

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

1 Cor. 15:1-8

Paul is charging others with the most fundamental belief of Christianity (Resurrection)

As we read, notice something unique about his charge (*because lots of people make big claims*)...

But Paul provides a trail of evidence...

[READ/pray]

VS1 - WHAT'S AT STAKE:

- THE GOSPEL (vs.1)
- YOUR SALVATION; REDEMPTION OF SINS (vs. 2, 17)
- YOUR FAITH (vs. 14)

Keep this in mind as Easter is approaching. You don't have to know all this by heart, but you should be bold about your faith...

VS2 - PAUL DOESNT WANT THE CHURCH TO "BELIEVE IN VAIN"

Lit: *Without due consideration, or in a haphazard manner, or thoughtlessly, or at random*¹

Scripture doesn't tell us to spoon-feed people blind-faith, it tells us to:

"Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." **[1 Pet. 3:15]**

¹ Thiselton, Anthony C., *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*, 1186.

VS3- ORAL TRADITION

"Received and delivered...were virtually technical terms in Jewish culture for the transmission of important traditions"²

vs 3-5 = "pre-Pauline,³ early Christian confession"⁴

Oral Tradition is like *telephone*, right?

No.

- Oral culture vs. our culture

These people were capable of retaining information as seen in:

- Training

...home teaching ordinarily began when the child was about three years old. The careful training of the memory...has ever since been one of the mental characteristics of the Jewish nation.⁵ –**Alfred Edersheim**

By age 10 they had memorized the entire Torah⁶

- Important info (the cure for cancer)

Most people did not have their own copy of the Scripture so they either had to know it by heart or go to the synagogue...⁷

- As part of a community

"Many critical scholars hold that Paul received [vs3-5] from the disciples Peter and James while visiting them in Jerusalem three years

² Thiselton, Anthony, C. *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. 1186.

³ Thiselton, Anthony, C. *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. 1177.

⁴ Walvoord, John F. and Roy B. Zuck. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*. 542.

⁵ Edersheim, Alfred. *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*. 121.

⁶ <http://wolkorea.multiply.com/reviews/item/49>

⁷ Follow the Rabbi. <http://www.followtherabbi.com/Brix?pageID=2753>

after his conversion. If so, Paul learned within five years of Jesus' crucifixion and from the disciples themselves"⁸

[READ] LUKE 24:44-48 (for an example)

We hear from 1st hand witnesses that "CHRIST DIED"

- Recorded in all four gospels
 - John is an eyewitness (John 19:26):
"When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"

We also hear from secular/hostile sources of his death and crucifixion:

- Lucian of Samasota
 - *Lucian was a Greek Satirist who "mocked [Christians] for their superstition"⁹*
"The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day-the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account."¹⁰
- Talmud (late second century)
"On the eve of the Passover, Yeshu was hanged."¹¹ (Yeshu is Joshua in Hebrew)¹²
- Mara Bar-Serapion

⁸ Habermas, Gary R., and Michael R. Licona. *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*. 52-53.

⁹ Engels, Frederick. *On the History of Early Christianity*. 2. (Engels is a proponent of communist theory, and an author I would not normally appeal to. In this case, he is a hostile source supporting the fact that Lucian was not biased in favor of Christianity when he made the claim that Christ was crucified)

¹⁰ *The Death of Peregrine*, 11-13

¹¹ Sanhedrin 43a

¹² Michael Licona states, "The Talmud was written too late to provide evidence for Jesus that is independent of earlier sources." But this quote is important to note that Jewish writings of antiquity never denied the crucifixion of Christ.

Writing to his son from prison: "Or [what advantage came to] the Jews by the murder of their Wise King, seeing from that very time their kingdom was driven away from them. ¹³"

Mara never mentions crucifixion, but he does say that he was killed.

