

Proof of the Resurrection (cont.)

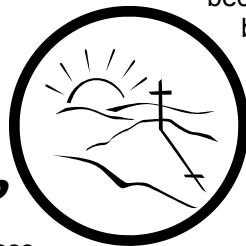
The second proof of the resurrection is that the Bible records how over 500 people saw the risen Lord! They spent 40 days with Him—listening to His teaching, eating with Him and some even touched Him. He didn't just *appear* alive, He was! It is unlikely that these followers would lie about being with Jesus while at the same time preach Jesus' teachings of truthfulness and honesty.

Third, His tomb was empty! Jesus' tomb was sealed and guarded by the Roman Government. No one could have gotten past the soldiers to steal the body and if Jesus really was still in the tomb, certainly the Romans or the Jewish leaders would have produced His body to discredit His followers.

Fourth, non-Biblical writings attest to His resurrection. Flavius Josephus, a non-Christian historian who lived in the first century wrote, "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day..." (Jewish Antiquities 18,3,3).

What Does This Mean To Us?

First, because Jesus Christ died on the cross as payment for sin, we can be forgiven and spend eternity in His wonderful presence enjoying His blessings and grace. Second, He is present with us wherever we go. His abiding strength gives us the ability to triumph over any disaster and any sin. We can also pray to Him anywhere and know that He hears us. Third, and most importantly, because these things are true, we can know whether or not we will go to heaven when we die.



Believe In Jesus For Eternal Life!

Jesus calls us all to repent and become born-again. This happens when we receive God's forgiveness and righteousness by faith. The Bible teaches, "To the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness (Romans 4:5)." We are not forgiven because of a good life, but because of genuine faith in the truth that Jesus died and paid for our sins.

Having faith means that you believe what the Bible says about you, your sin and Christ's death on your behalf. To be forgiven by God, confess to God that He is holy and pure and that before Him you are a guilty, lost, and helpless sinner. Sincerely ask Christ to save you and take His rightful place as the Lord of your entire life so that He would enable you to turn from sin and live for Him. If this is true of you, Romans 10:9 promises, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

Those who trust Christ for their salvation are children of God. The Bible says, "But as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name (John 1:12)." If this is true of you, then get to know your Lord through prayer, faithful study of His Word, and involvement in a good Bible-teaching church so that God can use you for His glory and your joy!

Would you like to know more?

We'd love to help!

Please contact us at

The Grace Tabernacle 732-681-3712

Join us for Sunday worship at

8:45 and 10:45 a.m.

To find out more information or hear recent sermons, please visit our website:

www.thegracetabernacle.org

The Grace Tabernacle
Presents...

The Crown



Inside:

answers to these and other important questions:

What's so good about GOOD Friday?

What does Jesus' death on a cross have to do with me?

How do we know the resurrection really happened?

Why did Jesus have to die?

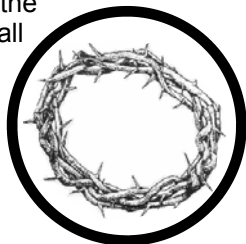
The Life of Jesus

Jesus Christ was the only person whose purpose was to die. Though He is God, Jesus left heaven and was born as a human baby in a stable. He began His ministry at thirty years old and declared that all people have sinned and must repent and turn to God. He also declared that He is the Son of God, the promised Messiah-King who holds all authority.

Jesus preached an amazing message, and He proved its truth through miracles—His miracles demonstrated His total power and authority over *everything*. Jesus could heal the lame, mend the paralyzed, restore the blind and deaf, and cure terrible diseases such as leprosy. He even raised some people from the dead and fed crowds on a few scraps of food! He did these miracles because He was God!

We can be confident that Jesus really did perform these miracles. The multitudes He healed were too numerous and their healings were too dramatic to be just parlor tricks. Likewise, the people didn't deny that they were cured, their healings never reverted, eyewitnesses validated them, and non-biblical writings from the era attest to them.

Yet Jesus received none of the glory He deserved. He was rejected by His family and friends, denied, mocked, spit upon, and tried as a criminal. Humanity's ultimate act against Him was to whip Him, pound a circle of thorns into His head and puncture His hands with spikes, and hang Him on a cross until He died a death reserved for the worst criminals. Yet this was all according to God's purpose and plan, for three days later He rose from the grave fully alive!



Why Did Jesus Die on a Cross?

If Jesus was God, then why did He undergo all of that terrible suffering? As God, Jesus could do whatever He wanted—yet He chose to suffer. Why? In order to demonstrate His grace and mercy by restoring *people* to God. You see, Jesus' death solved our serious problem of sin. Sin is a problem we all have—from presidents to priests, from the rich to the wretched—all of us have committed crimes against God. All of us have disobeyed His righteousness and holiness.

God has ultimate control and authority over our lives and just as every government has laws, so does God. When a person breaks a governmental law, they must suffer a penalty. In the same manner, when we break God's laws, we also must suffer a penalty.

How do we break God's laws? Anytime we do something wrong, we disobey God. This is called sin—and sin separates us from God. Isaiah 59:2 teaches, "But your sins have made a separation between you and your God..."* Because God is perfectly holy, even just one sin creates a chasm between God and us.

Not only does our sin separate us from God, His holy justice requires that we are punished for our wrongdoing. Our punishment is determined by more than just the degree of our crime—it is determined by *what* or *who* we have harmed. For example, if we smash a rock we generally suffer nothing. But if we kill a man we go to jail because a man is more valuable than a rock. In the same manner, all wrongdoing is sin against God. When we disobey God we sin against God who has eternal value so we must suffer eternal punishment.

Moreover, each sin requires eternal punishment no matter how "good" we may try to be. Imagine a murderer pleading to a judge, "Let me go because look at how many people I have not killed!" Justice is still required for his crime. Likewise a "good" life cannot balance out even one single sin against God. Because of sin, we

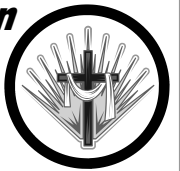
owe God an infinite debt of punishment. Since only God has infinite value, we must pay with infinite time in an eternal Hell.

Yet Jesus is fully man *and* fully God. As a man, He could take on our sins. As God, He is of infinite value. 2nd Corinthians 5:21 says, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." This means that when Jesus died on the cross, God treated Him as though He committed the sins of His believers, and He blesses them as though they have acted with Christ's righteousness.

The reason we call the day Jesus was killed "Good Friday" is because His death bridged the chasm between God and us so that we might be brought into God's grace and escape the punishment of Hell. Now that's a good thing!

Proof of the Resurrection

On Easter Sunday—also known as *Resurrection Sunday*—Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. He not only endured our punishment for sin, He also defeated death by overcoming it! After He was crucified, His dead body was laid in a tomb. Then, three days later—as God—He rose from the dead! No one else has ever predicted his own return from the dead—and then accomplished it! Jesus' resurrection stands as an eternal testimony that He was who He claimed to be: the Lord and God!



How do we know that Christ really rose from the dead? The first proof of Christ's resurrection is that the apostles wouldn't die for a lie. All of the Apostles who saw the resurrected Lord were killed for their faith. Simon Peter was crucified upside down. Andrew, James and the other Simon were also crucified. James was beheaded by Herod. Bartholomew was flayed to death. Why would so many disciples die for a lie? They didn't! They died for the truth! It was the truth of Jesus' resurrection that transformed them from cowards into martyrs!

(continued on the next fold...)