

**Why The Resurrection Is So Important To Us**  
**Steve Scoggins**  
Pastor, [First Baptist Church, Opelika, Alabama](#)

Why The Resurrection is so important to us:

**I. The Resurrection of Jesus proves our faith is true.**

**Matthew 12:38-40**

This was an illegitimate cry for more proof. The enemies of Christ had seen him heal the sick and cast out demons. Jesus denied them any more proof, any other sign except one: the Resurrection! Evidently this sign would be so convincing no other sign would ever be needed.

**Our faith is based on strong historical evidence:**

New Testament facts about the life of Jesus are also backed up by historical records of 2 first century authors, Josephus and Tacitus. It is beyond question that Jesus lived, died on a cross and was said to be risen by his followers.

Our own NT writings have stood the test of historical accuracy and are trustworthy. (We will deal with this in the DaVinci Code series.)

F.F. Bruce, the foremost expert on the original Biblical documents and a Professor at the U. of Manchester in England said, "Had there been any tendency to depart from the facts, the possible presence of hostile witnesses in the audience would have served as a further corrective."

\*This week the president of Iran once again said the holocaust never happened. Yet we have a holocaust survivor in our town! It has been 61 years since the war ended and there is enough eye witness testimony to refute this revision. In the same way, when Paul stated that Jesus died and rose and over 500 saw him, this passage was written less than 30 years after the resurrection. It is too recent of news to have a revision of history.

E.M. Blaiklock, Professor of Classics, Auckland University, said, "I claim to be an historian. My approach to Classics is historical. And I can tell you that the evidence for the life, the death and the resurrection of Christ is better authenticated than most of the facts of ancient history."

**What is the evidence for the Resurrection?**

**1. Jesus predicted his death and resurrection in detail in advance.**

In my lifetime I have heard cult leaders predict they would be raised from the dead. We are still waiting. Jesus was specific in how he would be spit upon, beaten, crucified and three days later rise again.

**2. The tomb was empty. Christianity could have been destroyed if the enemies of Christ could have produced his dead body.**

The first response to the Resurrection was not to deny it happened but to bribe the guards to tell the lie that the disciples stole the body while they were sleeping. (A guard who slept on duty would get the death penalty. And if they were asleep, how did they know who took it? Why would the disciples steal the body and die horrible deaths because of what they knew was surely a lie?)

**3. The number and quality of eye witnesses is strong proof of the Resurrection.**

1 Cor. 15:1-9 was written about twenty years after the Resurrection. Paul claims that over 500 saw Jesus risen. He then adds that most were still alive and could bear witness if you asked them. These were not just eye witnesses, but such strong witnesses they would die rather than change their testimonies.

**4. Changed lives point to the impact of the Resurrection.**

Before the Resurrection, Peter was seen cowardly denying Christ. After the Resurrection, he is boldly preaching to thousands. Before the Resurrection, Jesus' half brothers James and Jude did not believe in him. After the Resurrection, they became his followers, eventually writing books that became a part of the NT.

Our faith is not based on subjective feelings but on strong historical facts. "I feel better about Buddhism or Hinduism." It is not emotions, it is the facts that count.

The strong evidence of the Resurrection has been the anchor to my soul since I was exposed to them as a young Christian. It held me true to Jesus and to my faith through college and through the doubts that pop up in life.

**Romans 1:4-Jesus through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead:**

In other words, if you had any doubt that Jesus was the Son of God before the Resurrection, all doubts ought to be gone afterward!

**II. The Resurrection proves that grace is true.**

Every person knows that they have sinned and are often haunted by their past. People long to know they are forgiven.

\*A missionary to India stood at the banks of the Ganges and saw a man who had walked many miles to dip in this holy river to earn forgiveness. When he got out of the water, the missionary asked him, "Are you forgiven now?" He shrugged his shoulders and said he didn't know."

- C.S. Lewis was asked by a group of his fellow Oxford professors to name one word that makes Christianity different from all other religions. He said, "That's easy- it's grace." The Good News is that undeserving sinners can be forgiven and can have a place in heaven. But how do we know this incredible Gospel is true?

Glimpses of the Gospel of grace can be seen in the things Jesus said while hanging on the cross:

- Father Forgive Them
- To a convicted thief- "Today you will be with me in Paradise."
- Jesus last cry: "It is Finished/ Tetelestai/ Paid in Full." The full price for our forgiveness was paid for by Jesus.

This sounds great, but how would we know the thief went to heaven and the Father forgave us and our sins were paid for? We wouldn't be sure if the story ended at the cross. But the Resurrection proves those words were for real.

**Romans 4: 25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification**

Christian, you can lay your head on your pillow knowing tonight that your sins are forgiven and you have a place in heaven because Jesus rose.

### **III. The Resurrection of Jesus gives us a glimpse into our future.**

I mean two things by this point:

**1. The resurrection of Jesus means that death won't have the last word. Those who believe in him will have eternal life.**

Forgiveness without the promise of life after death would not be enough.

\*In the days of Queen Victoria, a man was unjustly sent to prison for over 20 years. Finally it was proven he was innocent and he was pardoned. When his friend who had fought for him for those years brought him the pardon, he was shocked at his prisoner friend's lack of joy. "Don't you realize that the Queen of England has pardoned you?" He opened up his shirt and showed the friend a cancerous tumor. "Can the Queen of England do anything about this?"

We are sure there is life after death because Jesus conquered death!

**2. The Resurrected body of Jesus tells us something about what we will be like in eternity.**

**1 John 3:2- Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.**

Will we recognize each other after we die? Yes, Jesus friends knew him. Will our bodies be the same? Yes and no. Jesus could be touched. He ate

breakfast with his disciples by the Sea of Galilee. Yet he could enter a room without opening the doors and all of the sudden be gone elsewhere. We will not have some of the limitations we have now.

John tells us that there will be no more pain and sorrow and death. No sickness, no aches, no Alzheimer's, no diabetes, no arthritis, no cancer.

#### **IV. The Resurrection lets us know that evil is not going to win out.**

1. One objection to the movie, "The Passion" was that it was too bloody. It was hard to watch, yet I believe accurate. It showed religious leaders and Romans enjoying his suffering as well as Jewish followers of his broken hearted over it. Pilate declared him innocent and still had him killed because of mob pressure. It was the greatest injustice of all time, the darkest moment of history. But that is not how the story ends. Easter Sunday follows that dark day of crucifixion!
2. It is easy to get discouraged when you look at our world. Evil seems to be winning. More and More deaths by bombers, rapes, murders. Wicked people get rich and do well while good people suffer. The number one reason why people give up on God is because of the presence of evil and suffering in the world.
3. How do we know evil will not win? The Resurrection gives us the proof.

#### **Hebrews 2:6-9**

**<sup>7</sup>You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor <sup>8</sup>and put everything under his feet? In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him.**

**<sup>9</sup>But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.**

Jesus is the harbinger that proves God will rule and evil will lose.

A harbinger is an action that indicates an unstoppable force is coming:

When we were having a March cold snap a few weeks ago, I heard geese flying overhead while I played golf. The birds returning were a harbinger that summer is coming. It won't be cold forever!

As a young man, I had a rock hit my windshield and make a small crack. I intended to ignore it. One of my friends said, "That will soon split the whole windshield." "I laughed and said, it was only a crack." But that crack spread and the windshield had to be replaced.

Jesus' resurrection was the crack in the hold that evil has on this world.

Evil is not going to win and you are going to want to have been on the right side!

**Conclusion: How can you know that you are on the right side, that you are a true Christian?**

**Romans 10:9**

**<sup>9</sup>That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**