

Inside the Lines
P.O. Box 1261
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JESUS

His Resurrection Lesson 6

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Something for You to Study

The resurrection is essential to the gospel. First Corinthians 15 rests the whole case for Christianity on the fact that Christ rose from the dead. It was not sufficient that He died; He had to rise again. The resurrection was a part of the plan of redemption that God had from all eternity.

IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection proves all of the claims the Lord Jesus made about Himself. He said He could forgive sin. He said He *gave* His life (John 10:18). He said if He died He would rise again. He said He was God. Anyone could make such claims, but the test would come in proving them. The resurrection proved Christ's claims. This means His death is only half the story; His resurrection is the other half. The gospel includes these facts: "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). The resurrection makes belief in other miracles possible, for this was the greatest miracle of all.

If the resurrection were not true, all of Christianity would be untrue. The apostle Paul said, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14). The resurrection is the final proof of Christ's deity. It proved that His death was voluntary, that He gave Himself willingly. The resurrection proved also that His death was vicarious, for if He had died and not risen, His death would have been of no value. The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be separated.

EXPLANATIONS FOR THE RESURRECTION

Through the centuries, attempts have been made to suggest possibilities other than an actual resurrection.

1. *The body was stolen by the disciples.* This is the oldest theory, first proposed by Christ's enemies at the time of the resurrection (Matthew 28:11-15). But a reading of the gospels makes it very difficult to believe that the timid, fearful disciples, who actually had not believed Christ's words that He would rise again, would confront armed guards at the tomb to carry off the body and hide it.
2. *Jesus did not really die.* This incredible theory would have Jesus, weak from loss of blood and the terrible treatment He had suffered, revive in the coolness of the tomb; free Himself from the grave clothes that were wrapped securely around Him, leaving them undisturbed; push aside the heavy stone at the entrance; slip unseen past

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the armed guards, who were charged with His safekeeping at the price of their own lives; and disappear.

3. *The disciples were victims of hallucination when they saw Him after His death.* If this were true, it would mean more than five hundred people had the same hallucination at the same time (1 Corinthians 15:6). The very definition of hallucination makes this an impossibility. Nor does it account for the tomb, which even His enemies admitted was empty.

4. *The disciples were deliberately lying in preaching His resurrection.* However the disciples had not themselves expected the event (Matthew 28:17; Mark 16:11; Luke 24:11). It would be most extraordinary for them to summon up courage from a lie and risk death by preaching boldly of Christ to those who had put Him to death (Acts 2:22-24).

It actually requires a great deal more credulity to believe such theories than to believe what the Bible states as fact that Christ "rose again the third day" (1 Corinthians 15:4).

EVIDENCES FOR THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection is one of the best-attested facts of the Christian faith. Luke says the Lord Jesus showed Himself alive after His resurrection by many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3).

1. He was seen at different times by different groups of people.

Briefly, they were:

Mary Magdalene, Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11 -17

the other women, Matthew 28:9-10

Peter, Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5

two on the Emmaus road, Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-35

ten disciples, Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-23

eleven disciples, John 20:26-29

seven disciples, John 21:1-2

five hundred disciples, 1 Corinthians 15:6

James, His brother, 1 Corinthians 15:7

eleven disciples, Matthew 28:16-20

those at His ascension, Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:3-9

First Corinthians gives a summary of some of these appearances.

2. The empty tomb shows that He rose from the dead. The tomb was not opened to allow Christ to come out but to let others see that it was empty.

3. The actions of the soldiers and rulers prove His resurrection.

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4. The disciples were changed from frightened followers into bold witnesses who fearlessly preached the resurrection.
5. The results of the day of Pentecost prove the resurrection, for three thousand people believed Peter's account of what had happened.

RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION

It proves the inspiration of the Bible. The Old Testament had prophesied the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus (Psalm 16:10; compare Acts 2:25-31). Paul's message was that of Moses and the prophets who had foretold the event (Acts 26:23). Only God could have known what was going to happen and tell of it centuries before it took place. Thus His promise was fulfilled.

It gives power for Christian living. The resurrection shows what mighty power God has which He uses to help the Christian. God works for the believer today "according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead" (Ephesians 1:19-20). Victory in the Christian life doesn't come by personal effort. It is through yielding to God's power which was shown in the resurrection.

It gives assurance that believers also will be raised. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus Christ rose from the dead in a body and it was the same body in which He had been crucified. The nail prints remained in His hands and feet (John 20:25-29) and the wound in His side (John 20:27). The fact of this identity is seen in His words to His disciples, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39), He ate food to show His disciples that He was not a spirit (Luke 24:41-43). He could be felt (Matthew 28:9; Luke 24:39).

However, while His body was the same in identity—in the way He looked—it was different in what it could do. He could go through locked doors (Luke 24:36; John 20:19) and vanish from sight (Luke 24:31, 51) since He was free from time-and-space limitations. He apparently did not need either food or sleep to sustain Him.

Our resurrection body will be like His, according to 1 John 3:2. God will raise us even as He raised the Lord Jesus (2 Corinthians 4:14).

A Further Word

Christ has been raised; and we are risen too. But not to hover, eager and intent, Upon earth's small affairs. The light breaks through, The clouds disperse and whither Jesus went We, too, shall go. But let us not forget, Meanwhile, a world that does not know Him yet.

Notes

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Find Out for Yourself

Name _____

1. State in your own words why the death of Christ is not complete without the resurrection. Use your Bible if necessary to find supporting Scripture.

2. Read Luke 24:25-27. How does this prove the inspiration of the Bible?

3. How is the resurrection proof of Christ's deity?

4. Find in the gospels two clues that show Jesus' enemies remembered His words and feared His disciples might take His body from the tomb.
 - a.
 - b.

5. How does attendance at church on Sunday give testimony to Christ's resurrection?

6. Read Ephesians 1:19-20. What confidence should these verses give the believer about God's power?

7. Throughout the Old Testament the crossing of the Red Sea, was given as the supreme example of God's power. In the New Testament it is the resurrection of Christ. Why are these two events chosen?

8. Read Ephesians 5:27, Philippians 3:21, and 1 John 3:2 List some words that describe the kind of resurrection body the believer will have.

Check Your Memory

1. The resurrection is proof of Christ's _____.

2. The resurrection proves the _____ of the Bible.

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3. The _____ is evidence that Christ rose.
4. Over _____ people saw Jesus at the same time after His resurrection.
5. Two false theories of the resurrection are:
 - a.
 - b.
6. Jesus' resurrection guarantees_____.



Scripture Memorization
(write on the back page three times)

1 Jn 3:1-3

1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

(KJV)