

Jerusalem, circa 30 ad

Luke
23. 50 - 24.1

"on the first day of the week..."



Why were they going to the tomb?
&
What did they expect to find?

next question:



What would have happened-if that was what they found?

- They would have anointed a corpse
- Peter and John would not have run to see the empty tomb
- The body would have decayed away
- You would never have heard of Jesus of Nazareth
- The first book ever printed would not have been printed
- The best selling book of all time would never have existed
- The pilgrims would not have sailed on the Mayflower
- The coins in you pocket would not bear their dates
- You would not be a Christian
- You would not be here tonight
- If your parents or ancestors met at church, you would not be anywhere

John 20-21; Acts 10:39-41; 1Cor.15.1-11



Paul "I
to Corinth t
circa 55 AD
1Cor.15.3-8 esv

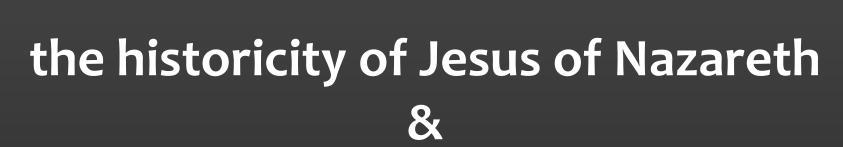
"I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you... that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all... he appeared

also to me."

"we gazed not in the open tomb..."

1 Peter 3.15

"be ready always to give answer to every man that asks you a reason concerning the hope that lies within you"



his death, burial, and resurrection: establishing evidence for the skeptic

THE IDENTITY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

THE WITNESSES

THE CRUCIFIXION

THE TOMB

THEY BELIEVED

THE CONV. OF SAUL

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS FOR THE SKEPTIC

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS FOR THE SKEPTIC

references to the crucifixion of Christ from external sources





FACT 1. Jesus of Nazareth, known also as the Christ, was put to death by crucifixion during the reign of Tiberius, at the orders of Pontius Pilate.

Internal evidence:
BIBLICAL HISTORY

External evidence:
SECULAR HISTORY

Tacitus

- ROMAN
- **GREEK**
- **-JEWISH**

Tacitus Annals XV, 44

Roman Senator & Historian; b. ca. 56 AD

"Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace.

Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate"

- classics.mit.edu/Tacitus/annals.html translated. By A. J. Church & W. J. Brodribb

Lucian •ROMAN •GREEK •JEWISH

Lucian of Samosata The Death of Peregrine, 11-13

Greek satirist, b. ca. 120 AD

"these misguided creatures... deny the gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage, and live after his laws."

lucianofsamosatat.info > The Works of Lucian of Samosata. Tr. by Fowler & Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1905

Josephus

-ROMAN

-GREEK

-JEWISH

external evidence

Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, XX, 9.1.

Jewish historian, b. 37 AD on the death of James:

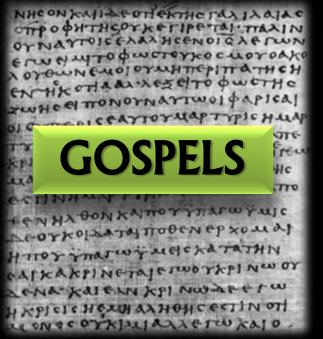
"brought before them the brother of **Jesus, who was called Christ,** whose name was James, and some others... he delivered them to be stoned"

NT documents

9

John: "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands" 1 John 1:1

Peter: "we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem." **Ac. 10:39**







P66 Jn. P127 Acts P46 2Cor.

If that had been the end of it would you have ever heard of Jesus?

Acts 5:36-37

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS
FOR THE SKEPTIC



cf. Acts 5.36

Not just death: but the death of the cross.

Beyond death & torture:

what was the purpose of public crucifixion?

degradation & shame horror & intimidation

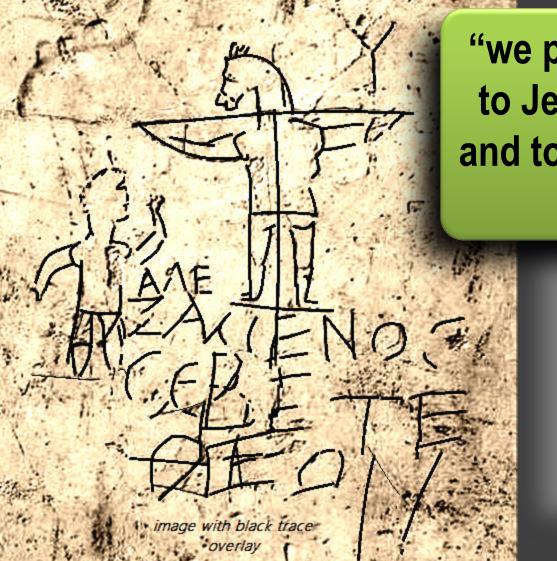
crucifixion & roman subjects

"Whenever we crucify the guilty, the most crowded roads are chosen, where most people can see and be moved by this fear. For penalties relate not so much to retribution, but to their exemplary effect."

