

## EASTER 2020

This is Easter Sunday 2020. It is a very unusual Easter Sunday because we are not able to corporately gather for worship. Our President wanted the country to be back open by Easter, but the timing is not right yet because of the Coronavirus.

I was interested in something someone said - "It is a shame we cannot go to church on Easter because Easter is a very special day for people of faith." We would agree it is a shame that people of faith cannot go to church on Easter, but actually all people have some kind of faith, whether or not they go to church. All people believe things when it comes to God. Some people believe things that are true and some people believe things that are not true.

For example, a theist believes in the existence of a personal God - that is his faith.  
An atheist does not believe in the existence of a personal God - that is his faith.  
An agnostic believes he doesn't know whether or not there is a God - that is his faith.

Frankly all people believe something when it comes to God. So in some ways all people are people of faith.

**Now what ultimately determines a sound and sane faith is evidence. What actually determines whether a faith is factual, rational and logical is evidence.**

If you have three belief systems about God—Theism, Atheism and Agnosticism—obviously all of them cannot be right. If one of the faith systems is right the other two will be wrong.

**The thing that determines which faith system is worthy of believing is the evidence.** We have carefully examined the evidence (go to our web site under Theology Proper) and we are convinced that the only faith system worthy of faith is theism.

Now this same point is true when it comes to Easter and Jesus Christ. The fact that Jesus Christ was a real Person who lived on this earth is something no rational, objective person can deny. Both Biblical writers and secular writers and even false religions acknowledge Jesus Christ was a real person who lived on earth in real history.

If you go to Israel, both Arab and Israeli tour guides will show you actual places where Jesus did and said things.

In fact, two secular historians who actually lived, researched and wrote around Jesus' time are:  
1) A Jewish historian named Josephus (AD 37-100).  
2) A Roman historian named Tacitus (AD 56-120). He started writing his history dating back to the time period of AD 29.

When you read their historical writings, both of them write very specific things about Jesus Christ. There are nine things they specifically say about Jesus Christ:

- 1) Both Josephus and Tacitus write that Jesus Christ did exist as a man.  
It was said of Tacitus, as a historian, he never wrote about a non-existent person, especially one who was crucified. He was careful in research.
- 2) Josephus wrote that Jesus Christ's personal name was Jesus.
- 3) Both Josephus and Tacitus write Jesus Christ was called *christos* in Greek, meaning anointed or Messiah. The Romans called him *Christus*.
- 4) Josephus wrote that Jesus had a brother whose name was James.
- 5) Josephus wrote that Jesus won over both Jews and Greeks.
- 6) Josephus wrote that Jewish leaders were not favorable to Jesus Christ, they were against Him.
- 7) Both Josephus and Tacitus wrote that Pilate made the decision that Jesus Christ should be executed.
- 8) Josephus wrote that Christ's execution was by crucifixion.
- 9) Both Josephus and Tacitus wrote that Christ was executed during the time when Pontius Pilate was governor over Judea.

So the two main secular historians of the time period, when the events happened, clearly testify of the real person named Jesus Christ, who did live and who did die. This does not include the gospel historical accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John that very carefully track the life of Jesus Christ.

Any rational, objective person interested in facts and truth must conclude Jesus Christ was here on earth and He was a very real person.

- 10) Josephus wrote one more thing about Jesus—He was restored to life the third day.

This is Easter Sunday. This is a day that has been set apart in history since around AD 300 to remember the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What exactly do we mean by the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

What we mean is that this is a day set aside to remember **that Jesus Christ was a real Person who had a real body who lived on this earth in real time in that body, and He was crucified and killed and was actually dead and His dead body was buried in a tomb and three days later He came out of that tomb in the same body alive.** That is what we mean.

**He really came back to life after He was really dead.** He was the same Person, He had the same body characteristics that He had when He was buried, including the nail prints in His hands and feet and wounds in His side (Luke 24:39, 42-43). He was not some Spirit being or emanation; He was a real Person who was alive in His same body three days after that same body was dead.

