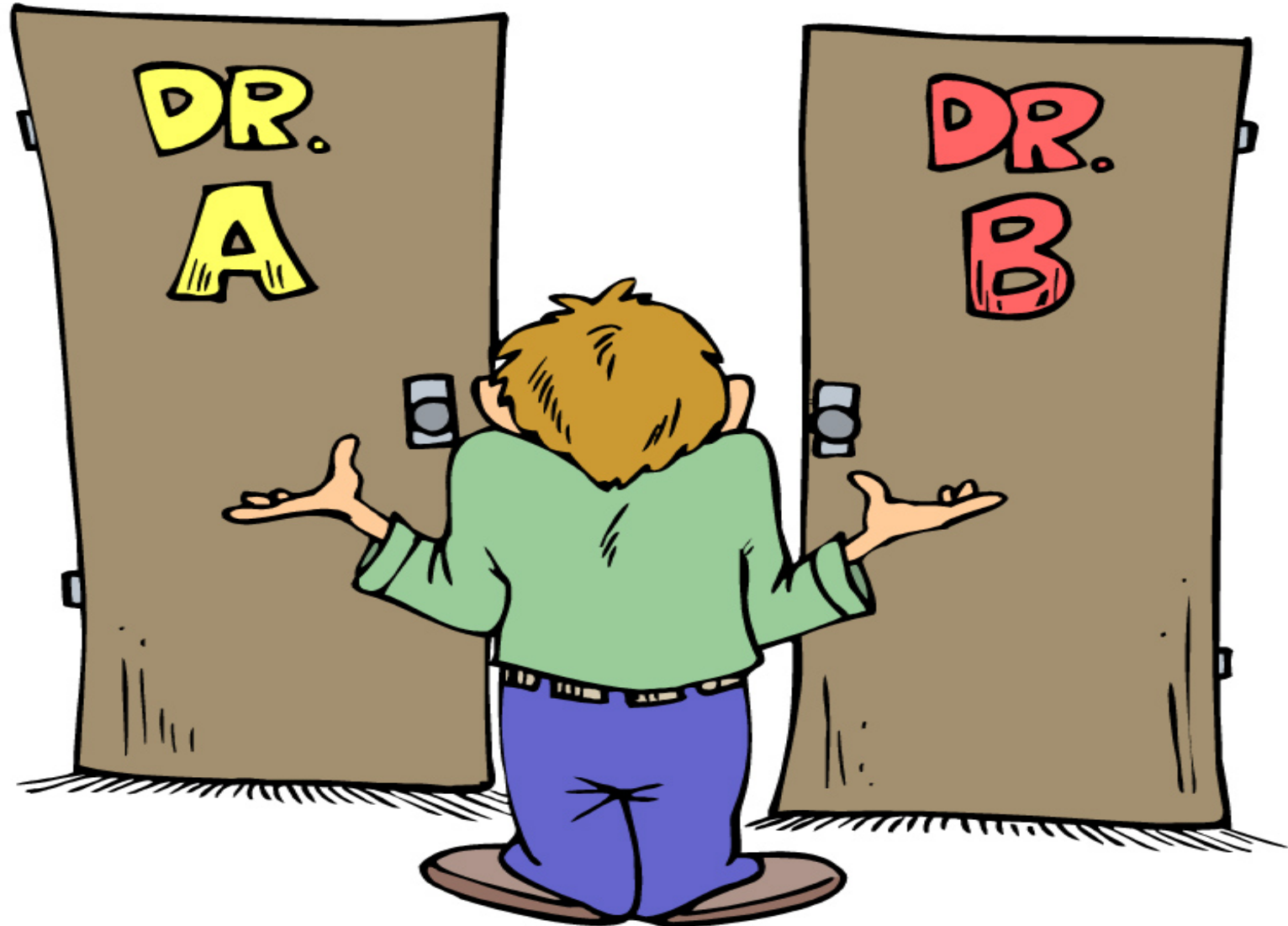


They beheld God

AND ASKING HIM INTO YOUR HEART



but one way or the other, you do have to make a choice, you do have to decide for one side or the other



And Jesus himself said not choosing for him is the same as choosing against him!

what will
you
choose
?

So having heard all the evidence, evidence that demands a verdict, do you agree with 2.4 billion people who say the only reasonable verdict is



He is Risen...



He is risen indeed



WHICH CAN MEAN ONLY ONE THING!

A close-up profile of a person's face, likely Jesus, wearing a crown of thorns. The image is split vertically: the left side is a solid orange color, and the right side shows the person's face. The text "Jesus is God!" is overlaid in a large, yellow, outlined serif font. "Jesus" is on the top line, "is" is on the second line, and "God!" is on the third line. The text is positioned across the orange background and the person's face.

Jesus
is
God!

*And he'll be coming
back one day!*



*King of Kings
and Lord of Lords*

*ARE YOU READY IF THAT DAY IS
TODAY?*



THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION IN LIFE IS
HOW WELL YOU KNOW JESUS CHRIST



On Judgment Day, when God asks you the only question that matters, will you be ready to give the only answer that counts?





JESUS

THAT IS MY FINAL ANSWER.