- Quintilian Decl. 274 (trans. From LCL 500) -cited in Baker & Green; Recovering the Scandal of the Cross IVPress 2000

crucifixion & roman citizens

"the executioner... and the very word 'cross,' let them all be far removed from not only the bodies of Roman citizens but even from their thoughts, their eyes, and their ears... the mere mention of them are unworthy of a Roman citizen and a free man." -Cicero, pro Rabirio Perd. 16



"we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness" 1 Cor. 1.23 NASB

> ANE EAMENOS CEBETE **OEON**

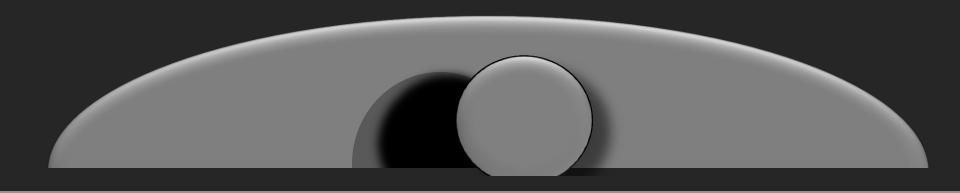
"ALEXAMENOS WORSHIP(S) HIS GOD" alexamenos graffito

public domain image; wikipedia

THE CRUCIFIXION

THE TOMB

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS FOR THE SKEPTIC



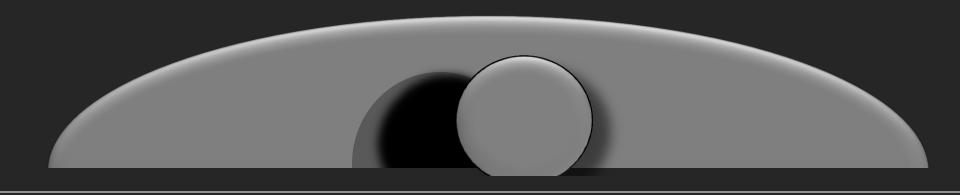
FACT 2. The tomb was reported empty

The disciples reported that the tomb was empty and that Jesus rose from the dead

(Mt. 28; Mk 16; Lk 24; Jn 20)

Unbelieving Jews said the tomb was empty because the disciples stole the body (Mt. 28:15b)

diametrically opposed as to why the tomb was empty, one point was agreed upon by both explanations: the body was not there.



FACT 2. The tomb was reported empty



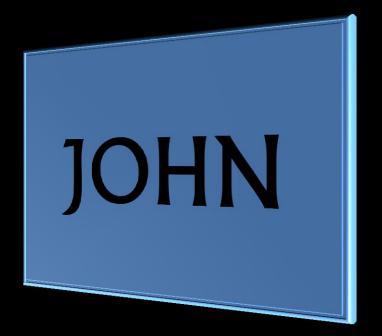
(Mt. 28; Mk 16; Lk 24; Jn 20)

Unbelieving Jews said the tomb was empty because the disciples stole the body (Mt. 28:15b)

diametrically opposed as to why the tomb was empty, one point was agreed upon by both explanations: the body was not there.

John 19:38-20:10





From the apostle John: cf. John 21.18-24

already in circulation by c.125+/- AD; John Rylands fragment / P52 (Jn.18)

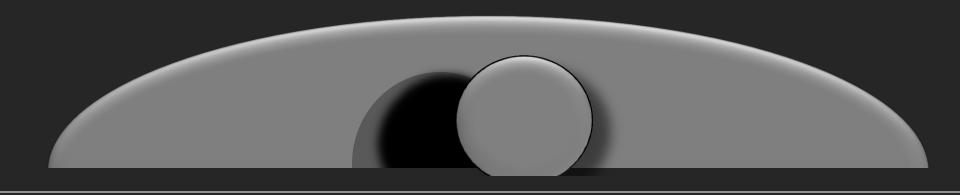
"He is not here, he is risen" Mt.28:6

the stone is rolled back... "he is not here, behold, the place where they laid him!"

