

The Resurrection

Christ's conquering of death and false god's

Introduction:

On this blessed time of year where we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, it is essential that all believers understand that this blessed event is truly the lynchpin of Christianity itself. Today I would like to go deeper into the narrative as stated by the apostle Paul, of what happened during his resurrection, what it means to all of us who believe, and what we have received because of Christ's suffering, death, and victory.

How the resurrection is viewed today:

1. The modern worldview
 - There is no God.
 - Jesus didn't exist.
 - Jesus really didn't die on the cross
 - There was no resurrection.
 - The resurrection cannot be proven scientifically.
 - The witness statements cannot be trusted.
 - The resurrection and the word of God goes against logic and reason.
 - There is no physical proof.
 - Jesus was not God.
 - Scripture is merely a fairy tale.

2. Struggles of modern Christians
 - They have received Christ as savior and ensured their entrance into heaven that have not made him their Lord of their life, becoming a servant.
 - They may not have a relationship with God. They believe in him but don't know him personally.
 - They don't know the word of God, or they do not trust it.
 - They may struggle with belief.
 - They may struggle with their very salvation.
 - They can't see spiritually, only physically.
 - They don't know the inheritance they have received through salvation.
 - They don't see how God views them.
 - They don't see or value God's will, which is his desire for family.
 - They put themselves before God.

The facts: excerpts from the book “The Case for Christ” by Lee Strobel

1. Jesus lived:

- there is more independent documentation about the man Jesus of Nazareth than there is documentation about the life of George Washington, America’s first president.
- Scholars agree that he was a real person and do not take any other view seriously, sighting historians such as Josephus, a Jewish scribe for Rome and not a follower of Christ. It is a non-issue.

2. Jesus was tortured, crucified, and died:

- the flogging itself caused many to die before crucifixion. It was terribly brutal causing hypovolemic shock due to blood loss. He would have been in serious to critical condition after the flogging.
- The crucifixion nails that were driven through the wrists and feet, would have crushed the main nerves in all areas being extremely painful. This is literally where the word excruciating was invented to describe this pain of Jesus. His shoulders would have been out of joint, he would have been suffocating under his own weight due to the restrictions of his rib cage. He would have gone into heart failure due to hypovolemia and fluid around the heart which is called pericardial effusion and fluid around the lungs which is called pleural effusion.
- Then the Roman soldier came around and being fairly certain that Jesus was dead, confirmed it by thrusting A spear into his side. It went through his lung and into his heart when he pulled it out some fluid (John stated blood and water in his gospel), came out due to the pericardial and pleural effusions. There was absolutely no doubt that Jesus was dead. The soldiers’ lives depended on it.

3. The empty tomb:

- The empty tomb, as an enduring symbol of the resurrection, is the ultimate representation of Jesus’s claim to be God. The apostle Paul said in first Corinthians 15: 17 that the resurrection is the very linchpin of the Christian faith: “if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.” Theologian Gerald o'collins put it this way: “in a profound sense Christianity without the resurrection is not simply Christianity without its final chapter. It is not Christianity at all”. The resurrection is the supreme vindication of Jesus’s divine identity and his inspired teaching. It's the proof of his triumph over sin and death. It's the foreshadowing of the resurrection of his followers. It's the basis of Christian hope. It's the miracle of all miracles. In the face of facts, they have been impotent to put Jesus’s body back in the tomb. They flounder, they struggle, they grasp at straws, they contradict themselves, they pursue desperate and extraordinary theories to try to account for the evidence. Yet each time, in the end, the tomb remains vacant. I was reminded of the assessment by one of the towering legal intellects of all time, the Cambridge educated Sir Norman Anderson, who lectured at Princeton University, was offered a professorship for life at Harvard University and served as Dean of the faculty of laws at the University of London. His conclusion, after a lifetime of analyzing this issue from a legal perspective, was

summed up in one sentence: “the empty tomb, then forms a veritable rock on which all rationalistic theories of the resurrection dash themselves in vain”.

