

Did Jesus Really Rise from the Grave?

Easter 2019

Grace Fellowship Church / April 21, 2019 / Pastor Brad Bigney

Matthew was an eye-witness that saw Jesus here on this earth both before and after His resurrection. You can read his account in **Matthew 28:1-20**.

I. Is It Possible?

Matthew 28:2-3 “And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.”

Matthew gives us a supernatural account of the resurrection. You have to be open to the supernatural and willing to investigate further.

Don't step into the trap of pitting science against Christianity or the supernatural. Science will never be able to explain some of the most important things about us and our world because everything cannot be measured in a test tube or graphed onto a chart.

II. But Is It True?

To answer this question, Matthew gives us three pieces of evidence that you have to consider.

A. The Existence and Admission of a Plausible Counter Argument (v. 12-15)

In **v. 12-15**, Matthew tells us that the religious leaders bribed the Roman soldiers who had been guarding the tomb and convinced them to say that the disciples had come to the tomb at night and stole the body away.

Matthew includes this because it actually happened. It's more evidence that he was telling the truth. If he was fabricating a story he wouldn't include a plausible counter argument that could explain away what he was proposing.

B. The Existence of Women and Other Eye Witnesses Who Saw Jesus Alive (v. 1)

This matters because in that culture the testimony of a woman was not even admissible in the court of law. Recording that women first saw the empty tomb would have been a huge mistake for anyone that wanted to perpetrate fiction or create a hoax, but all four Gospels include it.

C. The Incredible Spread of Christianity (v. 19-20)

Matthew put the "Great Commission" right next to the resurrection because without the life-changing power of the resurrection, no one would risk their life to spread or promote this new message of Jesus as the hope for mankind.

Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell us that the vast release of energy to spread Christianity happened because of the power of the resurrection that totally transformed a group of fishermen into bold proclaimers of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

III. So What Should You Do If You Think It Might Be True?

A. Start by Doubting Your Doubts

Be skeptical of your own skepticism if you've never taken the time to carefully examine the claims of Jesus and evidence for the resurrection. And know, you're not the first to have doubts.

Matthew 28:17 "When they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted."

Matthew said, "but some doubted," because we need to be reminded that all the evidence in the world cannot bring a person to absolute, 100% certainty.

B. Make a Decision the Same Way You Make Other Important Decisions

After careful investigation, you move forward based on the information you have. There's always a gap between 100% certainty and the evidence that we have, but that's the way we make every important decision in life.

You will never be sure until you commit to Jesus with your whole life because He calls you to give Him your life, not just your intellectual consent.