

Resurrection of Jesus: Antidote to Fear

2 Timothy 1:1-12. .

Dr John Dickson—former lecturer at Macquarie university was asked the question on the ABC’s TV program Q & A - “How do you know there is a God?”

- ◆ Apologetics: 1 Peter 3:15 *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer (ἀπολογία) to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect & Jude 3.. contend earnestly for the faith which was once handed down to the saints*

Overwhelming evidence points in the direction of Jesus, His life, His teaching & His healings, His death & resurrection. When I come to believe that, this opens up the world to me. It is like CS Lewis saying "I believe in Christianity for the same reason I believe in the sun, not because I can look at it but because by it I see everything".

Dr. John Dickson



- Coronavirus is hitting some countries very hard.. eg England with up to 1000 deaths per day.. For Australia that would be the equivalent of 3-400 deaths per day.. People would be fearful of loved ones dying... financial stress of unemployment..etc.. Understandable...
- Paul writing to Timothy says: “*For God does not give us a spirit of timidity but of power and love and of sound mind*”..2 Timothy 1:7. Timothy was experiencing great opposition and even persecution as he shared the Good News. Timothy was being intimidated so Paul urged him to be bold, to not be intimidated by people and circumstances. The same for us.. Remember...

The resurrection of Jesus Christ

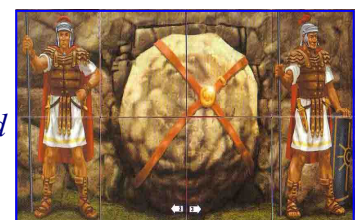
This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10 but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death (through His death and resurrection) and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 2 Timothy 1:9,10.

- A young British preacher shared of his dad.. “Dad are you afraid of the Coronavirus?” No...
- ◆ All of Christianity hinges on the resurrection of Jesus—Jesus coming back from the dead authenticates His claim to be Son of God— Jesus is God! Richard Dawkins is wrong!
- ◆ Something happened 2000+ years ago that changed the course of history from BC - before Christ to AD (the Latin Anno Domini - the year of our Lord). That something was so dramatic it changed 11 men's lives - so that all but one died a martyr's death....James – the step brother of Jesus changed from being a cynic to a martyr who died believing the resurrection of Jesus. That something was an empty tomb!

A student asked Josh McDowell ... “Why can't you refute Christianity?" For a very simple reason," Josh answered. "I am not able to explain away an event in history—the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Consider these facts...

Fact 1. Broken Roman _____ Matthew 27:66

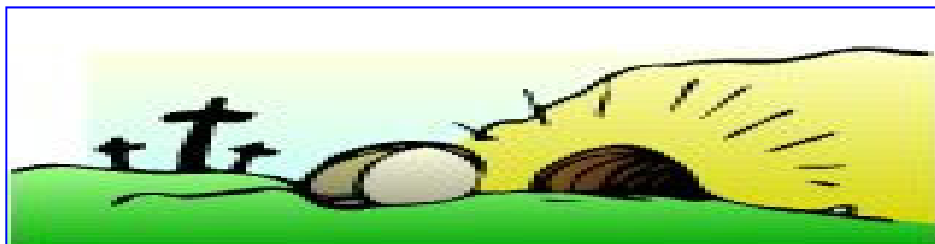
So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard Matthew 27:66



- The consequences of breaking the Roman seal were severe. The “FBI” and the “N.C.I.S.” of the Roman empire were called into action to find the people responsible. If they were apprehended it meant automatic crucifixion upside down. No-one willingly went through that sort of punishment. Yet the seal was broken. They never found the person who broke the seal.

Fact 2. The _____ Tomb.. Matthew 28:5-7..

- ♦ The disciples of Christ did not go off to Athens or Rome to preach Christ raised from the dead - they went right back to the city of Jerusalem—if their message had been false it would have been immediately discounted. The empty tomb can't just be rationalised away. All someone had to do was produce the dead body!!
- ♦ Anyone producing the dead body of Christ would have immediately destroyed the Christian faith - but it was never produced. The empty tomb is a silent testimony to the resurrection of Jesus that has never been refuted to this day



Fact 3. Large _____ Moved... John 20:1

- ♦ On that Sunday morning the first thing that impressed the people who approached the tomb was the unusual position of that approx. 1.5 tonne stone. All the gospel writers mentioned the removal of the large stone



John 20:1...*Early on the first day of the week while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance*

- ♦ The impression is given that the stone was in such a position away from the tomb that John uses a verb (*αιρω*) which means "to pick something up and carry it away". The stone was not just rolled a little to open the entrance but shifted away... disciples couldn't have done that with Roman guards around. But an angel could!
- ♦ The stone was not so much rolled away for Jesus to get out but for others to get in and see the empty tomb—Jesus had risen!