Mk.16:4-6

"they entered in, and found not the body of Jesus" Lk 24:3

"and behold, the linen cloths lying" Jn.20:6



FACT 2. The tomb was reported empty

The disciples reported that the tomb was empty and that Jesus rose from the dead

(Mt. 28; Mk 16; Lk 24; Jn 20)

Unbelieving Jews said the tomb was empty because the disciples stole the body (Mt. 28:15b)

diametrically opposed as to why the tomb was empty, one point was agreed upon by both explanations: the body was not there.



skeptic:

"You base that on Matthew.

If I don't trust its portrayal of Jesus,
why would I trust its portrayal of unbelievers?"

Mt.28.15b nasb

"this story was widely spread among the Jews, and is to this day"

if

original audience

two further observations on the empty tomb...

(a.) LOCALE:

The church began in Jerusalem, the city of Jesus' death & burial.

(b.) Jewish views on female witnesses:

"any evidence which a woman [gives] is not valid...

A robber is qualified to give the same evidence as a woman"

-Talmud, Rosh Hashannah 1.8 (Habermas / Licona 72)

"let not the testimony of women be admitted ... it is probable they may not speak the truth, either out of hope of gain, or fear of punishment" -Josephus, Antiquities 4.8.15

If early disciples had made up the story, is it likely that they would make Peter a coward, and make women the first witnesses?

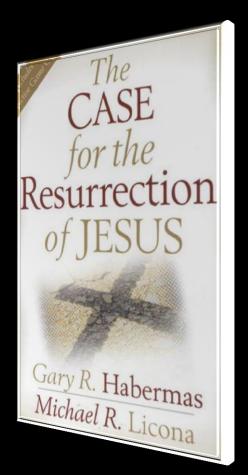
In The Case for the Ressurection of Jesus, Habermas and Licona lay out a minimal facts case for the resurrection, starting with points that are granted by "virtually all scholars on the subject, even the skeptical ones." (p.47).

Though the empty tomb is not acknowledged that fully:

"it is accepted as a fact of history by an impressive majority ...

Habermas discovered that roughly

75 percent of scholars on the subject accept the empty tomb as historical fact." (p.70).



objection

an empty tomb does not prove a resurrection

alternate explanations of the empty tomb various other explanation



various other explanations have been offered over the centuries, such as:

- a.) The tomb was empty because the disciples stole the body
- b.) The tomb was empty because Jesus was buried alive and recovered
- c.) The tomb was empty because they
 mistakenly returned to a different tomb
 d.) As Mary thought, someone moved the body

alternate explanations of the empty tomb

a.)

- A big problem with this theory is the evidence of the transformed disciples' conviction; despite heatings imprisonment and death. Another issue would be the resurrected appearances. Moving a dead body doesn't make it appear, converse, eat and drink. This also apply in the adjusted theory that someone else stole the body.
- c.) The was empty because they mistakenly returned to a different tomb

alternate explanations •scourged (John 19:1) compelling of Simon (Mark 15:21). crucified (Mark 15:25). a.) Teollapsed and dead (John 19:32-33). visual clarity of breath or not (v.23). les b.) T • the spear (John 19:34). the body was taken down, wrapped, buried, and a large stone was rolled across the door (Mark 15:46). turned to a different tomb

alternate explanations of the empty tomb

- the women observed the burial
- a. multiple visitors and at different times (Jn 20:1; Mk 16:2; Jn 20:3-13)
- b.) The tage of the body in a different tomber bur does not make appearances
- empty because they c.) The to mistakenly returned to a different tomb

more than an empty tomb...

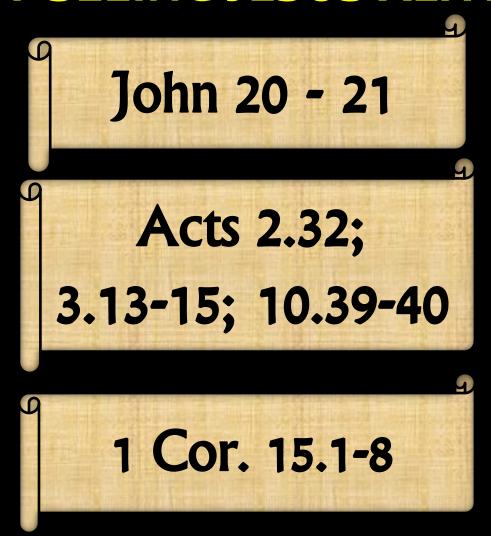
THE CRUCIFIXION

THE WITNESSES

THE TOMB

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS FOR THE SKEPTIC

[3.] THE DISCIPLES GAVE WITNESS OF SEEING JESUS ALIVE





I've read that the gospel accounts are legendary and from a later generation. For what reason should I even believe that the earliest disciples actually even made such claims?