It was a recognizable body and it was a body capable of eating food, like fish. One unique thing about His resurrected body is that He was no longer subject to death (Rom. 6:9). Paul said: "knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him."

That is what we mean by the resurrection and that is what we believe and either the evidence shows and proves that this is true or it doesn't.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is critical to setting Christ apart as God/Savior/Messiah/King. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is critical to us being saved from our sins as we are all sinners. Paul said the resurrection of Jesus Christ is what proves He is the only one who can save us. If Jesus Christ were not raised from the dead, then He is just another religious guy promoting some religious cause, and believing in Him to save us does not make any sense. In fact, Paul said so in I Corinthians 15:14, 17. Paul said, "if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain...and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless, you are still in your sins."

Now the thing that determines whether or not this is true is evidence. To actually determine whether or not Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, we need answers to two specific questions:

**QUESTION #1** – Does the objective evidence show that Jesus Christ was really dead?

In order to have a real resurrection you must have a real dead person, otherwise it is not resurrection; it is resuscitation. So for there to be a resurrection of Jesus Christ there must be a dead Jesus Christ.

The fact that Jesus Christ was crucified is something no objective historian has ever tried to deny. In fact, as far as I know in my research no one has ever doubted the fact that Jesus Christ did die on a cross.

The evidence that Jesus Christ was actually dead is so overwhelming that even skeptics don't try to deny it. Jews say Jesus was crucified by the Romans and the Muslims believe Jesus Christ did die.

**We cite 13 proofs that Jesus Christ was actually dead.**

**Proof #1** - It was predicted in the Old Testament that the Messiah would die. If He is the Messiah, He must die because that is what is predicted.  
Ps. 22:16 - the Messiah would have His hands and feet pierced - 1,000 years before crucifixion.  
Is. 53:5-10 - He would be led like a lamb to slaughter and be wounded for our transgressions.  
Dan. 9:26 - the Messiah would come to Jerusalem and be cut off and killed.  
Zech. 12:10 - the Messiah whom the people pierced and killed will return and people will mourn over what they did to Him.

**Clearly the O.T. did predict that the Messiah would die.**

**Proof #2** - The number of manuscripts of the gospel records of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all confirm Jesus Christ was dead.

William Shakespeare died in the United Kingdom in AD 1616. There are no original manuscripts in existence of William Shakespeare. In fact, there are 230 manuscript copies of his plays. Certainly no one would deny the existence of William Shakespeare or his life or death because of the limited amount of manuscript evidence.

Now let's compare that to manuscripts that discuss Jesus Christ. There are nearly 6,000 fragmented N.T. Greek manuscripts; 10,000 Latin manuscripts; 9,300 manuscripts in other languages and Dan Wallace of Dallas Seminary has produced 350,000 images of N.T. manuscripts and some of those manuscripts discuss the fact that Jesus Christ was crucified outside of Jerusalem and was dead. So manuscript evidence does say Jesus was dead.

**Proof #3** - Jesus Christ announced many times that He would die and be raised again.

John 2:19-21 - Jesus said to leading Jews that they could kill Him and three  
Days later He would rise from the dead;

John 10:10-11 - Jesus said He was the good shepherd who would lay down His life  
for the sheep;

Matt. 12:40 - Jesus said that He would spend three days and nights dead, like Jonah  
spent three days and nights in a fish.

Matt. 17:22-23 - Jesus said He would be killed and be raised on the third day.

Mark 8:31 - Jesus taught His disciples that He would be killed and rise three days  
later

Christ Himself said He would die. We have carefully examined all of the words and teachings of Jesus Christ and what we conclude is that Jesus Christ always told the truth about every subject. So when He predicts He will die; you may be sure He will die. When He says He will rise again; He will rise again.

**Proof #4** - Because all of the predictions in both the Old Testament and the New Testament that predict He will be raised from the dead, demand that He be dead.

