

The Resurrection of Jesus - Part 1

EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 6-8-16

Review - The Problem of Jesus

The Importance of the Resurrection

Jesus claimed His resurrection would _____ His claims about Himself (Matt. 12:38-40)
Without the resurrection, we have no _____ (I Cor. 15:13-19)

Some Features of the Resurrection

Cf. Appendix I

1. _____ - A reunion of the body and the soul.
 - Always bodily. Jewish association with end of time (John 11:23-24)
 - Glorified body - walk through walls (Luke 24:36), eat food (Luke 24:43; John 21), be touched (Lk. 24:39), ascension (Acts 1)
 - Not mere resuscitation
2. _____ - "many convincing proofs" (Acts 1:3). Cf. I Cor. 15:3-8.
3. _____ of our own (I Cor. 15:20) - the pattern
 - Guarantees our resurrection. Brings the future into our hearts now (HS as a "pledge")
 - Eschatological event - points to where history is going and to what history is all about (John 11:25-26)

Objections to the Resurrection

1. The resurrection narratives of the gospels developed long after the events happened
 - The first accounts were from _____ within 15-20 years of the events.
 - I Corinthians 15:3-6 - "3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received..."
 - Letters to churches - could easily have been refuted
 - Historical accounts were not allowed to be changed
 - Problems with fabrication theory: Women as the first eyewitnesses of the event?
 - Must take the empty tomb and personal meetings together
 - Resurrection was the belief from the very beginning
 - The gospels as summary (John 20:30-31)
 - Radical change:
 - The explosion of a new _____
 - The _____ of the disciples (cf. Acts 15:26, 17:6)
 - Who would die for a lie?
 - Pascal - "I believe those witnesses that get their throats cut."
 - The apostles' deaths and commitment to their faith (cf. Appendix II)

2. The Swoon Theory - that Christ did not actually die on the cross

- The evidence of Christ's death seemed enough to _____ his enemies and civil officials (Mark 15:44-45; John 19:33-34, 38, 40-42)
- Cf. Appendix III
- No one was going in...or coming out (Matthew 27:62-66)

Appendix I - The General Facts & Possible Harmony of the Resurrection Accounts

From the Catholic Encyclopedia at www.newadvent.org.

The main sources which directly attest the fact of Christ's Resurrection are the Four Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. Easter morning is so rich in incident, and so crowded with interested persons, that its complete history presents a rather complicated tableau. It is not surprising, therefore, that the partial accounts contained in each of the Four Gospels appear at first sight hard to harmonize. But whatever exegetic view as to the visit to the sepulchre by the pious women and the appearance of the angels we may defend, we cannot deny the Evangelists' agreement as to the fact that the risen Christ appeared to one or more persons. According to St. Matthew, He appeared to the holy women, and again on a mountain in Galilee; according to St. Mark, He was seen by Mary Magdalen, by the two disciples at Emmaus, and the Eleven before his Ascension into heaven; according to St. Luke, He walked with the disciples to Emmaus, appeared to Peter and to the assembled disciples in Jerusalem; according to St. John, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalen, to the ten Apostles on Easter Sunday, to the Eleven a week later, and to the seven disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. St. Paul (1 Corinthians 15:3-8) enumerates another series of apparitions of Jesus after His Resurrection; he was seen by Cephas, by the Eleven, by more than 500 brethren, many of whom were still alive at the time of the Apostle's writing, by James, by all the Apostles, and lastly by Paul himself.

Here is an outline of a possible harmony of the Evangelists' account concerning the principal events of Easter Sunday:

- The holy women carrying the spices previously prepared start out for the sepulchre before dawn, and reach it after sunrise; they are anxious about the heavy stone, but know nothing of the official guard of the sepulchre (Matthew 28:1-3; Mark 16:1-3; Luke 24:1; John 20:1).
- The angel frightened the guards by his brightness, put them to flight, rolled away the stone, and seated himself not upon (ep autou), but above (epano autou) the stone (Matthew 28:2-4).
- Mary Magdalen, Mary the Mother of James, and Salome approach the sepulchre, and see the stone rolled back, whereupon Mary Magdalen immediately returns to inform the Apostles (Mark 16:4; Luke 24:2; John 20:1-2).
- The other two holy women enter the sepulchre, find an angel seated in the vestibule, who shows them the empty sepulchre, announces the Resurrection, and commissions them to tell the disciples and Peter that they shall see Jesus in Galilee (Matthew 28:5-7; Mark 16:5-7).
- A second group of holy women, consisting of Joanna and her companions, arrive at the sepulchre, where they have probably agreed to meet the first group, enter the empty interior, and are admonished by two angels that Jesus has risen according to His prediction (Luke 24:10).
- Not long after, Peter and John, who were notified by Mary Magdalen, arrive at the sepulchre and find the linen cloth in such a position as to exclude the supposition that the body was stolen; for they lay simply flat on the ground, showing that the sacred body had vanished out of them without touching them. When John notices this he believes (John 20:3-10).
- Mary Magdalen returns to the sepulchre, sees first two angels within, and then Jesus Himself (John 20:11-16; Mark 16:9).
- The two groups of pious women, who probably met on their return to the city, are favored with the sight of Christ arisen, who commissions them to tell His brethren that they will see him in Galilee (Matthew 28:8-10; Mark 16:8).
- The holy women relate their experiences to the Apostles, but find no belief (Mark 16:10-11; Luke 24:9-11).