1 Ptr. 3.4

As evidenc

1 Cor. 1

1 Cor. is one of the letters accepted even by critics

Clement 95AD

"Take up the letter of Paul... he gave you spiritual direction regarding himself, Cephas, and Apollos, for even then you were dividing yourselves into parties" (ISBE VII. p 711)

would make no sense as a fabrication

aiready known & quoted in 1st cent. (Clement)

1 Cor. 15

THE SKEPTIC VIEW OF THE DOCUMENTS

the gospels

There is consensus among historians ... that Paul is the author of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, classifying its authorship as "undisputed"

The letter was written from Ephesus...usually dated as being in the range of 53 to 57 AD.

1 Cor. & the Gallio / Delphi inscription



"The inscription dates between April and July A.D., 52, and from it, it can be deduced that Gallio was the proconsul of Achaia in the previous year. Thus Paul's eighteenth month stay in Corinth (Acts 18:1–18) included the year 51."

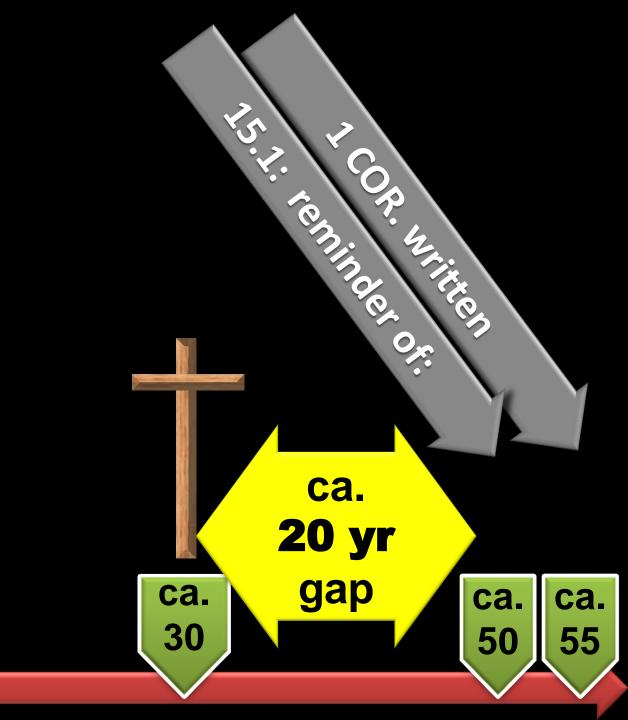
1Cor. 15 provides early & dateable evidence against the "later legend" concept

just a
"later legend"?
testimony from
an early &
dateable text

circa **50** AD

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8 esv

I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you...
I delivered to you ... what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day...and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all ... he appeared also to me.



MARLEE MATLIN FINDS TRUE LOVE WITH AN L.A. COP

weekly weekly



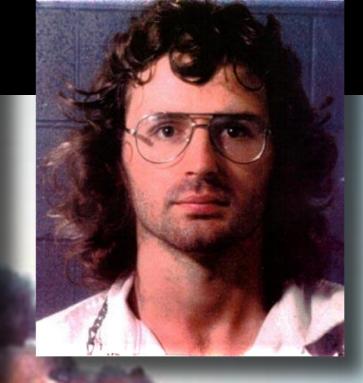
INSIDE THE WACO CULT

E EVIL ESSIAH

> 'I am the Lamb of God,' he told his believers. But David Koresh claimed 19 wives, had sex with children, armed his followers, and led them to tragedy

