

21 REASONS TO BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PERSON IN WORLD HISTORY IS JESUS CHRIST. MORE SONGS HAVE BEEN SUNG TO HIM, BOOKS WRITTEN REGARDING HIM, AND LIVES DEVOTED TO HIM THAN ANYONE WHO HAS EVER LIVED. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DOCUMENT IN WORLD HISTORY IS THE BIBLE WHICH GIVES THE EYEWITNESS REPORTS OF JESUS CHRIST. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN WORLD HISTORY IS THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM DEATH. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DECISION YOU WILL EVER MAKE IS WHETHER YOU WILL REJECT OR RECEIVE JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR ONLY GOD. IN RECENT YEARS, EVERYONE ON EARTH HAS BECOME ACUTELY FAMILIAR WITH THE FRAILTY OF LIFE, AND FINALITY OF DEATH. MY HOPE AND PRAYER IN THIS BOOK IS TO INTRODUCE YOU TO JESUS CHRIST SO THAT YOU CAN HAVE YOUR SINS FORGIVEN, HURTS HEALED, BURDENS LIFTED, AND ETERNAL LIFE SECURE KNOWING THAT ONE DAY YOU WILL ALSO RESURRECT FROM DEATH TO BE WITH JESUS, AND LIKE JESUS FOREVER!

JESUS LOVES YOU, AND I AM PRAYING FOR YOU,

Peter W. Denny





JESUS

There's no one equal to Jesus. There's no one like Jesus. There's no one alongside of Jesus.

Despite not having electricity, media, social media, a public relations firm, an attorney, an army, a wife, a child, money, power, or even an office, Jesus Christ is the most towering figure in all of human history. His three short years of itinerant ministry, walking around and preaching mainly to rural folks, including many illiterate peasants, without the benefit of Internet live-streaming changed the course of human history. Today, history is measured around Jesus Christ into BC (before Christ), and AD (Anno Domini, “the year of our Lord”). Non-Christian historian H. G. Wells said, “No man can write a history of the human race without giving first and foremost place to the penniless teacher of Nazareth.”¹

What did Jesus say about Himself that NO ONE else has said?

1.

Jesus said He was from Heaven and visited our planet,
“I have come down from heaven”
(John 6:38)

2.

Jesus said He alone was the One True God, and was killed for this very reason, “because you...claim to be God” (John 10:33). No other religion has its founder declaring Himself to be God.

3.

Jesus said He alone was completely sinless, inviting anyone to disprove his perfection saying, “Which of you can truthfully accuse me of one single sin?” (John 8:46).

4.

Jesus said that He alone could forgive sin saying, “your sins are forgiven” which puzzled the religious leaders because THE problem God has with us is sin and, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?”
(Mark 2:5,7-8)

5.

Jesus promised to defeat death as proof that He is the only God, “he began to tell them about the terrible things he would suffer... and be killed, and that he would rise again three days afterwards.”
(Mark 8:31)

6.

Jesus said He was the only way to Heaven, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
(John 14:6)



The stories of near-death experiences, or of people who were pronounced dead coming back to life are revivifications, not resurrections, because those people eventually die again. Jesus' resurrection, which is the pattern for our resurrection, means to die, return from death, and defeat death to never die again, living an eternal life with your body and soul reunited forever.

What is resurrection?

RESURRECTION

Step 1

Living in your body with your soul.

