

MEET ME
AT THE
TOMB



MEET ME AT THE TOMB

“The resurrection of Christ is either one of the most vicious, heartless hoaxes ever foisted upon the minds of men, or it is the most fantastic fact of history”

--Josh McDowell

Jesus' Credentials

- Impact of His life on history through His miracles and teachings.
- Fulfilled prophecy in His life.
- His Resurrection!



Significance of Jesus's Bodily Resurrection

"If Christ did not rise in the same physical body that was placed in the tomb, then the resurrection loses its value as an evidential proof of his claim to be God (John 8:58; 10:30). The resurrection cannot verify Jesus' claim to be God unless He was resurrected in the body in which he was crucified. The body was a literal, physical body. Unless Jesus rose in a material body, there is no way to verify His resurrection. It loses its historically persuasive value" (Geisler, 36).

Significance of the Resurrection


“Without belief in the resurrection the faith of Christ could not have come into being. The disciples would have remained crushed and defeated men. Even had they continued to remember Jesus as their beloved teacher, his crucifixion would have forever silenced hopes of his being the Messiah. The cross would have remained the sad and shameful end of his career. The origin of Christianity therefore hinges on the belief of the early disciples that God had raised Jesus from the dead” (Craig, KTR, 116-17).

Significance of the Resurrection

“While speaking of the positive evidence of the Resurrection of our Lord, it may be further urged that the fact, if true, harmonizes all the other facts of history”

(Milligan, RL, 71).

Significance of the Resurrection

- Unique Claim and Proof.
 - Emphasis in Apostolic Preaching.
 - Confirmation of the Deity of Christ.
 - Necessary for Mediation of Christ.
- 
- An empty stone tomb with a rolled-up white cloth inside, symbolizing the resurrection.

The Resurrection Scene

Jesus was Dead: His Beating

John Mattingly wrote:

“The criminal was usually first forcefully stripped of his clothes, and then tied to a post or pillar in the tribunal. Then the awful and cruel scourging was administered by the scourgers... the victim was at the mercy of his scourgers.”

The Resurrection Scene

Jesus was Dead: His Beating

Speaking of the instrument used, Mattingly said: *“It can readily be seen that the long, lashing pieces of bone and metal would greatly lacerate human flesh...Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea comments concerning the Roman scourging inflicted on those to be executed: the sufferer’s ‘veins were laid bare and ...the very muscles...and bowels of the victim were open to exposure.’”*

The Resurrection Scene

Jesus was Dead:

- Beating
- Journey to Calvary
- Crucifixion



The Resurrection Scene

Frederick Farrar gives a vivid description of death by crucifixion:

“For indeed a death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of horror and ghastliness – dizziness, cramps, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, shame...long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds...the unnatural position made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbed with incessant anguish; the wounds inflamed by exposure, gradually gangrened; the arteries – especially at the head and stomach—became swollen and oppressed...then there was the intolerable pain of a burning and raging thirst...”

(Farrar, 440).

The Resurrection Scene

E.H. Day speaking of the physical cause of the death of Christ says that *“the death of Christ was due, not to physical exhaustion, or to the pains of crucifixion, but to the agony of mind and body...the soldier’s spear was the means of exhibiting to the world that His death was due to a cardiac rupture”* (Day, 48-49).

The Resurrection Scene

Burial

- We know more about the burial of Christ than any other person in ancient history.
- We know who took his body from the cross.
- We know something of the wrapping of the body in spices and burial clothes.
- We know the very tomb in which the body was placed and the name of the man who owned it.
- We know even where this tomb was located. We have four records of this burial of our Lord.

The Resurrection Scene

- Stone
 - Thornburn comments regarding the weight of the rock, *“And when he was laid there, he (Joseph) put against the tomb a stone which twenty men could not roll away.”*
- *Seal (Matt. 27:66).*
- *Guards at the Tomb (Matt. 27-28).*
- *Disciples Went Their Way in Fear (Mk. 14:50).*

The Post - Resurrection Scene

Empty Tomb

“...The notion that Jesus rose from the dead with a new body while his old body still lay in the grave is a modern conception. Jewish mentality would never have accepted the division of the two bodies...When therefore his disciples began to preach the resurrection in Jerusalem and people responded, while the Jewish authorities stood helplessly by the only explanation is an empty tomb”

(William Lane Craig).