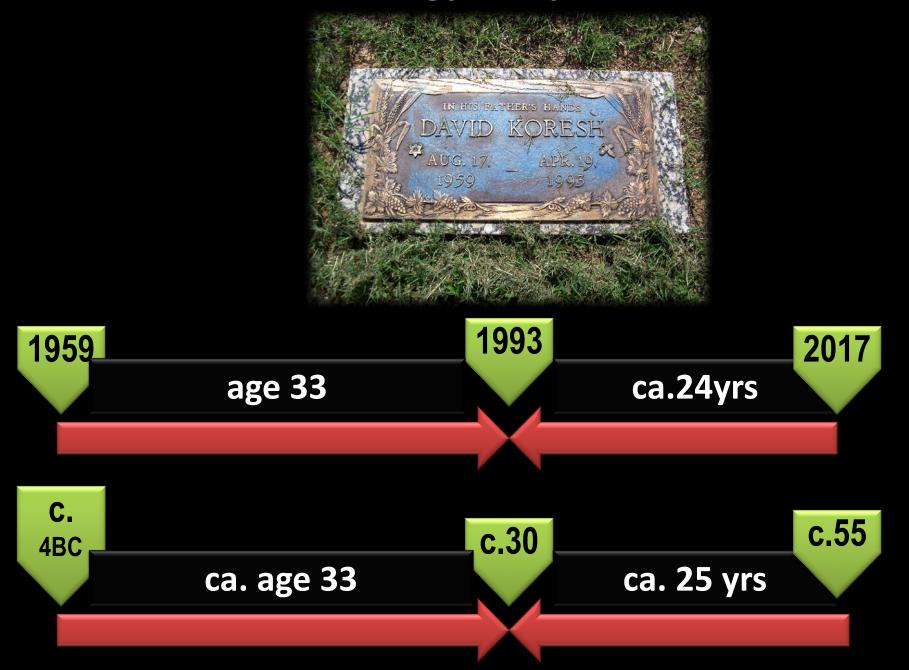


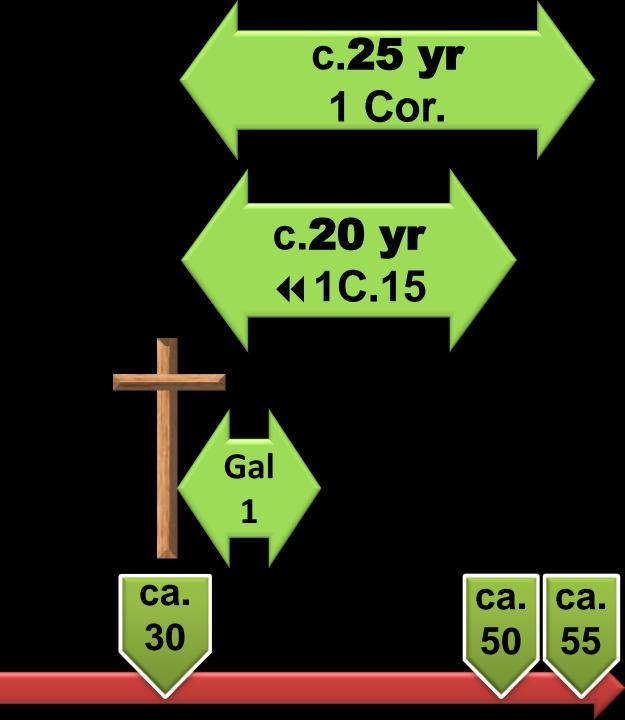






chronology comparison





1 Cor. 15 is not a later generation legend. It is a witness list.

1Cor. 15:11

"Whether then it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed."

The later church did not develop the resurrection, the early church was built on the resurrection.

THE CRUCIFIXION

THE TOMB

THEY BELIEVED

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS FOR THE SKEPTIC

THE WITNESSES

It was seeing the risen Jesus that transformed the disciples from fear and despair

Mk. 14.50-52; Mk. 14.66-72; Lk.24.21. Jn. 20.19

to courage and conviction after his resurrection.

Ac. 2 Ac. 3 Ac. 4 Ac. 5 Ac. 9

Unbelieving scholars routinely agree that the disciples believed they had seen Jesus. Summing up an overview of more than 1,400 academic sources Habermas reported that:

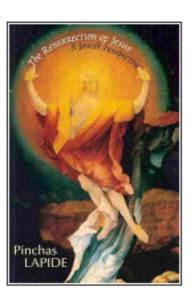
"perhaps no fact is more widely recognized than that early Christian believers had real experiences that they thought were appearances of the risen Jesus. A critic may claim that what they saw were hallucinations or visions, but he does not deny that they actually experienced something" (p.60).

