

Tough Questions

Did Jesus Really Rise From The Grave?

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / Apr 21, 2019 (Easter Sunday)

I. God spared no ink in making sure the Bible was abundantly clear. Jesus is alive!

- A. All four Gospel writers separately recorded the same great truth; Jesus rose from the grave!

Matt. 28:5-10 // Mark 16:1-20 // Luke 24:1-9 // John 20:1-10

- B. Paul dedicates an entire chapter to the resurrection in **1 Corinthians 15**.
- a. If Jesus didn't rise, neither will believers. (1 Cor. 15:12-15)
 - b. If Jesus didn't rise, His sacrifice was insufficient. (1 Cor. 15:16-19)
 - c. Since Jesus did rise, believers will rise, too! (1 Cor. 15:20-23)
 - d. Since Jesus did rise, we know He has victory over sin & death! (1 Cor. 15:24-34)
 - e. Since believers will rise, we will receive a glorious resurrected body, and will have ultimate victory over sin & death in every way! (1 Cor. 15:35-50)

II. Jesus appeared to many, many people after His resurrection.

- A. He appeared to the disciples and the women who went to visit His grave.
- B. He appeared to Thomas. (John 20:24-29)
- C. He appeared to the Disciples, performed a miracle, and ate breakfast in their presence. (John 21:1-14)
- D. He appeared to 500+ people at one time! (1 Cor. 15:6)
- E. He appeared to the Disciples before He ascended to heaven. (Acts 1:6-8)
- F. He appeared to Paul. (1 Cor. 15:8 cf. Acts 9:1-6)

III. God even uses the chief priests' lies to show Jesus really did rise from the grave!

Matt. 28:11-15 - ¹¹ While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. ¹² And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers ¹³ and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

The fact the chief priests didn't confirm the soldiers' account AND felt the need to manipulate how it would be told to others. God turned one of the greatest lies ever told right on its head, allowing it to only further affirm the greatest truth to ever be known; ***Jesus is alive!***

Gen. 50:20 - ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

IV. What is the greatest proof of the power of our risen Savior? Changed lives!

- A. The Disciples - changed from hiding & fearful to an unstoppable movement that would literally change the world forever.
- B. Paul - changed from a Christian-killing Jesus-hater to a Gospel-preaching Jesus-lover.
- C. People like you & me - changed from dead in our sins without hope to having been made alive in Christ with the promise of life after death! (1 Cor. 15:54-58)

Questions for Community Group and/or Personal Application:

- (1) What truth(s) from the sermon were great to hear again? Which one(s) were new to you?
- (2) Jesus appears, performs a miracle, and eats breakfast in the presence of His disciples (John 21:14). Why is the fact He ate breakfast so significant?
- (3) The chief priests' cover-up reminds us God even works through His enemies for His glory and our good. What situation currently exists in your life where you hope that proves to be true in the long run?
- (4) Pastor Peter quoted Gen. 50:20. Do you know the story of Joseph? (If not, check it out in Gen. 37-50!) Recall a time in your life when God redeemed negative circumstances to bring about something good.
- (5) Welcome to "Glad Libs." :) Fill in the blanks below with phrases about your life and see what you come up with in trying to talk about what God has done in your life.

I was _____.

But God _____.

So now _____.