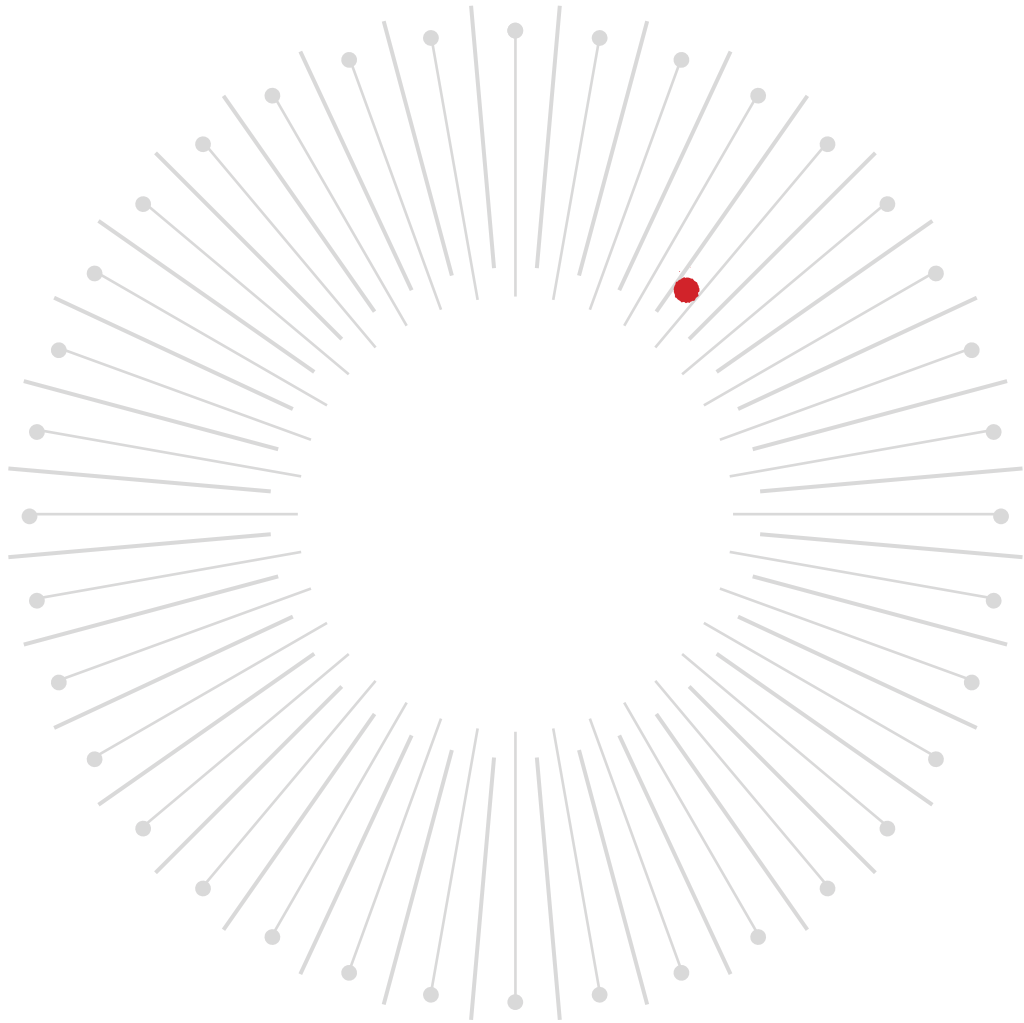
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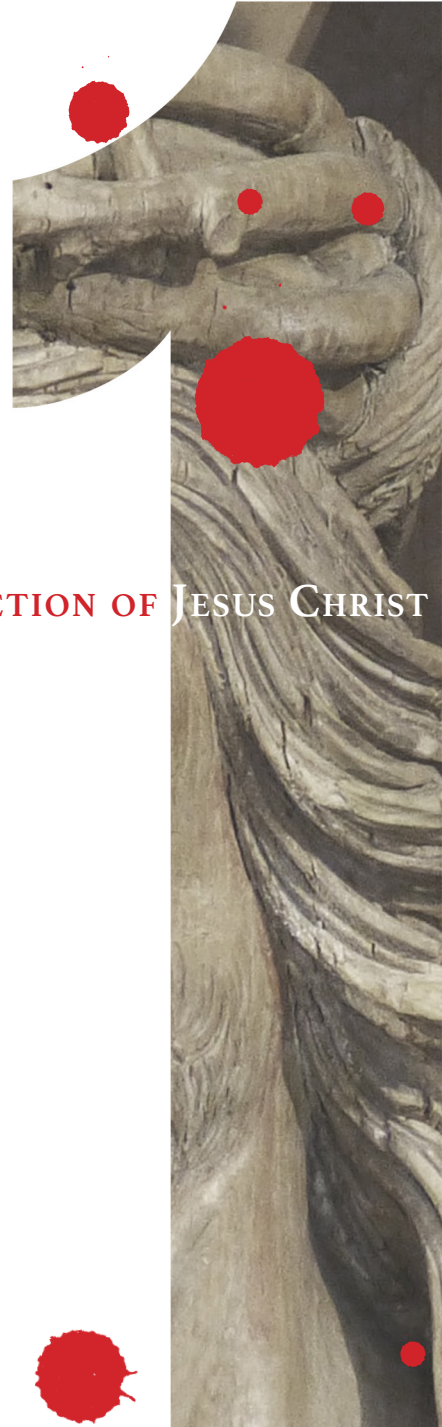