It was predicted in the Old Testament that the God/Savior/Messiah/King would suffer and die and He would also be raised from the dead.

For example, in Psalm 2:7 the text reads, "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten you.'" In Acts 13:33-34 Paul says this specifically refers to the day Jesus Christ was raised from the dead.

In Psalm 16:10, we read "You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor will you allow your Holy One to undergo decay." In Acts 2:29-32, Peter said this referred to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If a prediction is made that the God/Savior/Messiah/King would be raised from the dead, then in order to fulfill the prediction, He would have to be dead. Otherwise, it is not a resurrection.

**Proof #5** - When we examine the events prior to Christ's crucifixion, we would conclude that those events are the kind of events that would lead to someone's death.

He was on His feet through six trials the night before He was crucified.

- 1) He was examined by Annas, the father-in-law of the high priest Caiaphas. An officer did not like the way Jesus answered a question so he punched Jesus in the face (John 18:22-23).
- 2) He was examined by Caiaphas. The Jewish religious leaders were there and they spit on Jesus and punched Him with their fists and mocked Him (Mark 14:64-65).

- 3) He was examined by the Sanhedrin near daybreak (Mark 15:1). At this gathering of Jewish religious leaders, they asked Jesus if He were the Christ and He said Yes, I AM (Luke 22:70).  
They decided He needed to die. But only Rome could carry out the death penalty. These were the three religious trials.
- 4) He was examined by Pilate early in the morning (John 18:28). He doesn't find anything worthy of death so Pilate sent Him to Herod.
- 5) He was examined by Herod Antipas who beheaded John. Herod dressed Jesus in a robe and sent Him back to Pilate (Luke 6:6-12).
- 6) He was examined by Pilate. Pilate has Jesus scourged (John 19:1) but then handed Him over to the Jews for crucifixion and sentenced Him to die (John 19:16).

These were the three Civil trials.

Jesus was then handed over to the soldiers to carry out the execution. The soldiers put a crown of thorns on His head and started laughing at Him and slapping Him in the face (John 19:2-3). They spit in His face and punched Him. Mark says they kept beating Jesus in the head with a reed (Mark 15:19). **According to traumatic medical research, the leading cause of traumatic death is blunt trauma to the head. Jesus Christ was punched in the head by fists and a rod and no one can last long after head trauma like that.**

Isaiah said His appearance was marred more than any man. People were astonished by what they saw. They actually turned away from looking at Him. He was beaten beyond almost human recognition.

Jesus was up all night going through these six illegal trials. He had no sleep. He had no food. He had nothing to drink. He was physically beaten and brutalized all through the night, which was preliminary to Him being He was nailed to the cross.

After someone was sentenced to be crucified, it was common to have a condemned criminal carry his own cross beam, which weighed about 100 pounds, to the place of execution. The distance from Pilate's palace to the place of execution was about ½ mile. Christ was so physically weak and exhausted that He couldn't make it. He collapsed while carrying His own cross-beam. These trials and physical beatings would guarantee He would physically die.

**Proof #6** - The actual crucifixion and number of hours He hung on the cross would cause anyone to die. **He was on that cross for about 9 hours.**

He was hanging on that cross from nine in the morning, the third hour of the day (Mark 15:25), until just before sunset, when his body was taken down. Darkness hit at the 6<sup>th</sup> hour, which was noon, and it lasted to the 9<sup>th</sup> hour that was three in the afternoon and He was still hanging on the cross near evening when Joseph went to get the body down from the cross (Mark 15:25-42). So Jesus' body has been nailed to that cross for at least nine hours.

The loss of blood coming out of his hands and feet, plus His sliced open back and the thorns in His forehead would cause a tremendous loss of blood. Furthermore, hanging on a cross for that many hours would make it difficult to breathe and ultimately the person would die. No one could live through this.

**Proof #7** - The piercing of Jesus' side with a spear that produced "blood and water" proves He was Physically dead before the sword was thrust into His side (John 19:34).