The Post - Resurrection Scene

Grave Clothes (John 20:3-9)

- In preparing a body for burial according to Jewish custom, it was usually washed and straightened, and then bandaged tightly from the armpits to the ankles in strips of linen about a foot wide.
- Aromatic spices, often of a gummy consistency, were placed between the wrappings or folds. They served partially as a preservative and partially as a cement to glue the cloth wrappings into a solid covering. On the morning of the resurrection Jesus' body was gone, but not his clothing.

The Post - Resurrection Scene

Eyewitness Testimony

- Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; John 20:14).
- Women returning to the tomb (Matt. 28:9-10).
- Peter later in the day (Luke 24:34; I Cor. 15:5).
- Emmaus disciples (Luke 24:13-33).
- Apostles without Thomas (John 20:9-14).
- Apostles with Thomas present (20:26-29).
- Seven by the Lake of Tiberias (John 21:1-23).



The Post - Resurrection Scene

Eyewitness Testimony

- Multitude of 500 plus (I Cor. 15:6).
- James (I Cor. 15:7).
- Eleven (Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Lk. 24:33-52; Acts 1:3-12).
- Ascension (Acts 1:9-11)
- Paul (Acts 9:3-6; I Cor. 15:8).
- Stephen (Acts 7:55).
- Paul in the temple (Acts 22:17-21; 23:11).
- John on Patmos (Rev. 1:10-19).



The Post - Resurrection Scene

Resurrection Body

- Actual tangible resurrected body (John 20:25-31).
- He ate with the disciples (21:10-11).



Inadequate Non-Miraculous Theories

Swoon Theory

Theft Theory

Hallucination Theory

Wrong Tomb Theory



Swoon Theory

- Both medical and historical evidence argues against the possibility of survival under these circumstances.
- Jesus' injuries, whipping, beating, lack of sleep, crown of thorns, and collapse on the way to His crucifixion were life-endangering in and of themselves.
- The nature of crucifixion would make survival impossible.
- The piercing of Jesus' side from which came "blood and water" indicates serum separated from clotted blood demonstrating He died on the cross.
- Jesus uttered words indicating he was about to die (Luke 23:46; John 19:30).