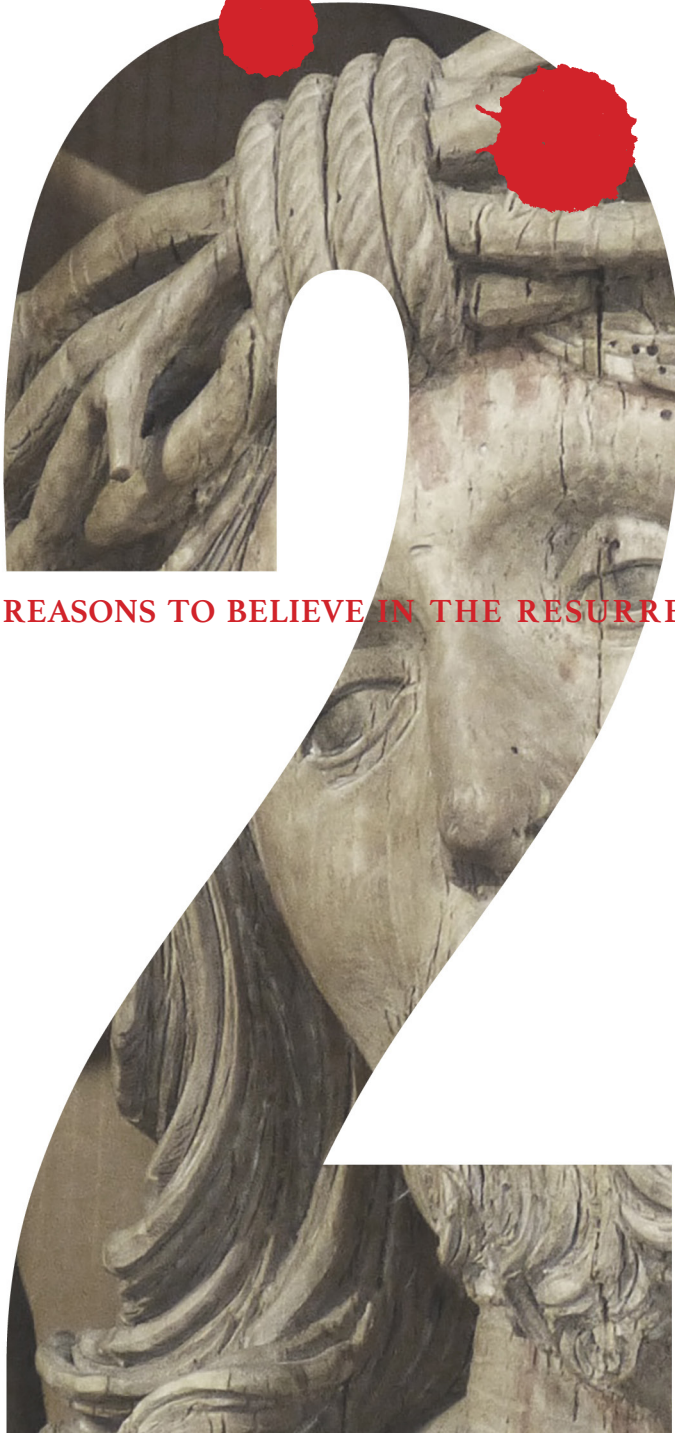
Die with your body going into the ground and your soul going before the Lord for judgement.