There was an article that appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Society* in 1986 in which medical doctors examined this very point and here was their conclusion: "Clearly the weight of historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right ribs, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured his death. Accordingly, interpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge" (*JAMA*, March 21, 1986: 1463).

**Proof #8** - Jesus Himself was involved in His actual dying on the cross. Luke says He said, "Father into your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46) and after this breathed His last." John says, "He bowed His head and gave up His spirit" (John 19:30).

Death comes at the moment the soul/spirit leaves the body and at that moment Christ gave up His own soul/spirit. From both a medical definition of death and a Biblical definition of death, Jesus Christ was dead. Life was gone from His body physiologically and the soul was gone from His body theologically. He was dead. **He was dead medically and He was dead Biblically.**

**Proof #9** - The Roman soldiers who were used to seeing people die on a cross declared Jesus Christ was dead, so they did not bother to break His legs (John 19:33).

To make certain the person was really dead and would not walk away, soldiers would typically break a person's legs. Sometimes when they saw a person was dead they wouldn't do it. That is what they saw with Jesus. He was dead.'

I asked a funeral director, who has seen hundreds of dead bodies, whether or not he ever thought a person was dead who wasn't dead? He said no. You can always tell when a person is dead. Those soldiers could tell. They knew it because they had seen it hundreds of times.

**Proof #10** - Pontius Pilate checked with the centurion to make sure Jesus was dead before he allowed Joseph to take and bury the body.

Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus Christ because he wanted to bury it (Matt. 27:57-60). Before Pilate would give him the body, he wanted to know if Jesus were dead. Pilate had heard rumors that Jesus might come back alive, so he wanted to double check to make sure Jesus was dead. When the centurion, who was in charge, assured Pilate Jesus was dead, Pilate let Joseph take and bury the dead body (Mark 15:44-45).

**Proof #11** - Jesus was wrapped in about 100 pounds of cloth and spices and was buried in a tomb that was sealed for three days (John 19:39-42).

Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man, who had been a member of the Sanhedrin (Mark 15:43). He did not consent to Christ being killed (Luke 23:50-51). He had a friend who was also a religious leader whose name was Nicodemus.

After Joseph claimed the body, his friend Nicodemus came and brought about 100 pounds of spices and that evening they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices and He was put in the tomb. Then they rolled a large stone over the entrance of the tomb (Matt. 27:60-61). There is absolutely no doubt that Jesus Christ was dead. He was really, truly dead.

**Proof #12** - Various historians who were not Christians who researched and wrote in the first century near the time of Christ, said Jesus was dead.

- A. Josephus, a Jewish historian, who researched and wrote in the first century, said Pilate condemned Christ to die on a cross.
- B. Tacitus, a Roman historian, said Pilate condemned Christ to die and then said His disciples claimed He was alive three days later.
- C. Thallus, a Samaritan historian, said there was an eclipse like darkness that fell on the land “during the crucifixion of Christ.”
- D. Lucian, a Greek historian in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, said Christ was “crucified in Palestine.”
- E. Phlegon, a Roman writer said that Jesus arose from the dead and actually showed marks of His punishment “and showed how His hands had been pierced by nails.”

**Proof #13** - All of the earliest church writers testify of the fact that Jesus Christ died on a cross. Writers such as Polycarp, who was a close friend of the Apostle John; Ignatius, who was a close friend of Polycarp and Justin Martyr; all referred to the fact Jesus Christ was dead.

If you honestly and objectively look at these proofs and historical facts, you must come to the conclusion that Jesus Christ was a real Person in a real body and He really did die.

