

## *The Resurrection of Christ --- Hoax or History?*

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***Introduction:*** Do you understand the logical basis for faith in Christ?

- A. What if someone asked you this question: “Why Christianity?”
  - 1. If you have not heard this question, your children will.
  - 2. Christianity is not based upon a “blind faith” but rather a reasonable faith. **(1 Peter 3:15)**
- B. Christianity is not just a system of philosophy or values.
  - 1. It is dependent upon the identity of its founder, Jesus. **(Matt 16:13-17)**
  - 2. Contrast this with the religions of Buddha and Mohammed.

### ***I. What are the consequences if Jesus never actually was born, died and then raised from the dead?***

- A. Consider the consequences as stated by the apostle Paul. **(1 Cor 15:12-19)**
- B. Could Jesus have been only a good, moral man and nothing more?
  - 1. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God! **(John 10:36; 12:48)**
  - 2. In light of his claims Jesus was either a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord.
  - 3. There is no middle ground!

### ***II. The Nature of the Evidence - Historical, Eyewitness Testimony.***

- A. Many when they speak of faith think in terms of feelings, tradition, and prejudice.
  - 1. This is not the Biblical concept of faith. **(Heb 11:1; 1 Pet 3:15; John 8:32)**
- B. At the heart of every sermon of the apostles is their eyewitness testimony of the raised Christ. **(Acts 2:32; 3:14-15; 5:30-32; 10:39-43; 13:27-31)**

### ***III. The Validity of Historical Testimony.***

- A. All personal knowledge that we have can be reduced to two categories - testimony and memory.
- B. Every day we accept things as true based upon testimony.
- C. Consider some people of history we accept from testimony.
- D. But not all testimony is valid!
  - 1. Many will lie or simply are mistaken when they bear testimony.
  - 2. On what basis do we *reject* some testimony and *accept* other testimony?
- E. Tests for Accepting or Rejecting Testimony.
  - 1. Is the person giving testimony in a position to know the facts?
  - 2. Does he have a ulterior motive in telling his account?
  - 3. Is this person of good character? Is he reliable?
  - 4. Are there other witnesses and do they agree?

### ***IV. The New Testament Passes the Test.***

- A. Were the apostles in a position to know the facts? **(1 John 1:1-3)**
- B. Did the apostles have any advantages in lying about the resurrection?  
**(1 Cor 15:30-32; John 16:1-3)**
- C. Are the writings of the apostles historically accurate?

D. Was there agreement between the numerous witnesses? (1 Cor 15:1-6)

**V. The Resurrection Scene (Matt 27:57-66 )**

**A. Jesus was Dead.**

1. Hear the description of an eyewitness. (John 19:32-36)

**B. The body was placed in a new tomb. (Matt 27:60)**

**C. The tomb was cut out of rock. (Matt 27:60)**

**D. A large stone covered the entrance. (Matt 27:60)**

**E. A Roman seal was placed on the stone. (Matt 27:66)**

**F. A Roman Guard was placed at the tomb. (Matt 27:65-66)**

**G. The tomb was inspected carefully. (John 20:3-8; John 20:11)**

**VI. Who Moved the Stone?**

**A. Did the Jews? (Matt 27:62-66)**

1. The Jews were the very ones trying to prevent the resurrection.

2. If so they had a perfect time to present the body 50 days later!

(Acts 2:32, 36)

**B. Did the Romans?**

1. The Romans would not want to risk their necks for what they would consider as "silly Jewish superstition".

2. The penalty for a Roman guard's failure was death. (Acts 16:26-27;27:42)

**C. Did the Disciples?**

1. This was the best explanation the smartest men among the Jews could come up with. (Mat 28:11-15)

2. If they were asleep, how did they know it was the disciples?

3. Why did they not arrest the apostles as grave robbers?

4. Did the apostles give their lives for a lie?

5. Their account is believable (Mark 16:9-14)

**D. Who then moved the stone? (Acts 13:27-31) (NKJV)**

**VII. Modern Day Attempts to Deny the Resurrection**

**A. The Swoon Theory.**

1. The enemies were closely watching the cross (Mark 15:31-32, 44-45)

2. The burial process itself would have killed Jesus (John 19:39-40)

3. How could Jesus have done this? (Luke 24:13-15; 32)

**VIII. The Significance of the Resurrection.**

A. Jesus is the Son of God (Rom 1:3-4)

B. Our resurrection is certain. (1 Cor 6:14; 2 Cor 4:13-14; Acts 17:30-31)

C. We are compelled to obey the gospel of Christ. (1 Pet 3:21; 2 Thess 1:7-10)

**Conclusion:** Do you believe that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead?

1. Are you living the Christian life? Are you ready for judgment?

2. Dying words of atheists.