

Theological Equipping Class

A Defense of the Resurrection | March 1, 2020

Why are we talking about this?

- 1.
- 2.

Objections

"The authors are not objective."

"The resurrection cannot be proven and thus we can't know for sure."

Why it is important?

- It affirms Christ's testimony of Himself as the eternal and divine Son of God (Romans 1:1-4)
- It validates our faith in Christ and Scripture.
- It distinguishes Christianity from other religions by grounding it in objective historical events.
- It declares that Christ's sacrifice was accepted and our sins are forgiven. (Hebrews)
- In short, if Christ is not raised, then "your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17) and "we are of all people most to be pitied." (1 Corinthians 15:19)

Three main lines of defense:

1. Empty tomb
2. Experiences of the disciples

3. Establishment of the church

Empty tomb

Where's the Body?

Options

1. The grave is not empty.
2. The grave is empty.

The grave is not empty

- Then where's the body?

The grave is empty

- Option 1: an animal stole the body.
 - Response:
- Option 2: the Romans or Jews stole the body
 - Response:
- Option 3: the disciples stole the body
 - Response:
- Option 4: unknown grave robbers.
 - Response:

Experiences of the disciples

- Other witnesses to the resurrection: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, Salome who was the mother of the disciples John and James
 - Why is it significant that the Bible records these women?
- Disciples
- Cleopas, on the road to Emmaus
- The apostle Paul
- Jesus appeared to "more than 500 brothers at one time" 1 Corinthians 15:6.

Did the disciples actually believe in the resurrection?

They didn't believe it.

They believed it

- Option 1: Maybe He was never actually crucified?
- Option 2: Maybe He was crucified, but didn't die.
- Option 3: The hallucination theory.

What do we have thus far?

- It is highly improbable that the body of Jesus was in the tomb.
- It is highly improbable that the disciples or Romans or Jews or animals stole the body.
- It highly improbable that the disciples were lying.
- It is highly improbable that hundreds of people simply hallucinated.
- The most likely explanation for the historical data is the resurrection.

Establishment of the church

Is the resurrection a result of legendary evolution?

- The gospel is first preached in Jerusalem.
- The evidence is too early.
- The initial and foundational message of the church.