

## **The Resurrection: History or Superstition?**

**By Miguel A. Canete**

If Christ “has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless” (1 Cor. 15:14, NLT). Paul was absolutely right. And while believing in the resurrection is ultimately a matter of faith, there *is* plenty of evidence that backs it up.

### **The Empty Tomb**

It is undeniable that the tomb where Jesus’ body was placed ended up empty. If this wasn’t the case, we can be sure that someone would have said, “Hey, here is the body! Stop this resurrection nonsense!” But, of course, both the Bible and other historical records show that this never happened.

Some argue that the disciples stole the body while the guards at the entrance of the tomb slept, but this is plain nonsense. Why? Because the tomb was being guarded by Roman soldiers whose lives were on the line if they allowed anyone to steal the body. (According to Roman law, a guard caught sleeping while on duty was subject to death.)

Also, first century tombs were sealed with a very heavy rock that could not be moved very easily, much less silently. So even if the guards were sleeping, the disciples could not have possibly moved the rock without waking them up.

### **The Testimony of the Disciples**

All the disciples suffered tremendously for preaching the resurrection. Peter was crucified, Paul and James were beheaded, and all the other apostles, with the possible exception of John, are believed that have died for their belief in the resurrection. Had they been lying, they could just have said, “You know what? We made up the whole thing!” and save their skin. Instead, they were willing to die for the message of the resurrected Christ. This makes no sense at all—unless the resurrection did take place, of course.

### **The Testimony of Millions throughout History**

Lastly, if Christ did not resurrect, how do we explain the countless lives throughout history that have been changed by their belief in him? And how do we explain the countless miracles reported (and in many cases thoroughly documented) to have taken place in the name of Jesus? One of these miracles occurred to Norma Morán, who lives in Miami, Florida. After a kidney stone obstructed her urethra in September 2002, her kidney “backed up” and contaminated her blood with urine. She was given 21 hours to live. But her family believed that prayer in the name of Jesus worked. They asked many to pray for her, and believed God could do the impossible. Three weeks later, Norma was

back in her house. When she first arrived at the hospital the doctors said she had no hope; now they called her “the miracle patient.” Could a dead god do these things? Certainly not!

Much more could be said, but this should be enough to remind us that the resurrection of Jesus is not a superstitious belief, but a historical reality.

“Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead!” (Luke 24:5-6, NIV).