

He is Risen
FACT OR FAIRYTALE?

1

Looking to the History

- **Two Preliminary Concerns...**
 - Isn't the resurrection something that is just believed by pure "faith?"
 - Doesn't using the New Testament to provide evidence for the resurrection assume the inspiration or inerrancy of Scripture?
- **Four Facts...**
 - 1. After his crucifixion, Jesus was buried in a tomb by Joseph of Arimathea.**
 - Jesus' burial is attested in the very old information handed on by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 15:3-5).
 - The burial is part of very old source material used by Mark in writing his Gospel.
 - As a member of the Jewish court that condemned Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea is unlikely to be a Christian invention.
 - The burial story itself lacks any traces of legendary development.
 - No other competing burial story exists.

2

Looking to the History

- 2. On the Sunday following the crucifixion, Jesus' tomb was found empty by a group of his women followers.**
 - The empty tomb story is part of very old source material used by Mark.
 - The old information transmitted by Paul in 1 Corinthians implies the fact of the empty tomb.
 - The story is simple and lacks signs of legendary development.
 - The fact that women's testimony was worthless in first-century Palestine counts in favor of the women's role in discovering the empty tomb.
 - The earliest Jewish allegation that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body shows that the body was in fact missing from the tomb.

3

Looking to the History

- 3. On multiple occasions and under various circumstances, different individuals and groups of people experienced appearances of Jesus alive from the dead.**
- o The list of eyewitnesses to Jesus's resurrection appearances mention in 1 Corinthians guarantees that such experiences occurred. These included appearances to Peter, the twelve disciples, the five hundred brethren and James. 1 Cor 15: 6-8
 - o The appearance traditions in the Gospels provide multiple, independent attestations of these experiences.
- 4. The original disciples believed that Jesus was risen from the dead despite having every reason not to.**
- o Their leader was dead, and Jews had no belief in a dying, much less rising, Messiah.
 - o According to Jewish law, Jesus' execution as a criminal showed him out to be a heretic, a man literally under the curse of God.
 - o Jewish beliefs about the afterlife precluded anyone's rising from the dead before the general resurrection at the end of the world.

4

Interpreting the History

- Proposed Explanations...**
- The Conspiracy Theory (early Jewish explanation)
 - The Survival Theory (some Muslims)
 - Wrong Tomb Theory (Kirsopp Lake)
 - The Alzheimer's Theory (Gerd Lüdemann)
 - The Hallucination Theory (Bart Ehrman, Keith Parsons, Gerd Lüdemann, et al.)
 - Twin Brother Theory (Robert Greg Cavin)
- OR... *Jesus rose from the dead*

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Living in the Light of the History

- **If Jesus Rose From the Dead...**
 - Your life is not your own.
 - You have no hope apart from the resurrected Christ.
 - You have every hope imaginable in the resurrected Christ.
 - How will you respond?

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