

## 1 Why I Believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

### 2 Hoax or History

- “After more than 700 hours of studying this subject, I have come to the conclusion that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is either one of the most wicked, vicious, heartless hoaxes ever foisted on the minds of human beings--or it is the most remarkable fact of history.”

### 3 Important Points

- The meaning of the resurrection is a theological matter, but the fact of the resurrection is a historical matter.
- The nature of the resurrection may be a mystery, but the fact that the body disappeared from the tomb is a matter to be decided upon by historical evidence.

### 4 The Bible's Account

- Living Witnesses – The New Testament accounts of the resurrection were being circulated within the lifetimes of men and women alive at the time of the resurrection. Those people could certainly have confirmed or denied the accuracy of such accounts.
- Over 500 Witnesses – Do you realize that if each of those 500 people were to testify for only six minutes, including cross-examination, you would have an amazing 50 hours of firsthand testimony? Add to this the testimony of many other eyewitnesses and you would well have the largest and most lopsided trial in history.

### 5 Josephus

- Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure.
- He drew over to him many Jews, and also many of Greeks.
- This man was the Christ. And when Pilate had condemned him to the cross, upon his impeachment by the principal man among us, those who had loved him from the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive on the third day. the divine prophets having spoken these and thousands of other wonder things about him.
- And even now, the race of Christians, so name from him, has not died out.

### 6 Historical Proofs

- Broken Roman Seal
  - A Roman Seal was a sign of Roman power and authority and breaking a seal was extremely severe.
  - How could Jesus' disciples show signs of courage when they hid themselves? Peter went out and denied Christ three times.

### 7 Historical Proofs

- Empty Tomb
  - Jews themselves reported that the Tomb was empty, but said the body was stolen.

- Jesus' disciples start preaching in Jerusalem. People could go and look for themselves.

## 8 Historical Proofs

- Large Stone Rolled Away
  - Those who observed the stone after the resurrection described its position as having been rolled up a slope away not just from the entrance of the tomb, but from the entire massive sepulcher.
  - If the disciples had wanted to come in, tiptoe around the sleeping guards, and then roll the stone over and steal Jesus' body, how could they have done that without the guards' awareness?

## 9 Historical Proofs

- Roman Guards Go AWOL
  - The Roman guards fled. They left their place of responsibility. How can their attrition be explained, when Roman military discipline was so exceptional?
- Grave-clothes Tell a Tale
  - Who robs a tomb and sticks around and folds the grave-clothes?
  - What attracted the Apostle John's attention was not only the empty tomb, but the position of the grave-clothes.
- The Changed Lives of the Disciples

## 10 Objection

- Body was stolen by the disciples. (Jewish argument)
- Body was moved by someone.
- Jesus merely fainted on the cross. (Swoon theory)
- God replaced Jesus on the cross with Judas. (Islamic argument)
- The church made the whole thing up?
- Jesus rose spiritually in the hearts of the disciples not physically. (Modern argument)


## 11 Theological Implications

- Jesus died and rose again, just as He said He would . . . implying all of the others things He said are true as well.
- His death was no accident, but an important part of God's plan.
- He died to pay for our sins, so that those who believe in Him can "legally" receive eternal life.
- Death is not final and the grave is only temporary.

## 12 Elements of the Resurrection

## 13 Lesson

- I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. (John 14:30–31 NIV)
- The resurrection of Christ shows what will happen with the righteous.
- The Father will honor those who follow Jesus with New Life when they honor Him with laying theirs down.
- Resurrection life is the result of doing God's will!

14  He is Risen!