Step 3

Return to life with your body and soul reunited to never die again.

In the most scholarly book ever written on resurrection, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, N. T. Wright proves that in the first century, resurrection did not mean “life after death” in the sense of “the life that follows immediately after bodily death.” Instead, “‘Resurrection’ denoted a new embodied life which would follow whatever ‘life after death’ there might be. ‘Resurrection’ was, by definition, not the existence into which someone might (or might not) go immediately upon death; it was not a disembodied ‘heavenly’ life; it was a further stage, out beyond all that. It was not a redescription or redefinition of death. It was death’s reversal.”²





REASONS TO BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

1

1. **Jesus died by execution from the ancient Roman government.** After being beaten beyond recognition for an entire night, Jesus carried a heavy wooden crossbar on His bloodied back. Jesus was then nailed to a cross through the most sensitive nerve centers on the body, His hands and feet. To ensure Jesus died, a soldier took a spear, ran it under His rib cage puncturing His heart sack so that water and blood flowed from His side. Jesus was dead. Jesus' dead body was then wrapped in upwards of a hundred pounds of burial linens and spices and laid in a cold tomb hewn out of rock without any medical attention for three days.

a. "Christ died for our sins..." 1 Corinthians 15:3

b. What is crucifixion?



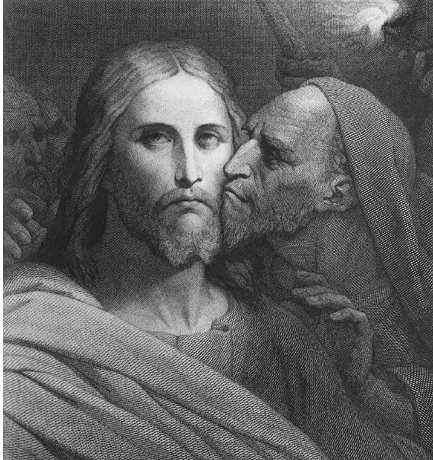
Imagine a long wooden stake being run through a person's midsection, and that stake then being driven into the ground, with the impaled person left to die slowly over the course of many days. This barbarous torture from the 9th century BC may be the earliest form of crucifixion.

The transition from impalement to crucifixion occurred under Alexander in the 4th century BC as he was a master of terror and dread. In the 1st century BC the former gladiator Spartacus fell in battle to the Romans, resulting in six thousand men being crucified along the shoulder of the highway on a single day.

The Romans perfected crucifixion, reserving it as the most painful mode of execution for the most despised people. The crucifixion methods varied with the sadism of the soldiers, as they tried to outdo one another, experimenting with torture to prolong pain and agony.

The Romans are believed to be the first to crucify on an actual cross. The Tau was a capital T cross and the Latin was a lowercase t cross. Both had the stipe (the vertical post) and patibulum (the crossbar). The stipe was probably permanent while each man carried his own patibulum.

The pain of crucifixion is so horrendous that a word was invented to explain it—excruciating—which literally means “from the cross.” Crucifixion was painfully slow death by asphyxiation for the crucified, passing in and out of consciousness often for days on end.



None of this was done in privacy, but rather in public places. It would be like nailing a bloodied, naked man above the front entrance to your local mall as state sponsored terror. People were likely crucified at eye level, looking their mockers in the face as they sweated in the sun, bled, and became incontinent from the pain.

Crucifixion was the most painful and shameful way to die. God's people considered crucified people cursed, "If someone guilty of a capital offense is put to death...you must not leave the body hanging on the pole overnight...because anyone who is hung on a pole is under God's curse." (Deuteronomy 21:22-23)

The night before His crucifixion, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples to pray. His anxiety is so great that He begins to sweat drops of blood, a medical condition called hematidrosis.

Jesus is then betrayed by Judas Iscariot, a covert pretend friend. Judas had been stealing from Jesus for years, while plotting His murder with religious and political leaders. Beaten all night, exhausted, and dehydrated, Jesus is then scourged by a flagrum (also called a cat of nine tails). It was comprised of a handle from which straps of leather would proceed, with stone or metal ball to tenderize the human flesh so that the hooks could then sink into the deep tissue, and even organs or bones, of the victim. The flesh would be repeatedly ripped off the victims' shoulders, back, buttocks, and legs—sometimes breaking a rib off the body as well—in what some doctors compare to a shotgun blast.

Jesus' bloodied and traumatized bare back and shoulders were then forced to carry His roughly hewn wooden cross to His place of crucifixion. If Jesus carried the entire cross, it would have weighed a few hundred pounds, and many think it is more likely he carried just the crossbar (patibulum), which would have been around one hundred pounds.

Despite his young age and good health, Jesus was so physically devastated from His sleepless night, miles of walking, severe beating, and scourging that He collapsed under the weight of the cross, unable to carry it alone through the narrow streets of the Old City of Jerusalem filled with shoppers. Doctors have said that the trauma from the heavy crossbar crushing His chest into the ground could have caused a bruised heart, similar to the chest trauma caused by a car accident without a seatbelt where the driver is violently thrown against the steering wheel.

