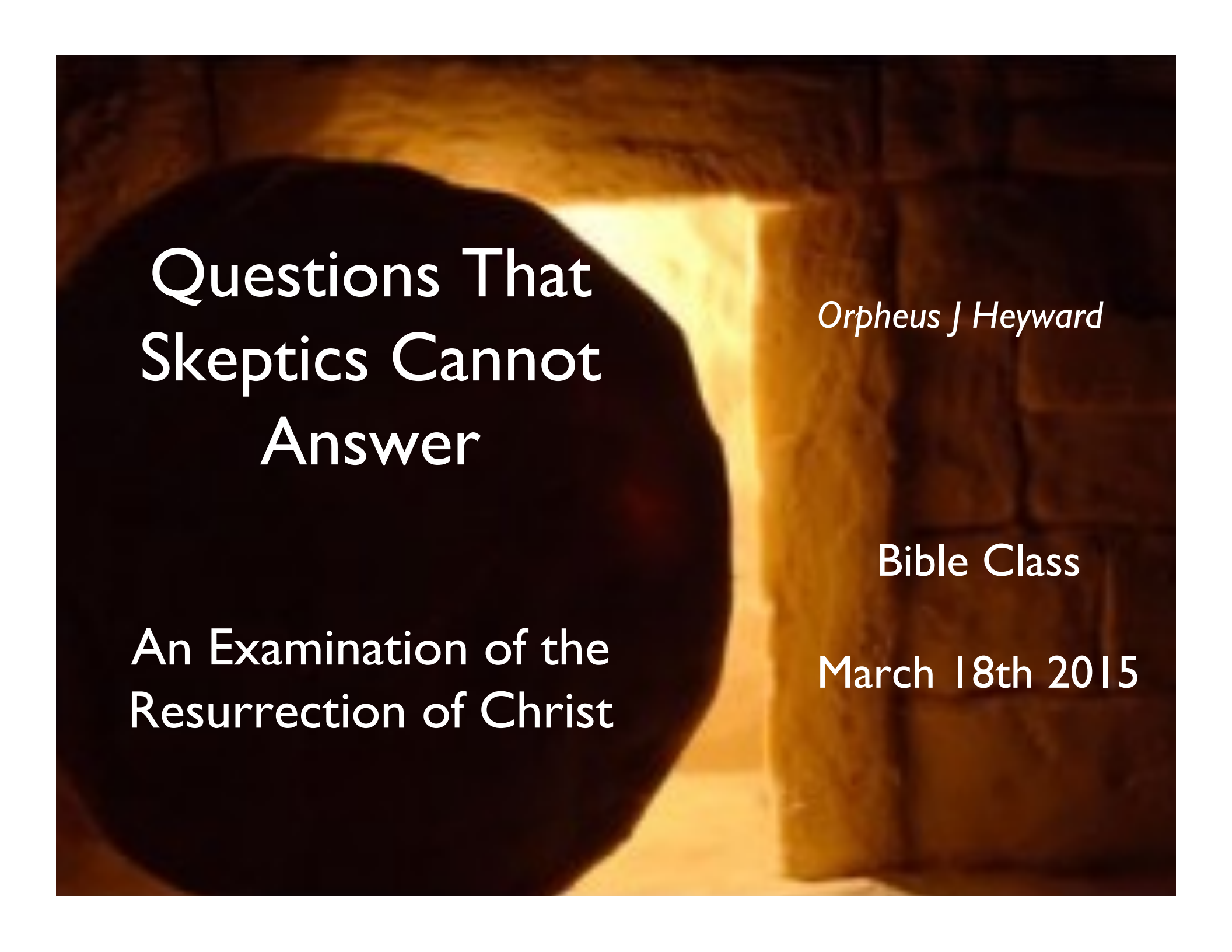




Questions That Skeptics Cannot Answer

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An Examination of the
Resurrection of Christ

Bible Class

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What Skeptics Are Saying

Theories to Explain the Missing Body And Post Burial Appearances of Christ



- Subjectivism of the Apostles.
- The Swoon Theory
- The Hallucination Theory
- The Theft Theory
- The Wrong-Tomb Theory

What Is Evidence According to the Legal System



The probability of truth is based on the volume of evidence amassed for or against it. This is nowhere more evident than in religious truth.

Simon Greenleaf-
“The Testimony of the Evangelist”

“a proposition of fact is proved, when its truth is established by competent and satisfactory evidence”

Dan Story - Author of Christianity on the Offense

“the amount of evidence required is that which leads to a conclusion beyond reasonable doubt.”

What Constitutes Evidence

1. Eye Witness Testimony
2. Reliable Documentation
3. Historical Confirmation

The Claims of Christianity Meet the Legal Criteria

- **It is based on Eye- Witness Testimony**
(Luke 24:48-49, Acts 1:8, 2 Pet. 1:16, 1 Cor. 15:3-8, 1 John 1:1-3.
- **It has Reliable Documentation** - Luke 1:1-4, John 20:30-31.
- **Historical Confirmation**: Tacitus, Josephus, Pliny the Younger, Suetonius...all substantiate the content of the NT documents. The Historical Reliability of the NT is beyond all other [historical documents](#) of its day.

