

1 Cor 15:15-19 – Resurrection, pt. 2 (The Evidence)
Midweek: Corinthians
4/11/18

Introduction:

- In 70 AD
 - Romans conquered Jerusalem
 - Led back to Rome, thousands of captive Jews
 - Including a leader, deemed “king of the Jews” named
 - Simon Bar Giora
 - Thought to be the Messiah, the one to bring the Jews back to an Israelite Kingdom
 - Led into Rome at the back of the triumphal procession
 - End of the spectacle – Flogged and killed
 - Imagine one of his followers saying:
 - I think Simon was the Messiah and still is!
 - They would be looked at weird, for he hadn’t restored Israel
 - Imagine the person saying:
 - But I believe he was raised from the dead!
 - What do you mean? He’s dead and buried.
 - But I have felt a warming in my heart, like my sins were forgiven, and, well, I saw him last night.
 - Don’t be crazy, you may have had a vision, but don’t disrespect Simon
 - Come on guys, we need to go die for him!
 - No, he wasn’t the Messiah.
 - I don’t know if you know this, but Giorianity is not a thing.
 - Further, there have been numerous people who have claimed to be the Messiah over the centuries, and they have all died.
 - Except Jesus.
 - 4 Parts:
 - The Necessity
 - The Evidence
 - Why it Matters Now
 - Why it Matters in the Future
- Just as the death of Jesus was necessary for the covering of our sins, the resurrection was necessary for the defeating of death. Both were required.
 - So the next question must be: Did the resurrection take place:
 - If it did, then Jesus is the only way.
 - If it didn’t, then why in the world am I Christian?
 - The Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus and What that means for Christians as he is our first-fruits.

The Corinthian Situation:
1 Cor 15:12-16

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say, “There is no resurrection of the dead”? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised;

- There were people, living Christians in the church of Corinth, who did not believe in a bodily resurrection.
 - Not just Jesus, but for all people.
 - And Paul makes the argument that Jesus and all people are bodily raised
 - We are going to look at this final, bodily resurrection of people in a few weeks
- But then Paul argues:

¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain, and so is your faith. ¹⁵ Moreover, we are found to be false witnesses about God, because we have testified wrongly about God that he raised up Christ—whom he did not raise up, if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.

Broader: An Apologetic for the Resurrection

¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Those, then, who have fallen asleep in Christ have also perished. ¹⁹ If we have put our hope in Christ for this life only, we should be pitied more than anyone.

- What’s the difference between Jesus and Simon Bar Giora?
- Modern opposition:
 - Apologetic theories for what happened in the resurrection:
 - Swoon Theory
 - Jesus passed out or fainted as a result of the enormous physical torment he suffered
 - The Spirit Theory
 - No bodily resurrection
 - Just a Spirit or as a spirit creature
 - Jehovah’s witnesses
 - Hallucination Theory
 - The disciples imagined the resurrection
 - The Vision Theory
 - The visions from the Lord appeared to be Jesus, but wasn’t
 - The Legend/Myth Theory
 - The stories of Jesus have been embellished over time
 - Commitment from Antisupernatural agenda
 - The Stolen Body
 - The earliest theory

- Mt 28:13
 - Not really held these days
- The Wrong Tomb
 - 1st women and then men went to the wrong tomb
- The Lie for Profit Theory
 - Hoax perpetuated by the disciples
 - Financial profit
- The Mistaken Identity Theory
 - Women mistook someone else to be Jesus
 - Jn 20:11-18
- The Muslim Theory
 - The Koran
 - God provided a substitute for Jesus
 - Surah 4:157-158

And [for] their saying, "Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah ." And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain.

4 Facts that are true of the resurrection:

• The Death of Jesus by Crucifixion

- Jesus' death was affirmed by Historians
 - Josephus – most comprehensive primary source on Jewish history that has survived through the ages
 - Says that Jesus was a person and he died – being the supposed Messiah
- Roman guards faced death if someone survived crucifixion
 - The spear in the side – Water and Blood came out
 - Confirmed death, which is why they didn't break his legs
 - Interestingly fulfilling prophecy of Exodus 12 and Zechariah 12
 - No broken bones, and he would be pierced
- He disappeared from history after his reported ascension
- JESUS DIED

• The Empty Tomb

- There is no question the tomb was empty

Matthew 28:11-15

¹¹ While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened.¹² When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³ telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So the soldiers took the money

and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

- From the beginning, they were trying to cover it up!
 - Disciples stole the body?
 - These cowards – Think Peter – had courage and skill to defeat a 16-man Roman guard unit that Pilate had put at its doors?
 - Romans stole the body?
 - Why? They have no motivation! Far more motivation to keep him there
 - Wrong tomb?
 - Then why wouldn't the Romans point them back to the right one? You idiots, over here!
- THE TOMB WAS EMPTY

- **The Witnesses of the Resurrection**

- Women First
 - You don't start something this transformative off of the work of women

Lk 24:9-12

The Women go, find the tomb empty, the angel tells them that he is risen

⁹ Returning from the tomb, they reported all these things to the Eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them were telling the apostles these things. ¹¹ But these words seemed like nonsense to them, and they did not believe the women. ¹² Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. When he stooped to look in, he saw only the linen cloths.^[b] So he went away, amazed at what had happened.

- Appearance to others 1 Cor 15:5-8

and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to over five hundred brothers and sisters at one time; most of them are still alive, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to one born at the wrong time,^[b] he also appeared to me.

- Over 500 people witnessed the resurrection!
 - They were lying
 - They were hallucinating
 - They really saw the risen Christ (Confirmed by testimony)

Charles Colson - "I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Everyone was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world-and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible."

- HE WAS RESURRECTED

- The Testimonies and Beginnings of Christianity

- JESUS ACTUALLY DIED
 - THE TOMB WAS ACTUALLY EMPTY
 - JESUS ACTUALLY APPEARED
 - How do we know?
 - The Origins of Christianity
 - JESUS' DISCIPLES WERE ACTUALLY CHANGED
 - After Pentecost – The Gospel spread
 - Mocking didn't stop them
 - Prison didn't stop them
 - Beatings didn't stop them
 - Death didn't stop them
 - The Apostles – Based on our best historical writings
 - Andrew
 - Thought to have gone into modern Russia and Asia Minor where he was crucified
 - Thomas
 - Possibly made it as far as India, pierced by the spears of 4 soldiers
 - Philip
 - North Africa, converted the wife of a Roman proconsul, the husband then had him arrested and put to death.
 - Matthew
 - Persia and Ethiopia, some say he died while sharing the Gospel, potentially stabbed to death
 - Bartholomew
 - Martyred after going to India, Armenia, Ethiopia and Southern Arabia
 - James
 - Syria, Josephus says he was stoned and clubbed to death because of the Gospel
 - Simon the Zealot
 - Persia, killed after refusing to sacrifice to the sun god
 - Matthais
 - Replacement for Judas, Syria, death by being burned alive
 - John
 - Exiled to Patmos
 - Paul
 - Beheaded
 - Peter
 - Crucified upside down, for he was not worthy to die the same death as his Lord
- Here's where I will close:
 - If there was no resurrection, then:
 - Our faith is useless and we are still in our sins.
 - But the resurrection is true:
 - Jesus died

- The tomb was empty
- The resurrection Jesus appeared
- The disciples were changed
- Believe that Jesus died for your sins
- Believe that he rose from the dead
- Be transformed by the reality that your sins are forgiven and that everyone needs this Savior.
 - Ask the Lord – How does the evidence of the resurrection change me?