**QUESTION #2** – Does the objective evidence show Jesus Christ was raised from the dead?

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is historically supported by seven evidences:

**Evidence #1** - The tomb in which Jesus had been placed was empty on the third day.

Now an empty tomb in and of itself does not prove the resurrection; but it does prove the body of Jesus Christ was no longer there. You could not have a resurrection if the body were still there. Every gospel writer stresses an empty tomb was what they found - (Matt. 28:1-8; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-8). One other fact needs to be pointed out here. Not only did they find the tomb empty and the body gone, but they also found the grave clothes and the head cloth folded neatly in a place by itself. Now that evidence may not convince you, but it did convince John that Jesus had risen (John 20:6-8).

Over 300,000 people per year travel to Israel just to look into an empty tomb. That tomb has been empty ever since the first century and thousands travel to look at it. You cannot deny that.

**Evidence #2** - There were many eyewitnesses who were there and they said they actually saw Jesus Christ alive.

These eyewitnesses were not convinced easily. Now one of the evidences that I want to use is the evidence that the eyewitnesses were actually there. People who are there are in the best position to state what happened as an actual eyewitness. This is a critical point. Good investigators in any situation track down witnesses who were there to find out what they know and what they saw.

One time I was speaking with a University Professor who was giving me his theoretical views of creation and the date. When He got done, I said, "How do you know, were you there?" I said there were three eyewitnesses who were there—God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit. They were there. So they say here is how it happened and how long it took and you say this is what you think. Should I believe you or them? They were there and you weren't. I said, I think I'll stick with the eyewitness account.

The fact that people claimed they saw Jesus Christ alive three days after He had been buried is also something no one may deny. They were there. You don't have to believe their story, but you weren't there so you don't really know. They were there and they did tell what they saw.

Many people said they actually saw Jesus Christ physically alive. They did not say they saw a vision or an emanation or manifestation; they say they saw Him and they were actually there in person. Both Luke and Paul said they actually knew and talked to some of these people.

**There are fourteen different people and groups we want to cite:**

**1) Mary Magdalene** had been a horrible sinner who had been saved by Jesus Christ. She loved Him and was devastated that He was dead. She started walking to the tomb with some other women, early that Sunday morning. They were going to anoint the body. It was about a two mile walk from Bethany to the tomb. Mary was the first woman to get to the tomb and the first to find the tomb empty and then she went to tell Peter and John. Then she went back to the tomb again, then Jesus Christ appeared to her first and talked with her and she went to the Apostles and told them she had seen Jesus with her own eyes. John 20:11-18

**Evidence that convinced her: 1) She was actually there; 2) She actually saw the Empty tomb; 3) She actually saw Jesus Christ; 4) She actually touched Jesus Christ and 5) She actually listened to Him as He spoke to her.**

**2) The other women who had been walking with Mary, including Mary the mother of James, Salome, and Joanna, plus others** got to the tomb and saw it empty and Jesus appears to them and tells them to go tell the disciples that He will see them in Galilee. They actually were so overwhelmed that they fell down to worship Him and touch His feet (Matt. 28:8-10).

**Evidence: 1) They were there; 2) They saw the empty tomb; 3) They saw Jesus Christ; 4) They touched the feet of Jesus Christ; 5) They listened to Him as He spoke to them.**

I have done many for a wife who lost her husband. Women rally around the grieving widow. I have never seen a group of women start telling a grieving widow that her husband is alive and she should be happy because they have seen him and talked to him. That did happen with Jesus.

**3) Later that first Sunday morning, Jesus appeared to Peter and Peter started telling people Jesus was risen (Luke 24:34; I Cor. 15:5). Peter had denied the Lord and didn't believe He was alive. Evidence: 1) He was there; 2) He saw the empty tomb; 3) He saw the Grave clothes that were on the body; 4) He saw Jesus Christ; 5) He listened to what He told him.**

**4) Sunday afternoon Jesus appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus, located about seven miles from Jerusalem, which archeology has just discovered (Mark 16:12-23; Luke 24:36-32; John 20:19-25). Jesus actually sat at a table with them and took bread and broke it and when they realized they were eating with Jesus, He vanished and they took off for Jerusalem (Luke 24:30-31).**

