



“The Early Witnesses of Jesus and Our Faith”

Pastor Steve McGuyre
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Get to know you question:

Right after you got your driver’s license, where did you go on your own?

Discuss:

Pastor Steve talked about the importance of credible witnesses. Can someone in the group share about a trial they were involved in where the witnesses were either good or bad and share the reasons why?

The disciples were very close to Jesus, from the time He called them to follow him and then onward from the resurrection days. Have you ever considered how this relationship lends itself to the credibility of their witness? What is it about the relationship of the disciples with Jesus that makes you trust their interpretation of His life?

Pastor Steve quoted Gary Hebermas extensively on the Resurrection. The eight points mentioned were:

1. The life of Paul, his conversion and testimony;
2. The early date of the resurrection narrative in 1 Corinthians 15;

3. Paul was careful to find the facts of the gospel, he sought counsel from the leaders of the church;

4. Paul knew what the other apostles believed and he affirmed their eyewitness accounts;

5. The other early creeds mentioned in sermons in the book of Acts focus on the Resurrection;

6. James, Jesus' brother, went from skeptic to believer; how did this happen? Paul said that Jesus appeared to him (1 Cor. 15: 7);

7. The empty tomb gives credence to the post-crucifixion appearances;

8. We have to account for the changed lives of the witnesses. They were not committed to an idea, but to a person who they claimed to have met after he was killed.

Of these eight points, which one (s) stand out the most to you? Which one could you take to your non-believing friends and share with them?

When you first heard the gospel message preached, what was it about it that drew you to Jesus? Or, better stated, how did Jesus use the preached word to draw you to himself?

Let's thank God for the early witnesses and consider how their testimony strengthens our faith. Truly, we stand on the shoulders of the early witnesses. Let's take what we've learned this week and consider the ramifications for our own lives. These days, we are Christ's witnesses and we are to be about repeating what the eyewitnesses told us: Finish by reading aloud 1 Corinthians 15: 1 - 11.