4. **The evidence of appearances.** Was Jesus saying alive after his death on the cross?:
-in a conversation with Doctor Gary Habermas, Strobel recalls him stating, “here's how I look at the evidence for the resurrection: first, did Jesus die on the cross? And second, did he appear later to people? If you can establish those two things, you've made your case because dead people don't normally do that. I'll start with the evidence that virtually all critical scholars will admit. Nobody questions that Paul wrote first Corinthians, and we have him affirming in two places that he personally encountered the resurrected Christ. He says in first Corinthians 9: “am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?” And he says in first Corinthians 15: 8, “last of all he appeared to me also.” I recognize that the last quote as being attached to the early church creed that Craig Bloomberg and I have already discussed. As William lane Craig indicated, the first part of the creed in verses 3-4, refers to Jesus execution, burial, and resurrection. The final part of the creed in verses 5-8, deals with his post resurrection appearances: “Christ appeared to Cephas, and then to the 12. After that, he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.” In the next verse, Paul adds, “and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.” On the face of it, this is incredibly influential testimony that Jesus did appear alive after his death. Here were names of specific individuals and groups of people who saw him, written at a time when people could still check them out if they wanted confirmation.

Jesus appeared:

- To Mary Magdalene, in John 20: 10-18
- To the other women, in Matthew 28: 8-10
- To Cleopas and other disciple on the road to Emmaus, in Luke 24: 13-32
- To 11 disciples and others, in Luke 24: 33-49
- To 10 apostles and others, with Thomas absent, and John 20: 19-23
- To Thomas and the other apostles, in John 20: 26-30
- To seven apostles, in John 21: 1-14
- To the disciples, in Matthew 28: 16-20
- And he was with the apostles at the mount of olives before his ascension, in Luke 24: 50-52 and Acts 1: 4-9.

5. **No rational doubt:**

- Jesus was killed on the cross, his tomb was empty on Easter morning, his disciples and others saw him, touched him, and ate with him after the resurrection. As prominent British theologian Michael Green said, “the appearances of Jesus are as well authenticated as anything in antiquity. There can be no rational doubt that they occurred, and that the main reason why Christians became sure of the resurrection in the earliest days was just this. They could say with assurance, we have seen the Lord. They knew it was he.”
- **The disciples died for their beliefs.** It has been proven time and time again, that under the threat of death human beings will not maintain a lie. Not only is it incomprehensible

- that a group of people could maintain a lie for as many years as they lived as Christians, but they certainly would not have died in the terrible manners in which they did, for a lie.
- **The conversion of skeptics.** It's not the simple fact that Paul changed his views. You have to explain how he had this particular change of belief that completely went against his upbringing; how he saw the risen Christ in a public event that was witnessed by others, even though they didn't understand it; and how he performed miracles to back up his claim to being an apostle.
 - **Changes to key social structures.** Jewish people did value tradition they lived in a period in which the older something was the better. In fact, for them, the farther back they could trace an idea the more likely it was to be true. So, to come up with new ideas was the opposite of the way we are today. These changes to the Jewish social structures were not just minor adjustments that were casually made-they were absolutely monumental. This was nothing short of a social earthquake! And earthquakes don't happen without a cause.
 - **The emergence of the church.** There's no question the church began shortly after the death of Jesus and spread so rapidly that within a period of maybe 20 years it had even reached Caesar's palace in Rome. Not only that, but this movement triumphed over a number of competing ideologies and eventually overwhelmed the entire Roman Empire. You probably wouldn't put money on a ragtag group of people whose primary message was that a crucified Carpenter from an obscure village had triumphed over the grave. Yet it was so successful that today we name our children Peter and Paul and our dogs Caesar and Nero! I like the way C. F. D. Moule, the Cambridge New Testament scholar, put it: "if the coming into existence of the Nazarenes, a phenomenon undeniably attested by the New Testament, rips a great hole in history, a whole the size and shape of resurrection, what does the secular historian propose to stop it up with?" If someone wants to consider this circumstantial evidence and reach the verdict that Jesus did not rise from the dead- fair enough. But they've got to offer an alternative explanation that is plausible for all of these facts. It's the ongoing encounter with the resurrected Christ that happens all over the world, in every culture, to people from all kinds of backgrounds and personalities-well educated and not, rich and poor, thinkers and feelers, men and women. They all will testify that more than any single thing in their lives, Jesus Christ has changed them. To me, this provides the final evidence-not the only evidence but the final confirming proof-that the message of Jesus can open the door to a direct encounter with the risen Christ.