Fact 4. Roman _____ go AWOL

- ♦ Some skeptics claim that the Roman guard fled. This has to be explained because the military discipline of the Romans was exceptionally good - and the punishment for leaving one's post was exceptionally bad... death!

Matthew 28:3 describes the angel who lifted away the stone... *His appearance was like*

- ◆ *lightning and his clothes were white as snow. (4) The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like deadmen*

Fact 5. _____ Tell a Tale.

- ◆ After visiting the grave and seeing the stone rolled away Mary ran back and told the disciples.

John 20:3 So Peter and the other disciple (John) started for the tomb. (4) Both were running but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. (5) He bent over and looked (παρακυψας βλέπε .. to glance in, to look in.) in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. (6) Then Simon Peter who was behind him arrived and went into the tomb. He saw (careful notice, θεωρεω not a mere glance βλέπω such as John gave in verse 5) the strips of linen lying there, (7) as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. (8) Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw (ειδεν “to perceive with intelligent comprehension.”) and believed.

- ◆ John saw something so startling that he immediately believed. He looked over to the place where the body of Jesus had lain. There were graveclothes in the form of the body but it was empty—like the empty chrysalis of a caterpillars cocoon.

Fact 6. 500+ _____ confirm resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:3,4 .. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures 4 that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the ... Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all He appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

- ◆ Paul is saying in effect... if you don't believe me... then go and ask them—they are eyewitnesses! This is extremely powerful evidence written within 30 years of the actual event... “newsflash” time frame!

Fact 7 _____ Witnesses....

- ◆ Another factor crucial to interpreting Christ's appearances is that He appeared to those who were hostile or unconvinced

eg Saul of Tarsus... he despised Christ and persecuted His followers. Acts 9:3ff... *As he (Saul) neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. (4) He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"*



Fact 8. _____ saw Him first

- ◆ Another authenticating feature of the resurrection narrative is that the first appearances of the risen Christ were to women eg John 20:1,2.. .. According to Jewish principles of legal evidence women were invalid witnesses. They did not have a right to give testimony in a court of law.

- ◆ If the resurrection accounts had been **invented** women would not have been included as the first witnesses. So many factors point to the resurrection of Jesus.. we can have complete confidence that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive for evermore...
- ◆ Theories have been advanced attempting to show that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was a fraud... eg **Unknown Tomb Theory**...

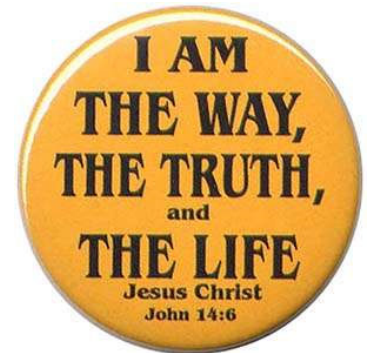
But the Bible makes the location very clear... and look at the detail given...

John 19:38.. *Later Joseph of Arithmathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilates permission, he came and took the body away. (39) He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 75 pounds. (40) Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. (41) At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no-one had ever been laid. (42) Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.*

- ◆ If for some strange reason the disciples did not know where the tomb location was certainly Joseph of Arithmathea did. It was his own private tomb. Also the Romans knew where the tomb was... they had planted a guard there.

The Resurrection of Jesus has many implications

- ◆ *It assures us about the _____ that what Jesus achieved on the cross was effective. The resurrection of Jesus is not the reversal of a defeat but the proclamation of a victory*
- ◆ *It assures us about the _____. Jesus is alive now. We can hand our fears and worries over to Him.. Remember Philippians 4:6...*
- ◆ *It assures us about the _____. This life is not the end - there is life beyond the grave. History is not meaningless or cyclical - it is moving toward an incredible climax. There is hope... eternal hope.. Romans 12:12..*
- The only way we can be part of all this is to come to Jesus who said.. *"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no-one can come to the Father except through Me...John 14:6..*
- The Bible says we are to repent of our sin ... (Acts 3:19) and turn to King Jesus... *"Repent then and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord"*



A final word from Paul: *That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.* 2 Timothy 1:12. Paul was convinced... so can we be...

Personal testimony eg Sir Lionel Luckhoo—one of the world's greatest lawyers... **"I say unequivocally the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so overwhelming that it compels acceptance by proof which leaves absolutely no room for doubt"**

Have you become a follower of the resurrected Jesus?