

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

Adapted from the text *Reasonable Faith*



Paul's Account

▣ The Resurrection of Christ: 1 Cor. 15

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, **which you received**, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you – unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance **what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with 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 Cephas, then to the twelve.

6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Structure of the Argument

1. To establish the facts which will serve as historical evidence
2. To argue that the hypothesis of Jesus' resurrection is the best explanation and most probable explanation of these facts.

The Evidence for Jesus' Resurrection

- I. The Postmortem Appearances
- II. The Empty Tomb
- III. The Origin of the Christian Faith.

I. The Postmortem Appearances: The Facts of the Postmortem Appearances

1. Paul's list of eyewitnesses to Jesus' resurrection appearances guarantees that such appearances occurred. (1 Cor. 15)
2. The Gospel accounts provide multiple, independent evidence of postmortem appearances of Jesus.
3. The resurrection appearances were physical, bodily appearances.

II. The Empty Tomb: The Facts of Jesus' Empty Tomb

1. The historical reliability of the story of Jesus' burial supports the empty tomb.
2. The discovery of Jesus' empty tomb is multiply attested in very early, independent sources.
3. The phrase 'on the third day of the week' reflects ancient tradition.
4. The Markan story is simple and lacks legendary development.
5. The tomb was probably discovered empty by women.
6. The earliest Jewish polemic presupposes the empty tomb. (Matt. 28:11-15)

III. The Origin of the Christian Faith: The Fact of the Origin of the Christian Faith

- ▣ Not From Christian Influences
- ▣ Not From Jewish Influences
- ▣ Not From Pagan Influences

Jesus' Resurrection: Answering Alternate Explanations

- ▣ Conspiracy Hypothesis
- ▣ Apparent Death Hypothesis
- ▣ Hallucination Hypothesis
- ▣ (Wrong Tomb Hypothesis)