- John Dominic Crossan (Highly critical scholar of the Jesus Seminar)
"That He was crucified is as sure as anything historical can ever be."¹⁴

VS5- THE DISCIPLES CLAIMED AND BELIEVED THAT THE RISEN JESUS APPEARED TO THEM

- Paul's own testimony
- Strong oral tradition
- Other writings
- 7 ancient sources attesting to their willingness to die

Other writings:

- The gospels (all four written in the first century)
- Apostolic fathers

Men were taught by and associated with the Apostles, claim that the disciples believed Jesus rose:

- Clement of Rome
- John > Polycarp > Irenaeus

¹³ Document is in a British Museum, Syriac Manuscript. (From Habermas, Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*, 257)

¹⁴ Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography, 145.

- Irenaeus recollects: [*Polycarp*] reported his discussions with John and others who had seen the Lord.¹⁵

➤ 7 ancient sources telling us of their willingness to die for their beliefs:

- Acts tells us of these sufferings
- Tertullian (A.D. 200) "That Paul is beheaded has been written in their own blood...Then is Peter girt by another, when he is made fast to the cross."¹⁶
- Polycarp
- Ignatius
- Origen ...tells us that Peter was crucified upside down.
- Eusebius

According to history, the disciples proved with their blood that they actually *believed* in their own claims.

VS7- APPEARED TO JAMES, A SKEPTIC

("James the Just" - Not the disciple, but the brother)

➤ What we know about James:

- He was an unbeliever during Jesus ministry (Mark 3:21-31; 6:3-4; John 7:5)
- The early creed mentions Jesus appearing to James (1 Cor. 15:3-7)
- Subsequent to the resurrection, James is identified as the Jerusalem church leader (Acts 15:12-21; Gal. 1:19)
- Not only did he convert, but his beliefs were so strong that he died a martyr because of them (attested by Christian/non-Christian sources)

¹⁵ Ibid, 55. Referencing Irenaeus's *To Florinus*, cited by 4th century historian, Eusebius (Ecc. His. 5.20)

¹⁶ Ibid, 58. Referencing *Scorpiace*, 15, in Roberts, Donaldson, and Coxe, eds. And trans., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*.

VS8- APPEARED TO PAUL, ENEMY OF CHRISTIANITY

➤ What we know about Paul:

- He claimed to see the risen Christ while on his way to imprison Christians (Corinth, Galatia, Philippi)
- It changed him drastically
 - Paul's testimony
 - Luke's testimony
 - Early Christians in Judea (Galatians)
 - Clement of Rome
 - Polycarp
 - Tertullian
 - Dionysius of Corinth
 - Origen

[NOTE]: Many people have converted for what they received from others. THESE MEN DIED FOR WHAT THEY THEMSELVES SAW!

SUMMARY:

1. Jesus died

2. His disciples died for believing they saw Him risen

3. James, the skeptic, claims to see the risen Christ, converts, becomes the leader of the central church of the day, and dies for his belief of seeing a risen Jesus.

4. Paul, an enemy of Christianity, claims to see Christ while attacking Christians, converts, becomes the biggest friend of Christianity, and dies for his belief of seeing a risen Jesus.

5. Empty tomb

How do you explain this?

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

(Brace yourself, because it means a lot)

Paul tells us in Romans 6:4..

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

SOME OF US PROFESS JESUS ALL DAY LONG, AND YET NEVER STARTED WALKING.

We confess with our mouths a resurrected Jesus, but we show the world a faith *without due consideration.*

We leave Christ in the grave.

[NEWS FLASH]: Christ isn't in the grave. ← REALITY

"Nothing is more manifest in fact, than that the things of religion take hold of men's souls no further than they *affect* them..." –**Jonathan Edwards**

“...yet they remain as before, with no sensible alteration, either in heart or practice, because they are not *affected* with what they hear.” –**Jonathan Edwards**¹⁷

THE 12 APOSTLES DIDN'T BELIEVE THIS HAPHAZARDLY, BECAUSE THEY **SAW** THE RISEN LORD, AND LOOK AT HOW THEIR LIVES CHANGED...

