

# The Path - Christian Apologetics

## Day 21: The Resurrection

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Jesus Christ offered his death, burial and three days in the grave, and his resurrection as “proof” of his identity. Consider the following predictions by Jesus:

- Matthew 12:38-40 - “Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the son of man be \_\_\_\_\_ days and \_\_\_\_\_ nights in the heart of the earth.”
- Matthew 16:21 - “From that time began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be \_\_\_\_\_ again the third day.”
- Matthew 17:9 - “And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be \_\_\_\_\_ again from the dead.”
- Matthew 17:22-23 - “And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be \_\_\_\_\_ again...”
- Luke 9:22-27 - “Saying, the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be \_\_\_\_\_ up the third day.”
- John 2:18-22 - “Then answered the Jews and said unto him, what sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest say unto them, destroy this temple, and in three days I will \_\_\_\_\_ it up. Then said the Jews, forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus said.”

What kind of man would make a claim of knowing when he would die, how he would die and that he would resurrect in three days? If you or I would have made statements like these we would have been quietly institutionalized. No other founder of any cult or religion has ever dared to

stake all their claims on a resurrection in three days. If they have they were proven wrong: but Jesus did just that.

What proofs are there that His claim “I will rise again” was fulfilled?

In Acts 1:3, Luke writes,

“To whom He shewed himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs”

The word infallible indicated that the proofs of the resurrection are the strongest type of legal evidence. Thus, the evidence that we have that Jesus did rise from the dead is the kind of evidence that could be used in a courtroom when determining if an event actually happened.

Professor Ernst Kevan states, “For the establishment of an alleged historical fact, no documents are esteemed more valuable than contemporary letters.” Not only do the early Christians write of the resurrection, but they turn the tables around and state categorically, “you also know about these things” because if he is not correct in the details it will be mercilessly used against him by the opposition.

Please note the following written, contemporary letters:

Acts 2:22-24 - “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also \_\_\_\_\_ : Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.”

Acts 26:22-26 - “...I continue unto this day, both small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, ‘Paul, thou art beside thyself: much learning doth make thee mad.’ But he said, ‘I am not mad most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king

\_\_\_\_\_ of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.”

The resurrection was loudly proclaimed in letters, in front of multitudes, in front of Festus a governor, and in front of Agrippa the king. The exponential growth of the early New Testament church shows that the resurrection of Christ was believed to have taken place by great masses of people.

In our next lesson we will read eyewitness statements from those who personally saw the resurrection.

Discussion:

1. How did Jesus offer His resurrection as the proof of His identity?
2. Has any other religious leader throughout history staked his claims upon a resurrection?
3. How valuable are contemporary letters in establishing the veracity of an alleged event?
4. How do we know that the resurrection account was widely believed?