



## Foundation of Our Faith

"And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith." [1 Corinthians 15:14]

### Historical Method - The 3 R's of History

1. Relevant Sources - use the best sources you have at your disposal. Early, better attested documents are generally preferred.
2. Responsible Method - use responsible historical methods to determine what actually happened. Example, criteria of historical authenticity (embarrassment, multiple attestation, dissimilarity).
3. Restrained Results - don't come up with fanciful "just so" theories.

### 4 Historical Facts Concerning the Resurrection

#### 1.) The Crucifixion

Eyewitness accounts in the Biblical documents.

"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 Pilatus..." (Tacitus, 1st Century Roman Historian)

"That he was crucified is as sure as anything historical ever can be." (John Dominic Crossan, nonbeliever)

#### 2.) Empty Tomb

1. Mark 16:1-8 account is very simple (compare to Gospel of Peter, a later, false gospel)
  2. Joseph of Arimathea was historical. Member of a 70-man leadership team, would have been well-known, so they wouldn't make him up. Member of Jewish leadership, who the early Christians had animosity towards. Why give him a role giving Jesus an honorable burial?
  3. There are no alternative accounts.
  4. Enemies affirm that the tomb was empty by assuming it in their argument (Matthew 28:12-15)
  5. Discovery of tomb by women is historical. Women had little credibility in the culture. Why make that up?
- "By far most exegetes hold firmly to the reliability of the biblical statements concerning the empty tomb." (Jacob Kremer)

#### 3.) Appearances

1. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 is extremely early Christian creed that reports many of the appearances.
  2. Appearance is only explanation for conversion of Paul - originally Saul the Christian persecutor.
  3. Appearance is only explanation for conversion of James, brother of Jesus. Originally a nonbeliever.
- "It may be taken as historically certain that Peter and the disciples had experiences after Jesus' death in which Jesus appeared to them as the risen Christ." (Atheist scholar Gerd Ludemann)

#### 4.) Origin of Christian Faith - With Bodily Resurrection at the Foundation

1. Jews expected resurrection at the end of the world for all people.
2. Non-Jews did not believe in a bodily resurrection - they thought the physical body was worthless.
3. Jews would have assumed Jesus was "translated" directly to heaven rather than bodily raised, based on their preconceived ideas.

"If the coming into existence of the Nazarenes, a phenomenon undeniably attested by the New Testament, rips a great hole in history, a hole of the size and the shape of the Resurrection, what does the secular historian propose to stop it up with? ...the birth and rapid rise of the Christian church...remain an unsolved enigma for any historian who refuses to take seriously the only explanation offered by the Church itself." (C.F.D. Moule)