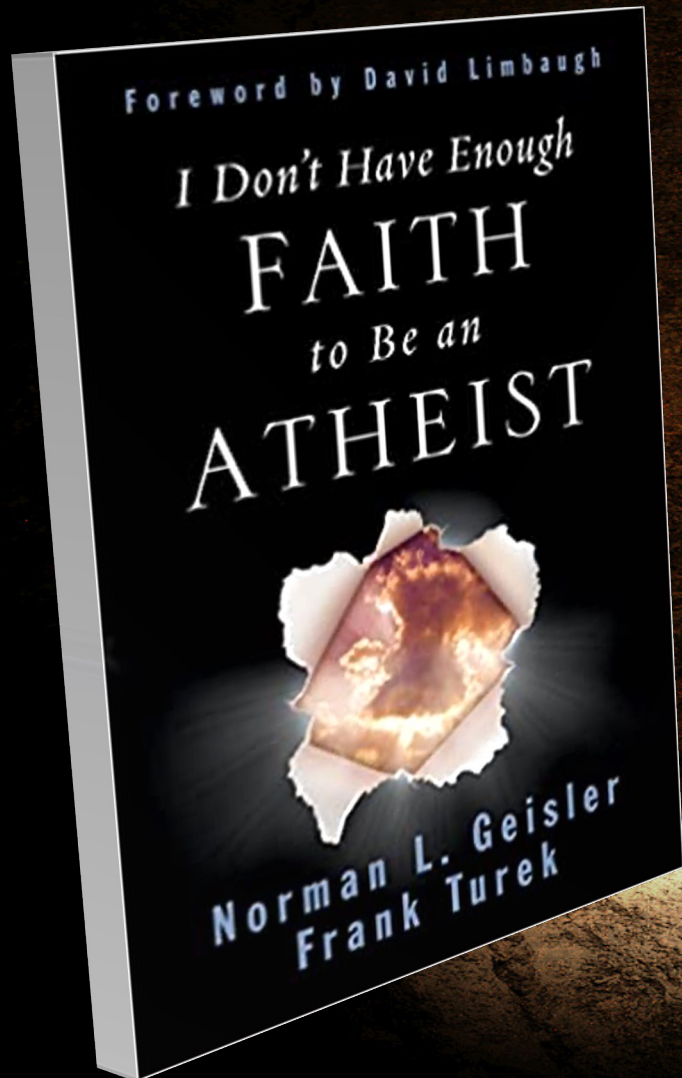
Swoon Theory

- Roman soldiers were trained executioners – did not break his legs because He was already dead (John 19:33).
- Pilate summoned the centurion to make sure Jesus died (Mark 15:44-45).
- Jesus's body was wrapped in about a hundred pounds of cloth and spices and placed in a sealed tomb until the third day (John 19:39, 40; Matt. 27:60).
- Even non-Christian historians have recorded his death.
- In an article in the peer-reviewed Journal of the American Medical Association scientific research has demonstrated that Jesus died.
- Additionally, He would have had to have moved the huge stone, overcome Roman soldiers, and walked victoriously into Jerusalem.

Theft Theory

- The disciples were crushed by the events, not stealing his body.
- If Jesus had not been raised these men would have known that it was a lie and died for it anyway?
- Enemies of Christ would have shown the body and ended Christianity had they stolen it (Matt. 28:11-15)
- Consider the change from cowardice to courage on the part of the apostles (Acts 2:36-38; 4:19)

Theft Theory



- How would the disciples have overcome trained soldiers?
- No Roman guard would have voluntarily admitted to sleeping on the job or being defeated by lowly disciples of Jesus (Matthew mentions they had to be paid off).
- You must have a lot of faith in false theories in order to deny the resurrection of Christ!

Theft Theory

Chuck Colson, special counsel to President Nixon during the Watergate scandal in the 1960s, knows full well how difficult it is to keep a conspiracy together. Says Colson:

“I know how impossible it is for a group of people, even some of the most powerful in the world, to maintain a lie. The Watergate cover-up lasted only a few weeks before the first conspirator broke and turned state’s evidence.”

Hallucination Theory

- Not just one person saw Christ appear – people with different personality and psychological profiles saw Him.
- 500 saw Him and His disciples saw Him personally several times (The impersonation theory cannot explain the personal appearances either).
- They not only saw Him, but they also touched Him, conversed with Him, and ate with Him (John 21:13, 27; 1 John 1:1-4).
- Consider Paul's experiences as well, along with His very analytical, calm personality and the deep, radical transformation He experienced (Acts 9; 22; 26; Phil. 3:4-11) [He had nothing physical to gain].
- The evidence would not explain an empty tomb.

Wrong Tomb Theory

William Dever wrote, *“I think I’m open minded. I’m certainly not trying to defend the Christian tradition. I’m not a believer...I am trying to be a good scholar and honest historian and stick with the facts and not go beyond them...For me it (Wrong Tomb Theory) represents the worst kind of biblical archaeology even if its antibiblical because it seems to me that the conclusions are already drawn in the beginning...I think it is an entirely unreasonable conclusion.”*

(Archaeologist, Old Testament Scholar, Near Eastern Archaeology and Anthropology, Professor at University of Arizona and Lycoming College, Pennsylvania).

Christ Is Risen Indeed!

- Confucius's Tomb - Occupied
- Buddha's Tomb - Occupied
- Mohammed's Tomb - Occupied
- Jesus Christ's Tomb - **EMPTY**



MEET ME
AT THE
TOMB