Pinchas Lapide

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Pinchas Lapide (November 28, 1922—October 23, 1997) was a Jewish theologian and Israeli historian. [1] He was an Israeli diplomat from 1951 to 1969, among other position acting as Israeli Consul to Milan, and was instrumental in gaining recognition for the young state of Israel. He wrote more than 35 books during his lifetime.

The Resurrection of Jesus: A Jewish Perspective

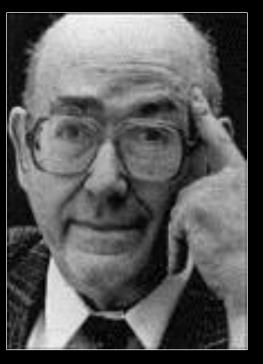


Q+1 (0) Pinchas Lapide, Wilhelm C. Linss

1 Review

Wipf & Stock Pub, Mar 31, 2002 - 160 pages

I accept the resurrection of Jesus not as an invention of the community of disciples, but as an historical event." When a leading orthodox Jew makes such a declaration, its significance can hardly be overstated. Pinchas Lapide is a rabbi and theologian who has specialized in the study of the New Testament.



"I accept the resurrection of Jesus not as an invention of the community of disciples, but as an historical event."

an explosive faith

- Acts: 3,000 > 5,000 > multiplied
- enemies:
 - "these that have turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6) ca. 50 AD "everywhere it is spoken against" (Ac.28:22).
- who did Nero choose for a scapegoat?
- The phenomenal faith that started in Jerusalem and would out last both Jerusalem and Rome was founded on the disciples' testimony of Jesus Christ risen from the dead.

faith in Jesus as Lord & risen from the dead spread across national, cultural & economic lines

```
the poor & the slaves (1Cor.1:26; Col.3:22)
```

Manean, brought up with Herod (Ac.13:1)

Joannna, the wife of Herod's steward (and a witness at the tomb; Luke 24:10 & 8:3)

Erastus, official of the capital of Achaia (Rom. 16:23)

members of Caesar's household (Phil. 4:22)

The jihadist that dies to get 72 virgins is not a witness. His martyrdom does not demonstrate the validity of Jihad,

but it does demonstrate his belief in what he has heard



ieved. What does mist terrorists belind are willing to distribute Mohammed nat prove their 72

In the case of
Apostolic
witnesses,
the case is very
different.

They weren't dying for what they heard.

They died for what they witnessed.

THE CRUCIFIXION

THE TOMB

THE WITNESSES

THEY BELIEVED

THE CONV. OF SAUL

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS FOR THE SKEPTIC

[5.] Paul was radically transformed after a reported encounter with Jesus.

Acts 9 Acts 22 Acts 26 1Cor 15.9 Gal.1.11-17 Php. 3.4-6 1Tim.1.13-16

[5.] Paul was radically transformed after a reported encounter with Jesus.

Paul's testimony is powerful and must be either true or false. If false, he was deceived or lying (options 1 & 2 below). If true, then Jesus is the risen Christ (option 3 below).

options:

- 1.) Paul's testimony is false, but he was deceived: (a.) by self (b.) by someone else.
- 2.) Paul was lying. He made it up.
- 3.) Paul's testimony is true. Jesus is the Christ.

WHY?

Why did Saul of Tarsus began proclaiming the very thing he most wanted to destroy?

Why did he give up his acceptance in Judaism for a belief he hated?

Why did he choose to go from persecutor to persecuted?

Why would he devote his life, and sacrifice his liberty and life for what he had utterly opposed?

1 Cor. 9.1 1 Cor. 15.1-11

conclusion

What explanation accounts for these facts? What is the explanation for the sudden and radical transformation in Saul of Tarsus? Why was he willing to undergo such hardship? Why was the tomb reported empty? Why did the disciples say they saw Jesus? Why did they believe they saw Jesus? What transformed them from fear and despair to courage and conviction? What changed history?