The Reliability of the N.T

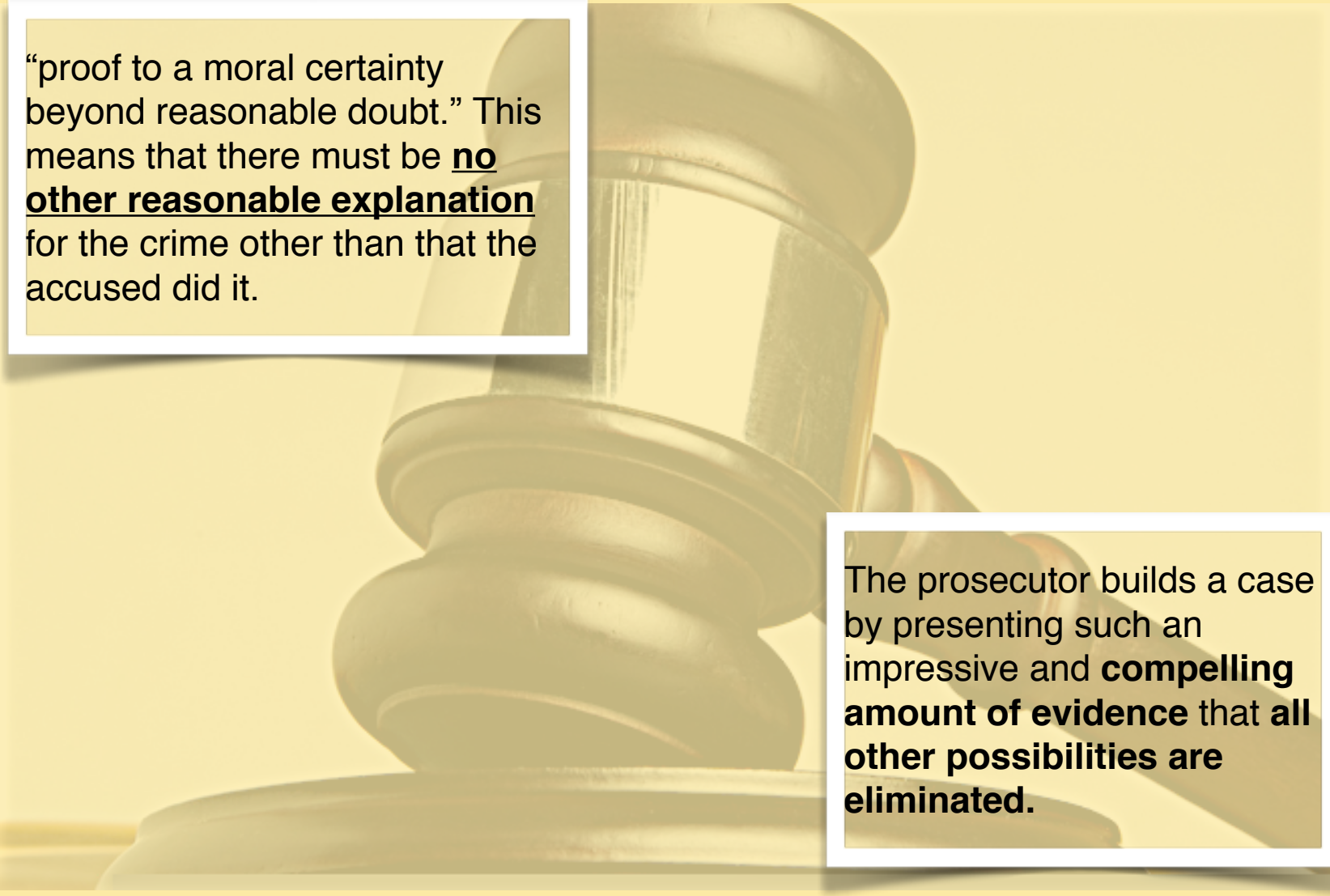
Josh McDowell

There is more evidence for the reliability of the text of the New Testament as an accurate reflection of what was initially written [the autographs] than there is for any ten pieces of classical literature put together

The Test for the Reliability of any ancient document

- I. The Biographical Test
- II. The Internal Test
- III. The External Test

How Does the Court Determine Innocence of Guilt?



“proof to a moral certainty beyond reasonable doubt.” This means that there must be **no other reasonable explanation** for the crime other than that the accused did it.

The prosecutor builds a case by presenting such an impressive and **compelling amount of evidence** that **all other possibilities are eliminated.**

★ Christianity is the only religion in the world in which truth-claims can be tested by legal reasoning, that is, by evidence. All other religions require us to accept their tenets based either on the testimony of their founders and leaders (authoritarianism or rationalism) or on our own personal experience (subjectivism). However, in all such cases, “testimony” is incapable of validating truth. **It is in this sense that Christianity invites Investigation on the basis of substantial evidence.**

Problems Skeptics Cannot Answer

- I. The Transformation of the disciples
- II. The Empty Tomb
- III. The Grave Clothes
- IV. The Post Burial Appearances
- V. The Conversion of Paul

The Problem of the Transformation of the Disciples: A Look at their Skepticism

The apostles themselves did not believe the testimony of others that Christ had risen from the dead.