**Evidence: 1) They were there; 2) They walked with Jesus Christ; 3) They talked with Jesus; 4) They ate with Jesus Christ; 5) They listened to Jesus Christ as He taught them. They walk seven miles back to Jerusalem to tell others they had seen Him and He was alive.**

**5) Sunday evening Jesus appeared to ten disciples, minus Thomas, who were locked in the Upper Room (Luke 24:36-45; John 20:19-25). At this gathering, Jesus specifically showed His disciples His hands and feet. Also He asked them if they had anything to eat. They handed Him a piece of broiled fish and He ate it. What this proves is that He is still in a physical body that is capable of eating. Evidence: 1) They were there; 2) They were together; 3) They actually saw Jesus Christ; 4) They actually touched His wounds; 5) They actually ate food with Jesus Christ; 6) They actually listened to what He said to them.**

**6) The following Sunday Jesus appears to 11 Apostles, including Thomas (John 20:26-28).**

A week later Jesus shows up again to the same group. He is able to enter the room with doors locked shut. He asks Thomas to touch his finger and touch the nail scars in His hands and take His hands and touch the wound in His side. Thomas did and says, "My Lord and My God." Thomas saw the crucifixion wounds and he touched the crucifixion wounds and that convinced Him to believe.

**Evidence: They were there; 2) They were together; 3) They actually saw Jesus Christ; 4) They actually touched His wounds; 5) They actually ate food with Jesus Christ; 6) They actually listened to what He said.**

**7) Jesus appeared to seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-14).**

**Evidence: 1) They were there; 2) They saw Jesus Christ; 3) They ate food with Jesus Christ; 4) They listened to what He had to say.**

**8) Jesus appeared to 500 people, most of whom were alive when Paul wrote his letter to the Corinthians - I Cor. 15:6. Evidence: 1) They were there; 2) They saw Jesus Christ; 3) They heard Jesus Christ.**

- 9) **Jesus appeared again to the 11 apostles at a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20).**  
**Evidence: 1) They were there; 2) They saw Jesus Christ; 3) They heard Jesus Christ.**
- 10) **Jesus appeared to James, His half-brother (I Cor. 15:7).**  
**Evidence: 1) He was there; 2) He saw Jesus Christ; 3) He heard Jesus Christ.**
- 11) **Jesus appeared to His eleven disciples** and led them outside of Jerusalem, when He ascended into heaven (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:4, 9). **Evidence: 1) They were there; 2) They saw Jesus Christ; 3) They were taught by Jesus Christ about kingdom matters and did what He said by staying in Jerusalem; 4) They talked with Jesus Christ; 5) They saw Him ascend into heaven.**
- 12) **Jesus appeared to Stephen** when He was being executed (Acts 7:55-56). **Evidence: 1) He was there; 2) He actually saw Jesus Christ; 3) He identified Him as Jesus—the Savior and the Son of Man—the Daniel term for the Messianic Deity who will one day rule the world.**
- 13) **Jesus appeared to Paul** on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-6, 26-30; 20:24; 23:11).  
**Evidence: 1) He was there; 2) He actually saw Jesus Christ; 3) He actually heard Jesus Christ; 4) He actually talked to Jesus Christ.**
- 14) **Jesus appeared to the Apostle John** when he wrote Revelation (**Revelation 1:12-20**).  
When we were on Patmos, the tour guide said Jesus appeared to John here.  
**1) He was there; 2) He actually saw Jesus Christ; 3) He talked with Jesus Christ; 4) He obeyed what Christ told him to do, which was to write the book of Revelation.**  
John was banished to the island of Patmos, which was a prison island because he said Jesus was alive.

This is a very impressive list of over 560 people who claimed they saw Jesus Christ alive.

One of the leading skeptical agnostics wrote this: “What is certain is that the earliest followers of Jesus believed that Jesus had come back to life, in the body, and that this was a body that had real bodily characteristics: It could be seen and touched and it had a voice that could be heard.”