Unable to continue carrying His cross on the roughly one-mile journey to His execution, Simon of Cyrene was appointed to help carry Jesus' cross. Upon arriving at His place of crucifixion, they pulled Jesus' beard out—an act of ultimate disrespect in ancient cultures—spat on Him, and mocked Him in front of His family and friends.



“...if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.”

I CORINTHIANS 15:17



A crown of thorns was then placed on Jesus' head to mock Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. A painting later discovered from a second-century Roman graffito depicts the head of a donkey being crucified, with a man standing alongside it with his arms raised. The caption reads, "Alexamenos worships his god" which summarizes what people thought about Christ and Christians.

To silence Jesus on the cross, a Roman soldier took a sponge, placed it on the end of a stick, sopped it in sour wine, and shoved it in His mouth. It was likely part of the military field kit used as toilet paper and disinfectant while in the field of battle. Jesus died praying for people while tasting the bowel movement of His killer. Jesus then breathed His last and died crying out, "It is finished".

To ensure Jesus was dead, a military executioner ran a spear through Jesus' side, which punctured his heart sac, and water and blood flowed from His side. This is evidence that Jesus died of a heart attack; the sac around the heart filled with water until the pressure caused Jesus' heart to stop beating. Jesus died with both a literal and metaphorical broken

heart. On the cross, Jesus took your place and put you in His place. He died, so that you could live. He was cursed, so you could be blessed. He was separated from the Father, so you could be reconciled to the Father. All of this was done to Jesus, but for you, "God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

2. Jesus' resurrection was predicted in the Old Testament. 1000 B.C. Psalm 16:10 says, "...you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay."

700 B.C. Isaiah 53:7-11 says, "He was oppressed, and... afflicted... like a lamb that is led to the slaughter... By oppression and judgment he was taken away... he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people... they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death... Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days... Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities."

3. Jesus predicted His resurrection in advance.

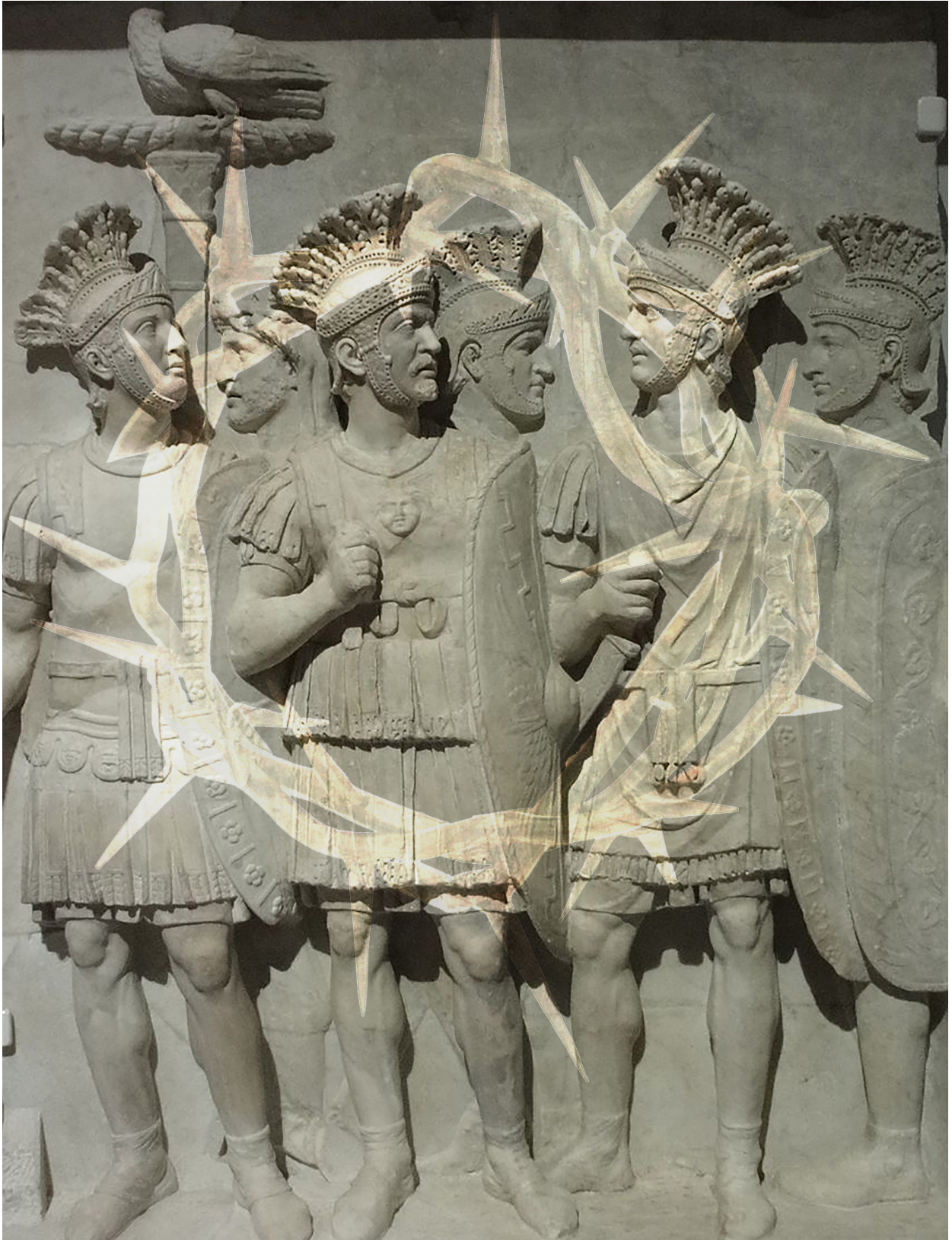
Mark 9:31 "I, the Messiah, am going to be betrayed and killed and three days later I will return to life again."