John 20:3-8 Acts 2:32 1 Cor. 15:1-8

JESUS THE RISEN CHRIST

THE WITNESSES

THE TOMB

THE CRUCIFIXION

THEY BELIEVED

THE CONV. OF SAUL

ESTABLISHING BASIC FACTS FOR THE SKEPTIC

Romans 1.4

1 Peter 3.15

"be ready always to give answer to every man that asks you a reason concerning the hope that lies within you"

Paul "I
to Corinth t
circa 55 AD
1Cor.15.3-8 esv

"I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you... that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all... he appeared

also to me."

post script:

two arguments from unbelievers

from: debunkingchristianity.blogspot.com

-J. Loftus

http://debunkingchristianity.blogspot.com/2011/10/assessing-minimal-facts-approach-of.html

Habermas and Licona ignore the fact that a miraculous resurrection is always going to be more improbable than any improbable speculation about what may have happened instead. ... Unless they can show that our "improbable" explanations are more improbable than a miracle

REPLY: How did life originate? By Creator? Or by chance? The atheist rejects the regeneration of life with a purpose, but accepts the generation of life from without a purpose. Which is more inexplicable? Resurrection is unquestionably remarkable. But for those who see in creation the power of the creator, the question is not whether or not he is powerful enough to raise the dead. (cf.Ac.26:9) Atheists & theists both believe in remarkable things. The atheist accepts the generation of life from non-life, w/o design. The Christian believes in the generation of life by God, and the regeneration of life, with design, with a reason. WHICH OF THOSE BELIEFS LACKS AN ADEQUATE CAUSE?





Evidence for the Resurrection would not tell us if Jesus was God or man... Was Jesus even *trying* to start a religion? These and other questions would remain unanswered by the evidence, even if the resurrection could be proven.

Romans 1.4

declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead Paul "I
to Corinth t
circa 55 AD
1Cor.15.3-8 esv

"I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you... that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all... he appeared

also to me."

fini

Bibliography

Barret, C.K. (ed.). The New Testament Background: Selected Documents. New York: Harper, 1961

Buttrick, George (ed.). The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. Nashville: Abingdon, 1962

Habermas, Gary & Licona, Michael. The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus. Kregel: Grand Rapids MI, 2004

Lapide, Pinchas (tr. Linns). The Resurrection of Jesus: A Jewish Perspective. London: SPCK, 1984

Loftus, John W. "Debunking Christianity: Assessing The Minimal Facts Approach of Habermas, Licona, and Craig." *Debunking Christianity: Assessing The Minimal Facts Approach of Habermas, Licona, and Craig.* N.p., 15 Oct. 2011. Web. http://debunkingchristianity.blogspot.com/2011/10/assessing-minimal-facts-approach-of.html

Orr, James (ed.). The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939

Tertullian. The Apology of Tertullian. Trans. William Reeves. London: Griffith Farran, 1889.

William Whiston (tr.) The Works of Flavius Josephus. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979

Wright, N.T. The Resurrection of the Son of God. Fortress Press: Minneapolis, 2003

E.P. Holding (ed.) Shattering the Christ Myth Xulon Press, 2007

[B.] SUGGESTED CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS AND APPEARANCES

The following is not presented as exhaustive or inerrant. It is hoped that it will be helpful.

- 1. Several women (perhaps in different homes), make plans to go, or meet at the tomb, around dawn.
- **2.** Mary Magdalene arrives early "while it is yet dark" (John .20:1). Seeing the tomb open, and before finding out what happened, she runs to report the removal of the body.
- **3.** More women arrive "when the sun is risen" (Mark 16:2). They see the angels and hear the message: "He is not here, but is risen." They depart.
- **4.** Peter and John arrive, look at the grave clothes, and depart (John 20).
- **5.** Mary returns to the tomb. Weeping, and mistaking a man nearby to be the gardener, she asks about the body. When Jesus calls her by name, she turns and sees it is Jesus.
- **6.** Women report the vision of the angels to the disciples (Luke 24).
- 7. Jesus appears to the women (Matt. 28:9).
- **8.** Jesus appears to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24)
- **9.** They report or affirm an appearance to Simon (Luke 24:34; cf. 1 Cor.15:5).
- **10.** Appears to the disciples, late on that first day of the week (Luke 24:36ff.; John 20:19ff).
- **11.** Appears to the disciples again a week later, with Thomas present (John 20:24ff)
- **12.** Appears to the disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21)
- 13. Appears to more than 500, perhaps in Galilee (Matt. 28:10, 16; 1 Cor. 15:6)
- 14. Appears to his brother James (1 Cor. 15:7).
- **15.** Ascends from the Mt. of Olives (Acts 1; Luke 24)
- 16. Appears to Saul of Tarsus, on the road to Damascus (1Cor. 15:8; cf. Acts 9; 22; 26)

Note: this sequence does not include textual variants which are not present in all the Mss. (Matt. 28:9a [KJV]; Luke 24:12; and Mark 16:9-20). -s.smelser