Paul's view of the resurrection, and our place as sons and daughters of God:

Paul was the apostle to the gentiles and considered all new covenant believers in Christ as “Israel”. Paul stated many times “both Jews and gentiles”. In the following passages Paul links our status in Christ as being set apart, new creatures, sons and daughters of God. We are God's portion, his property, and his dominion!

Why does Paul link his description of the resurrection in first Corinthians 15: 35-50, to forbidden idolatry in Deuteronomy chapter 4? We must remember as we read all of scripture, especially when reading the New Testament, that the New Testament writers had an ancient Hebrew worldview. They all used the Old Testament scriptures as the foundation for all of their writing. They wrote in a way where they assumed the readers shared the same worldview as they did. To them, the old and new testaments fit seamlessly together. He is using the idols of the fallen nations in deuteronomy as examples of death and those people who are outside of God's covenant. He is showing that there is no life in any god but through Christ and our father in heaven and what we worship is what we give our lives to.

1 Corinthians 15:35-50 ESV

The Resurrection Body

³⁵ But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” ³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for **humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.** ⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. ⁴¹ There is one **glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars;** for star differs from star in glory.

⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”;^[a] the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then

the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ **As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.** ⁴⁹ **Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall^[b] also bear the image of the man of heaven.**

Mystery and Victory

⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Deuteronomy 4:15-20 ESV

Idolatry Forbidden

¹⁵ "Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, ¹⁶ beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, **the likeness of male or female,** ¹⁷ **the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air,** ¹⁸ **the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth.** ¹⁹ **And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars,** all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. ²⁰ **But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.**

- The premise is that we do not worship what doesn't bare God's likeness.
- Paul links the worldly idols that we give our lives to as rulers, principalities, and powers. These things are the exact things that we are attacked by and have strongholds in our lives. These are what we fight against when loving and helping others break free from the strongholds. We do this by receiving the power of salvation, the resurrected Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The one true God!
- Resurrection isn't just about rising from the dead but also about a change of nature into the likeness of Christ's resurrected state.
- We are elected, set apart through Christ, and his resurrection.
- Our election removes us from under the bondage and dominion that the God of this world and his principalities control.

- As Israel was brought to life and set apart by God through Abraham, we have been brought to life and set apart through Christ.
- What are the idols that are being worshipped today by both Christians and non-Christians?
 - o Wealth and riches, (mammon)
 - o Self-interest
 - o Fame, glory, and power
 - o People in our lives that we put before God
 - o Etc.
- Do any bear the likeness of Christ? No!
- Our beliefs direct what we give our lives to, and this is called worship.
- There are only two categories of how we live:
 - o spiritually, with our eyes on eternity and living by faith where we have no other god but Yahweh and his son Jesus Christ.
 - o Physically, where all things are temporary, and we live in unbelief where all things die.
- What is worshiped today in this physical world is useless in eternity.
- What one worships, one gives power to in this life.
- As sons and daughters of God, we are to be about the business of undoing the works of Satan. We have the responsibility to suppress the rulers, powers, and principalities (Idols), because the resurrection of Christ has defeated them.
- As sons and daughters of God, we have the responsibility to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations of the earth. We are to finish what the apostles began in reclaiming the nations for God, through Christ, and bring in the fullness of the gentiles, making the way of the return of Israel to the true Messiah Jesus Christ.