- Jesus appears to the disciples, at Emmaus, and they return to Jerusalem; the Apostles appear to waver between doubt and belief (Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-35).
- Christ appears to Peter, and therefore Peter and John firmly believe in the Resurrection (Luke 24:34; John 20:8).
- After the return of the disciples from Emmaus, Jesus appears to all the Apostles excepting Thomas (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25).

Briefly, therefore, the fact of Christ's Resurrection is attested by more than 500 eyewitnesses, whose experience, simplicity, and uprightness of life rendered them incapable of inventing such a fable, who lived at a time when any attempt to deceive could have been easily discovered, who had nothing in this life to gain, but everything to lose by their testimony, whose moral courage exhibited in their apostolic life can be explained only by their intimate conviction of the objective truth of their message. Again the fact of Christ's Resurrection is attested by the eloquent silence of the Synagogue which had done everything to prevent deception, which could have easily discovered deception, if there had been any, which opposed only sleeping witnesses to the testimony of the Apostles, which did not punish the alleged carelessness of the official guard, and which could not answer the testimony of the Apostles except by threatening them "that they speak no more in this name to any man" (Acts 4:17). Finally the thousands and millions, both Jews and Gentiles, who believed the testimony of the Apostles in spite of all the disadvantages following from such a belief, in short the origin of the Church, requires for its explanation the reality of Christ's Resurrection, for the rise of the Church without the Resurrection would have been a greater miracle than the Resurrection itself.

Appendix II - The Apostles' Deaths

Peter - crucified upside down in Rome

Philip - crucified in Egypt in 54 AD

Thaddaeus - crucified in Edessa in 72 AD

Simon "the zealot" - crucified in England in 74 AD

Andrew - crucified on an x-shaped cross in Greece. After being whipped severely by seven soldiers, they tied his body to the cross with cords to prolong his agony. His followers reported that when he was led toward the cross, Andrew saluted it in these words: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it." He continued to preach to his tormentors for two days until he died.

Doesn't sound like a madman or a charlatan, but one whose life was transformed by the risen Lord.

Matthew - stabbed in the back with a sword in Ethiopia

James, brother of John - put to death with the sword by King Herod Agrippa

Thomas - stabbed by a spear in India (28 million Christians today!)

James, the lesser - at 94 was beaten and stoned by persecutors, and then killed him by hitting him in the head with a club.

Matthias - replacement for Judas was stoned and beheaded

Bartholomew - missionary to Asia where he was skinned alive and beheaded

Paul - tortured and beheaded in Rome by the infamous Nero in 67 AD.

James, the brother of Jesus (not an apostle) - thrown from the southeast pinnacle of the temple (over 100 feet down). Having survived, he was beaten to death by clubs.

John - only one who died peacefully, but he was first boiled in a huge basin of oil and miraculously survived. Went on to write Revelation

Judas - fell and his guts went everywhere...

Appendix III - Hypovolemic Shock - John 19:34

The Roman flogging or scourging that Jesus endured prior to being crucified normally consisted of 39 lashes, but could have been more (Mark 15:15; John 19:1). The whip that was used, called a flagrum, consisted of braided leather thongs with metal balls and pieces of sharp bone woven into or intertwined with the braids. The balls added weight to the whip, causing deep bruising and contusions as the victim was struck. The pieces of bone served to cut into the flesh. As the beating continued, the resulting cuts were so severe that the skeletal muscles, underlying veins, sinews, and bowels of victims were exposed. This beating was so severe that at times victims would not survive it in order to go on to be crucified.

Those who were flogged would often go into hypovolemic shock, a term that refers to low blood volume. In other words, the person would have lost so much blood he would go into shock. The results of this would be

1. The heart would race to pump blood that was not there.
2. The victim would collapse or faint due to low blood pressure.
3. The kidneys would shut down to preserve body fluids.
4. The person would experience extreme thirst as the body desired to replenish lost fluids.

There is evidence from Scripture that Jesus experienced hypovolemic shock as a result of being flogged. As Jesus carried His own cross to Golgotha (John 19:17), He collapsed, and a man named Simon was forced to either carry the cross or help Jesus carry the cross the rest of way to the hill (Matthew 27:32–33; Mark 15:21–22; Luke 23:26). This collapse indicates Jesus had low blood pressure. Another indicator that Jesus suffered from hypovolemic shock was that He declared He was thirsty as He hung on the cross (John 19:28), indicating His body's desire to replenish fluids.

Prior to death, the sustained rapid heartbeat caused by hypovolemic shock also causes fluid to gather in the sack around the heart and around the lungs. This gathering of fluid in the membrane around the heart is called pericardial effusion, and the fluid gathering around the lungs is called pleural effusion. This explains why, after Jesus died and a Roman soldier thrust a spear through Jesus' side, piercing both the lungs and the heart, blood and water came from His side just as John recorded in his Gospel (John 19:34).