**Evidence #3** - There was a definite dramatic change in the people who saw Jesus Christ.

Only John was at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, because the rest of the apostles had fled and were “scared, scattered, and skeptical” (Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, p. 623).

Peter and John were very skeptical that He had arisen from the dead, even after Mary told them He was alive. But after they had seen Christ, they became bold witnesses. Paul did not believe Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and was, in fact, chasing down Christians who claimed Jesus was the Messiah who had been raised from the dead. Paul was one of the most Anti-Christian; Anti-Jesus Christ people alive. He persecuted the Church and any who believe in Jesus Christ. After He had seen Jesus Christ, he became the Apostle who took the gospel of grace to the whole world.

The women who went to the tomb were sad, but after they had seen Jesus Christ, they were joyful and happy. Have you ever gone to a funeral and a few days later and all the family and friends out telling people that the loved one they just buried is alive? That did happen with Jesus.

Within a few days these same people who had been depressed and afraid are out publicly and dogmatically proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 4-5). Now how do you explain that? **There is only one explanation and that is they really did see the resurrected Christ.**

**Evidence #4** - After the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first day of the week, Sunday became a very special day for worship.

Prior to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, people worshipped on the Sabbath Day, which was Saturday but after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's people gathered on the first day of the week because that was the day on which Christ arose. They realized the day of the O.T. law worship was over and the day of the N.T. Grace worship was now here.

What is even more amazing about this is that the early church was comprised mostly of Jewish people, who were accustomed to worshipping on the Sabbath Day. They changed their day of worship because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Evidence #5** - On the day of Pentecost, some 50 days after the resurrection, Peter preached a message in Jerusalem that featured thousands of people from every surrounding nation.

These people had been in Jerusalem when the events occurred. In his message, Peter declared that "they knew" (literally "you yourselves know") that Jesus Christ had been put to death and had Risen from the dead (Acts 2:22-24). Not one person challenged Peter because they all knew it was true. In fact, some 3,000 people believed in Jesus Christ to save them from their sins that very day.

**Evidence #6** - The Resurrection of Jesus Christ became the predominant theme of Apostolic preaching.

There is an interesting statement made by Dr. Luke. He says in Acts 4:33, "and with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and abundant grace was upon them all."

All of the Apostles proclaimed the truth that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead. All of the Apostles who had been timid and afraid are now out telling everyone that Jesus Christ died for sins and that He was raised from the dead proving He can save us from our sins.

Most of the Apostles would be executed for preaching this very message—Jesus Christ was the living God/Savior/Messiah/King who was raised from the dead.

**Evidence #7** - The early church was persecuted and threatened with death because they said Jesus Christ was the risen God/Savior/Messiah/King (Acts 7:57-60).

The people that were there when this happened were threatened, persecuted and executed, yet they kept proclaiming Jesus Christ was alive and was raised from the dead.

In the 1700's there was a Scottish agnostic philosopher, named David Hume, who opposed the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He reasoned that we should never believe that Jesus Christ could come back to life because this has never happened with any other man in any other country.

His argument was since millions of other people have died and none of them have ever been raised from the dead, three days later, then the odds of Jesus Christ being raised from the dead make this a fallacy. But I love something Dr. Norman Geisler said, **“wise people base their belief on facts, not on odds”** (Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, p. 56).

Objective facts show this:

- 1) Jesus Christ was a real Person.
- 2) Jesus Christ really did die on a cross.
- 3) Jesus Christ really was buried in a tomb.
- 4) Jesus Christ really did rise from the dead.

The Apostle Paul, who had actually seen Jesus Christ alive from the dead, said this: “Now I make known to you brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received in which also you stand, by which also you are saved...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...” (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

Jesus Christ is the only Person worthy of your faith. He is the only Person who can save you from your sins. He is the only Person who can give you everlasting life. He is not a way to salvation; He is the only way to salvation. Believe on Him and you will be saved---those are the Biblical facts and the resurrection of Jesus Christ proves it.