James the son of Zebedee

Beheaded in A.D. 44. –Clemens Alexandrius¹⁸

Matthew the tax collector

Nailed to the ground with short spears, then beheaded in A.D. 66.¹⁹

Simon the Zealot

Painfully tortured and crucified by the governor of Syria in A.D. 68.²⁰

Matthias

Stoned at Jerusalem, then beheaded.²¹

Mark

Tradition says that he was dragged to pieces by the people of Alexandria when he spoke out against a solemn ceremony for their idol Serapis.

Jude

Martyred in A.D. 72 by crucifixion at Edessa.²²

¹⁷ Edwards, Jonathan. *On Religious Affections; The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Vol. 1.* 238.

¹⁸ Foxe, John. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs.* 5.

¹⁹ *Jesus Freaks,* 219.

²⁰ *Ibid,* 220.

²¹ Foxe, John. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs.* 6.

²² *Ibid,* 8.

Thomas

Tortured by angry pagans in Calamina, India. He was run through with spears, and thrown into the flames of an oven.²³

Bartholomew

Beat cruelly by pagans, then crucified.²⁴

King Astyages of Armenia (modern day Turkey) ordered him to be “beat with rods, suspended upside down on a cross, and skinned alive.” After all this, he was still conscious and continued to exhort the people to believe in Jesus and worship the true God. He was finally beheaded to quiet him.²⁵

Andrew

Martyred in Edessa by being crucified on an X-shaped cross.²⁶

As Andrew was brought near to the cross to which he would be fastened, and instead of the fear that might have been expected, fervent love for Jesus rose up in his heart.

He cried out, “*O cross, most welcome and long looked for! With a willing mind, I joyfully come to you, being the disciple of Him who hung on you.*”

He hung alive on the cross for three days, preaching the Gospel.²⁷

Peter

Peter went back to the city of Rome, knowing that he faced death. After being captured and taken away to his place of martyrdom at the hands of Nero, he

²³ *Jesus Freaks*, 8.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 8.

²⁵ *Jesus Freaks*, 206.

²⁶ Foxe, John, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. 7.

²⁷ *Jesus Freaks*, 150.

requested that he be crucified in an upside down position because he did not consider himself worthy to be crucified in the same position as his Lord.²⁸

-Hegesippus

John

He was in Ephesus, where he was arrested, sent to Rome, and cast into a large vessel filled with boiling oil that did not harm him. As a result, he was released and banished by Emperor Diocletian to the Isle of Patmos, where he wrote the book of Revelation. He is the only Apostle to escape a violent death.²⁹

Jesus is no longer in the grave, and those that are convicted by that reality live accordingly.

HE DIDN'T SAVE YOU SO THAT YOU COULD RIDE ALL THE WAY INTO HEAVEN ON AUTO-PILOT, BUT TO WALK IN NEWSNESS OF LIFE, AFFECTING THOSE AROUND YOU, ENGAGING IN HIS MISSION.

If there is an area in your life that needs resurrecting....REPENT.

We listed four facts that point to the historicity of the resurrection

Here's four reasons why the resurrection should revive your passion³⁰

1. Because of the resurrection, He gives repentance and forgiveness of sins. (Acts 5:31)
2. Because of the resurrection of Jesus, we now enjoy His personal fellowship with us always. (Matthew 28:20)

²⁸ Ibid, 7.

²⁹ Ibid, 10.

³⁰ Piper, John. *Desiring God.*

3. Because Jesus was raised, He has received the promise of the Spirit and poured out the Spirit on us. (Acts 2:33)
4. Jesus' resurrection was the beginning and guarantee of our resurrection.
(1 Cor. 15:20; 2 Cor. 4:14)

THE RESURRECTION CHANGES EVERYTHING

HEB 10:39 – 11:1

But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

May your convictions lie in the person, identity, and finished work of Jesus Christ who is Lord of all.

If you believe that He is risen...