Mark 10:33-34 "I, the Messiah, will be arrested and taken before the chief priests and the Jewish leaders, who will sentence me to die and hand me over to the Romans to be killed. They will mock me and spit on me and flog me with their whips and kill me; but after three days I will come back to life again."

4. Jesus' tomb location was well-known. Some 700 years before Jesus was born, God promised that Jesus would be assigned a grave "with a rich man in his death." (Isaiah 53:9) This was incredibly unlikely, because Jesus was a very poor man who could not have afforded an expensive burial plot. This prophecy was fulfilled when, "a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph...was a disciple of Jesus...And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away" (Matthew 27:57-60). Jesus' tomb was easy to find because it belonged to a well-known affluent man who was still alive and legally owned it.

5. Jesus' tomb was guarded by the Roman government.

To secure Jesus' dead body, "Pilate said... 'You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.' So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard" (Matthew 27:65-66).



6. Jesus' empty tomb was found by women. If the historical record of the Bible were fiction and not fact, women would not have been fabricated as the first eyewitnesses to the empty tomb, because their testimony was not as credible in court. Because these women honored their Lord, the Lord honored their testimony: "on the first day of the week [Sunday], at early dawn, they went to the tomb...And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus...it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them..." (Luke 24:1-3, 10).

7. Jesus' disciples were transformed from cowards to courageous. Prior to Jesus' resurrection, His disciples were cowards with Peter denying Him, and Thomas doubting Him. Both men later died for Jesus as martyrs, along with other disciples, because they no longer feared death. John 20:24-28 reports this transformation from cowards to courageous, "Thomas, one of the twelve...was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.' Eight days later...Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!'"

“...you will not abandon
me to the realm of the
dead, nor will you let your
faithful one see decay.”

PSALM 16:10





8. After Jesus rose from death, He appeared to crowds upwards of 500 people over the course of 40 days. Jesus was available in His risen body to meet and talk with people following His resurrection, “For forty days after his death he appeared to them many times in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive. They saw him, and he talked with them...” (Acts 1:3).

Jesus’ resurrection was so well known that large crowds came to Him after He defeated death, “I delivered to you as of first importance...Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep [died]” (1 Corinthians 15:3-6).

