

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST: FACT OR FICTION?

(1 Corinthians 15:12-19)

- I. The FACT of the EMPTY TOMB (Mark 16:1-4)
 - A. Did the disciples STEAL the BODY? (Matt. 18:1-15)
 1. Only “WITNESSES” said they were ASLEEP
 2. The accused WOULD NOT have done so
 - a. No MOTIVE
 - b. No OPPORTUNITY
 - c. Contrary to their CHARACTER
 - B. Did the Jewish or Roman authorities REMOVE the BODY? (John 20:2)
 1. No REASON for doing so
 2. Result was BELIEF in the RESURRECTION
 - C. Was Christ in a SWOON from which He REVIVED?
 1. Testimony of ALL was to Christ’s DEATH
 - a. Professional SOLDIERS who EXECUTED Him
 - b. Both FRIENDS and ENEMIES who watched Him DIE
 - c. Those who PREPARED His BODY for BURIAL
 2. CONDITIONS were not conducive for REVIVING
 3. Couldn’t explain WHAT HAPPENED NEXT
 - a. REMOVED the STONE?
 - b. OVERCAME the GUARDS?
 - c. Traveled miles on NAIL-PIERCED FEET?

- d. Convinced the disciples He'd CONQUERED death and was GLORIFIED?
 - e. Only to DIE within the next SIX WEEKS?
- D. Did the WOMEN go to the WRONG TOMB? (Mark 15:46-47; Luke 23:50-56)
 - 1. Opponents need only point out the RIGHT TOMB
 - 2. PETER and JOHN would hardly have made the SAME ERROR
 - 3. This was a PRIVATE burial ground, not PUBLIC
- E. Only adequate explanation is the BODILY RESURRECTION of Jesus

II. Later EVIDENCES

- A. TEN distinct post-resurrection APPEARANCES of Jesus
 - 1. Varied TIMES
 - 2. Varied PLACES
 - 3. Varied EMOTIONAL STATES of the witnesses
 - 4. Varied CIRCUMSTANCES
 - 5. Varied WORDS and ACTIONS
 - 6. LIMITED in time to 40 DAYS
 - 7. Witnesses were convinced AGAINST THEIR WILLS
- B. The Christian CHURCH grew from this event
- C. The Christian DAY OF WORSHIP established by this event
- D. The NEW TESTAMENT was WRITTEN to attest to this event
- E. The DISCIPLES were TRANSFORMED by this event
 - 1. Had been unwilling to STAND TOGETHER with the LIVING JESUS
 - 2. Now ready to DIE ALONE for the RISEN LORD