

Resurrection—History or Hoax?

John 10:25-33; 5:16-23; Mark 2:1-7; John 2:12-22

East Berlin Community Church

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Introductions

- Superstitions and myths about Good Friday and Easter
- Our tendency to believe without checking the facts

Resurrection—History or Hoax?

A. Resurrection as the Proof of Christ's Claims

1. The Truth Claims of Jesus

a. Claimed to be God

- John 10:25-30-- *"Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one.'"*
- John 10:31-- *"Then the Jews took up the stones again to stone Him"*
- John 10:33-- *"The Jews answered Him saying, 'For a good work, we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.'"*

b. Claimed the right to be worshipped as God

- John 5:16-23-- *"For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them. 'My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.' Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Most assuredly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.'"*
- Jesus Christ not only demanded worship; He accepted it. Matt. 8:2; John 9:35-39; Matt. 14:33

c. Claimed to have the ability to forgive sins

- Mark 2:1-5—*"And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven you.'"*
- Mark 2:6-7-- *"some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 'Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone.'"*

d. **Claimed God as His Father**

- John 2:13-17-- *"Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves. 'Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!' Then His disciples remembered that it was written. 'Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.'"*

2. **Proof of His Claims: His Bodily Resurrection**

- John 2:19-22-- *"Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said."*

B. Resurrection of Christ: Fact or Fiction?

1. *Are the New Testament accounts of historically reliable?*

- Early testimony?
- Eyewitness accounts?
- Multiple, independent, eyewitness accounts?
- Corroborating evidence from Archeology and other writers
- Enemy attestation?
 - Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews-- *"At this time (time of Pilate) there was a wise man who was called Jesus. His conduct was good and he was known to be virtuous. And many people from the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. But those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion, and that he was alive; accordingly he was perhaps the Messiah, concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders."*
- Testimony contain embarrassing details or events?

2. *Do the skeptics theories explain the alleged resurrection of Christ?*

- Refuse to believe the gospel truth that Jesus Christ *"died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the twelve"* (1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

 - Disciples stole the body and buried it in another tomb
 - Matthew 28:13-14 -- *"Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure.'* So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."
 - Jesus never died, but was merely weakened and revived.
 - Witnesses went to the wrong tomb
 - Resurrection appearances were hallucinations
 - Resurrection is the product of the disciples' faith.
 - New Testament writers copied pagan resurrection myths

3. **CONCLUSION: Jesus Christ bodily rose from the dead! And Jesus Christ is Who He claims to be: The Son of God and only Savior!**

- John 14:6-- *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father, but by me!"*

- John 3:16-- *“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life!”*
- **The TRILEMNA and C. S. Lewis.** Jesus Christ claims to be more than a good, moral teacher but God in the flesh. Therefore Jesus Christ is either a...
 - 1) LIAR
 - 2) LUNATIC
 - 3) LORD