9. Jesus’ followers remained loyal to Him.

On the day that Jesus died, three men were crucified, and two thousand years later only one has a global movement of devoted followers willing to die as martyrs. Why? Only Jesus died and then rose from death. Historian Kenneth Scott Latourette says, “It was the conviction of the resurrection of Jesus which lifted his followers out of the despair into which his death had cast them and which led to the perpetuation of the movement begun by him. But for their profound belief that the crucified had risen from the dead and that they had seen him and talked with him, the death of Jesus and even Jesus himself would probably have been all but forgotten.”³

10. Jesus’ tomb was not enshrined. When a beloved person dies, we mark their grave to honor them. When a prophet or holy person dies, a shrine is made for their followers to visit. Of the four major world religions based upon a founder, only Christianity lacks a known grave or shrine. Abraham’s Jewish holy site is at Hebron. Buddha’s holy site is in India. Mohammed’s Islamic holy site is in Medina. Each of these graves are visited by millions of people every year. Scholars have also found the tombs of at least 50 religious leaders enshrined in Jesus’ day, but no sign of Jesus’ burial place. No one knows where Jesus was buried, because He’s no longer dead. Instead, He walked away from His tomb. According to former professor at the University of Durham James D. G. Dunn, there is “absolutely no trace” of any veneration at Jesus’ tomb.⁴



11. Jesus' followers worshiped Him as God.

The first two of the Ten Commandments are that there is only one God, and that God alone is to be worshiped. For devout Jewish worshippers to begin worshiping Jesus as the One True God was a revolutionary shift in their history. If untrue, it also meant that everyone who worshiped Jesus was doomed to hell. They believed Jesus' words that He was the God of their ancestors risen from death and spoke truth when He said, "as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:31-32).

12. Jesus' family worshiped Him as God.

James, Jesus' half-brother, was originally opposed to the claims of deity by his brother (John 7:5), but a transformation occurred in James after he saw his brother resurrected from death (1 Corinthians 15:7). James went on to pastor the church in Jerusalem and authored the New Testament book bearing his name. Jesus' mother Mary was part of the early church that prayed to and worshiped her son as the Son of God, along with James and Jude (Acts 1:14). Jesus' brother Jude also wrote a book of the New Testament bearing his name. It is impossible to conceive of Jesus convincing His own mother and brothers to suffer persecution in this life and choose the torments of Hell in eternal life for worshiping Him as the one true God unless He proved His deity by resurrecting from death.

"But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother." (Galatians 1:19)

"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings."
(James 1:1)

"Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James,
To those who are called, beloved in God the Father
and kept for [b] Jesus Christ:" (Jude 1:1)

13

“I am the Living One. I was dead, but look, I am alive forever. I have power over death and hell.”

JESUS CHRIST

REVELATION 1:18

13. Jesus’ followers changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. The early church stopped worshiping on Saturday, as Jews had for thousands of years, and suddenly began worshiping on Sunday in memory of Jesus’ Sunday resurrection (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). The Jewish seven-day week with a Saturday Sabbath was established by God at creation. The Sabbath was so sacred to the Jews that they would not have ceased to obey one of the Ten Commandments unless Jesus had resurrected in fulfillment of their Old Testament Scriptures. Yet, by the end of the first century, Sunday was called “the Lord’s Day” (Revelation 1:10). To change the Sabbath was an attempt to literally reset the entire week, change their days of work and rest, and alter the business and worship dealings of the entire nation around Jesus’ resurrection.

14. Jesus’ followers practiced communion and baptism. God’s people welcomed the sacraments of baptism and communion into their worship of Jesus as God. In communion, the early Christians remembered Jesus’ death in their place for their sins. In baptism they remembered Jesus’ resurrection in their place for their salvation and anticipated their personal future resurrection. These ancient practices have continued for thousands of years wherever the Church has existed.





The Gospel of Mark; first century document thought to be among the earliest writings of the early Bible.

The Greek cross has equilateral arms, the shape of the Greek letter *chi*, is an early Christian symbol.



15. Jesus' enemy, Paul, was converted. Paul was a devout Jewish Pharisee who routinely persecuted and killed Christians (Phil. 3:4–6; Acts 7:54–60). After an encounter with the risen Christ, Paul was converted and became the most dynamic defender and expander of the church (Acts 9). Had Jesus not truly risen from death, it is absurd to assume that Paul would ever have worshiped Him as God, particularly when Paul rightly believed that worshiping a false God would send one into the eternal flames of Hell. Paul hated Jesus and would never have changed unless Jesus had risen from death to prove Paul wrong. Furthermore, Paul insisted that Jesus had risen in almost all his New Testament letters.