Luke 24:11

When the women reported it, “their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them”

John 20:25

So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

John 7:5

5 For not even His brothers were believing in Him.

Why The Transformation?

James - An
unbeliever: John 7:5

Peter- Denied Christ
three times -John 13:38

All **the disciples**
forsook him (Mark.
14:50)

James - The Servant
of the Lord (James 1:1)

Peter- A Bold Proclaimer:
Acts 2:22-24

Peter is standing with
the disciples (Acts 2:14-
16)

The Problem of the Empty Tomb

- The Empty tomb was a testament to the fact that the resurrection was a bodily resurrection, and not a spiritualized resurrection.
- The Problem for skeptics is if the tomb was empty, then why was the body not produced to destroy the claims of the Christianity? If the resurrection is not the explanation of the empty tomb, then what alternative do skeptics offer based on observable evidence?
- An undeniable fact, which speaks loudly today, is the Romans nor the Jews disputed the empty tomb.

The Suggested Wrong Tomb Theory

- This is the idea that the woman came to the wrong tomb and led the disciples to the wrong tomb.
- The Historical Record states that the woman saw exactly where Jesus was laid ([Luke 23:50-55, Mark 15:47](#)).
- The Empty tomb stands as a irrefutable fact of the resurrection attested by even the enemies of the Christ ([Matthew 28:11-18](#))

Luke 23:50-55

- 50 ^aAnd a man named Joseph, who was a ^bmember of the Council, a good and righteous man
- 51 (he had not consented to their plan and action), *a man* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was ^awaiting for the kingdom of God;
- 52 this man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.
- 53 And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain.
- 54 It was ^athe ¹preparation day, and the Sabbath was about to ²begin.
- 55 Now ^athe women who had come with Him out of Galilee followed, and saw the tomb and how His body was laid.

The Problem of the Guard (Matthew 27:62-66)

- History suggest that a roman guard could be anywhere from to 10-30 trained soldier.
- Purpose:To prevent a disciple from stealing the body since the “deceiver” said he would rise in three days.

The Problem of the Grave Clothes

- The position of the grave clothes pose a serious problem for skeptics seeing that the clothes were lying in reclined posture.
- This phenomenon is recorded in John 20:5-8 and Luke 24:12.
- The greek term for “lying” literally means to be reclined.
- The linen clothes were anointed with spices to preserve the body, but also causing the linen to become solid.

John 20:5-8

- 5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes **lying**; yet went he not in.
- 6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes **lie**,
- 7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not **lying** with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.
- 8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

Matthew 28:6

And the angel answered and said unto the women, ☩ Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the **Lord lay**.

Notice the interesting parallel in using the term lying/lay. Where the body was reclined, the clothes were still reclined in the same position as if undisturbed. The same term used to describe the position of the body is used to describe the position of the clothes.

Merrill Tenney

In preparing a body for burial according to Jewish custom, it was usually washed and straightened, and then bandaged tightly from the armpits to the ankles in strips of linen about a foot wide. **Aromatic spices, often of a gummy consistency, were placed between the wrappings or folds. They served partially as a preservative and partially as a cement to glue the cloth wrappings into a solid covering....** John's term "bound" (Gr. *edesan*) is in perfect accord with the language of Lk. 23:53, where the writer says that the body was *wrapped*...in linen.... On the morning of the first day of the week the body of Jesus had vanished, but the graveclothes were still there." (Tenney, RR, 117)

The Problem of the Appearances

- 1 Cor. 15 is considered a very old oral tradition used by Paul to establish the validity of the resurrection by showing the validity of Christ Resurrection.
- He uses a three-fold argument to prove the resurrection: I. Scriptural Argument. II. Historical Argument III. Eschatological Argument.
- In his historical argument he declares the appearances of Christ. Skeptics have attempted to devalue this passage by indicating the appearances were really visions, and not actually the resurrected Christ.

1 Cor. 15:3-8

3 For ^aI delivered to you ¹as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died ^bfor our sins ^caccording to the Scriptures,
4 and that He was buried, and that He was ^araised on the third day ^baccording to the Scriptures,
5 and that ^aHe appeared to ^bCephas, then ^cto the twelve.
6 After that ^aHe appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some ^ahave fallen asleep;
7 then ^aHe appeared to ^{1a}James, then to ^ball the apostles;
8 and last of all, as ¹to one untimely born, ^aHe appeared to me also.

The Hullucination Theory is senseless in light of the witnessing of Christ by five hundred brothers at once. The raised body was the body that appeared. It also fails to account for the appearance to skeptics who had no previous commitment to Christ (Paul and James - 1 Cor. 15:7-8)

What is the Conclusion of the Matter?

Albert L. Roper: a Prominent Virginia Attorney

He once began a thorough legal investigation into the evidence for the resurrection of Christ, asking himself the question: Can any intelligent person accept the resurrection story? After examining the evidence at length, he came away asking a different question: Can any intelligent person deny the weight of this evidence?