Jesus - Was He Raised From the Dead?

Greg Clements last edit April 16, 2022

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(glc) This indicates the nearby comments were written by Greg Clemelnts.

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(glc) If Jesus was not raised from the dead Christianity is a myth and not a path to God.

(glc) You may wish to read two of my other documents before reading this document: “Bible - It Is True,” and “Jesus was a Real Person.” I believe the Bible is reliable and I believe Jesus was an actual historical person.

(glc) Some of the discussion below comes from reading “Evidence That Demands a Verdict” by Josh McDowell (c)1972 by Campus Crusade for Christ Chapter 10 “The Resurrection-Hoax or History?” starting on page 185 and continuing through page 273.

This book discusses the resurrection accounts in the gospels; the importance of the resurrection; The claims of Christ that he would be raised from the dead; The testimony of history and law; The testimony of early church fathers; The Resurrection Scene.

(glc) Followers of Jesus were arrested and put to death for not turning away from their testimony of who Jesus is and their testimony that he was raised from the dead. Would you die for a lie?

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What are the possible explanations given by those who don’t believe Jesus was raised from the dead?

1. (glc) Some would say ‘Jesus did not die on the cross,’ he just became unconscious for a time.

BUT… Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:35) by Roman soldiers (Mathew 27:27-31). Roman soldiers were trained executioners. Jesus gave up his spirit (Matthew 27:50). The Roman soldiers saw Jesus was dead and pierced his side with a spear to verify he was dead (John 19:31-37). Pilate gave permission for Jesus’ body to be removed. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wrapped Jesus’ body and placed it in a tomb. (John 19:38-42). I am confident that Jesus was physically dead when he was on the cross.

2. (glc) Some would say ‘Jesus’ followers stole his body from the tomb and buried him at some undiscovered location.’

BUT … The Roman guards were somewhat on duty at the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66). Jesus’ followers were afraid of the Jews and in hiding in the upper room (John 20:19). Jesus’ followers were not yet ready to confront the authorities. They didn’t go out into public view until Jesus had visited them in the locked room (John 20:19).

AND..Jesus did not remain physically dead. He was witnessed to be alive by a multitude of people. These include the 12(after Judas was replaced) disciples, James (the brother of Jesus), other apostles, Paul, and over 500…many of whom were still alive when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians (Matthew 28:9,10; John 20:20; John 20:26-29; Matthew 28:16; John 20:15-18; John 21:1-14; Acts 1:2-3; Acts 1:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:3-9 ). Some of those people died because they would not give up their testimony that Jesus rose from the dead (Acts 7:54-60; Acts 12:12; 2 Corinthians 6:4-9; 2 Peter 1:12-15; 2 Timothy 4:6-7.

3. (glc) Some would say ‘The disciples just saw someone who resembled Jesus.’

After the resurrection, Jesus came to the disciples in a room that was locked (John 20:19). He was not let in through a door. He came and went in a way that a normal person cannot do. Jesus showed the disciples his hands and side where he had been pierced (John 20:20 and John 20:26-29).

The disciples lived with Jesus for three years. They would know him.

4. (glc) Some would say ‘Someone other than Jesus was on the cross.’

BUT … Jesus’ mother and John, his disciple, were at the cross and would have known if it was not Jesus on the cross. Jesus had a short talk with them (John 19:26,27)

AND … The Jews would have made sure that Jesus was on the cross. They did not want him to continue living because the people were rallying to him and the religious leaders were in danger of losing their reputation and authority over the people.

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(glc) The leaders of the Christian church in the last half of the first century and into the centuries that followed wrote of the resurrection as a fact. You can read what these writers wrote on pages 193 of “Evidence That Demands a Verdict.” The pages after page 193 give an extensive account of the historians who have investigated the resurrection evidence.

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(glc) Jesus spoke the truth, and Jesus said he would die and be raised from the dead.

Matthew 16:21; 17:9; 17:22,23; 20:18,19, 26:32, Mark 9:10; Luke 9:22-27; John 2:18-22

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(glc) What did Peter claim when he spoke on Pentecost? Acts 2:14 - 36

1. v22 God verified Jesus through the powerful deeds done by Jesus

2. v23 Jesus was executed on a cross

3. v24 God raised Jesus, Jesus is not dead

4. v32 David spoke about the resurrection of the Christ; that Christ’s body would not experience decay

5. v32 Peter (and disciples) are witnesses that God raised up Jesus

6. v33 Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God; Jesus received the Holy Spirit and Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit today

7. v36 God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ

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Suggested Reading

“Who Moved the Stone” by Frank Morison