16. Jesus' resurrection was recorded shortly after it occurred. Mark's Gospel account of the days leading up to Jesus' crucifixion mentions the high priest without naming him because he expected his readers to know who he was speaking of (14:53, 54, 60, 61, 63). Since Caiaphas was high priest from AD 18–37, the latest possible date for the mention is AD 37, which is within a few short years of Jesus' death when eyewitnesses were still alive.

Jesus' resurrection was celebrated in the earliest church creeds. In 1 Corinthians 15:3–4, Paul says, "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures." This statement is widely accepted as the earliest church creed, which began circulating as early as AD 30–36, shortly after Jesus' resurrection.

These facts prove that there was not sufficient time between the crucifixion and the report of Jesus' resurrection for a myth to become popular. In addition, the resurrection eyewitnesses were still alive and available to be questioned about the facts surrounding the resurrection.

17

17. Jesus' resurrection is unique in history.

For those who doubt or disbelieve that the Bible is historically accurate, the following quote from the ancient Jewish historian Josephus, born shortly after Jesus' resurrection, helps affirm it as historical fact:

“About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Christ. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing amongst us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. On the third day he appeared to them restored to life, for the prophets of God had prophesied these and countless other marvelous things about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared.”⁵

No 10.

colloquente: sicut cū fuisset egressus uotis
eū ac secundis p̄cibus p̄sequebant̄: nunc
econtra aduersus eū maledictis non pro-
hibeant̄ excipere: Verebant̄ enim cuncti.
q̄d penam eēt fr̄ibus p̄ sua impietate solu-
turus. Ea tempestate contigerat forte ua-
rum quintalium in ierosolimis agere: qui
successor saturni ad syrie regionē fue-
rat destinatus: uenerat quippe consultatū
herodi. ab eo dē postulatus pro causis in
quarum dispositionib̄ hest̄ bat. Quib̄
na. consiliū habent̄ uenit anticipat̄
cunctis illi reb̄ incognitis. Quiq; cū ingressus
eēt aulam regiam indutus purpura. ipsū
quidē tantores suscipiunt. amicos antē
qui circa illum erant. aulam excedere phi-
bent̄. Cepit itaq; perturbat̄ in que mala
deuenerit manifestō cognoscent̄. Deniq;
pater salutarū accedentē reppulit. fr̄icidū
simul accusant̄. & consilia obiectant̄ sup̄
suimet ipsi interitu. quoz om̄ium audito-
rem ac iudicē in crastinū uarum fore con-
firmat. Et ille quidē tanto malo audito
partē atq; imminente: ipsa magnitudine
fatigatus abcessit. Cui mater & uxor ac-
currunt. que residua fuerat de filiabus
antigoni qui ante regem in iudea regna-
uerat. Ex quib̄ uniuersa cognoscent̄. cepit
se certamini iudicioq; preparare. Sed die
postera confessum faciunt uarus simul atq;
rex. amici etiā utrozq; conuocant̄. Adert
quoq; regis consanguinei. & salome soror:
& si qui nuntiaturi forent que p̄diderant

tamam diuinitatē
uerit. ac sua sene-
incidisset. Nemo
educationes quas
opum quoq; ac fa-
quibuscūq; tempe-
illis p̄t̄us adiac-
pedime. nū. quo-
tis incis. ret. dā
festinare. ante-
cederet. unde se-
cipantis. quara si-
sine illa refrenat̄
rumpere. quando
rem etiā scriben-
utq; nū. tempor-
ret. n̄. quantudin-
potentie. quinq;
talenta ex reditib̄
talenta romā eum
pabat illum etiā
malignos accusan-
extitisset. si v̄. in-
aduersus consang-
cisset. nam illa om̄
fuissem a nullo alio
dicebat aduertisse
cuncta. que aduer-
quos nunc p̄sus
p̄t̄icidū fac. n̄
cent simul p̄
illum inter-
sinebant





The ancient Greek myth of the Phoenix tells of a bird consumed by fire, rising anew from its ashes. The resurrection of Jesus is another thing entirely.

18. There was no concept of individual resurrection prior to Jesus. The ancient Jews had a concept of all of God's people rising together at the end of history, but no concept of one person rising alone in the middle of history as Jesus did (Daniel 12:2).

In the ancient world, Greek philosophy believed the physical body was bad, but the spiritual soul was good. The goal was to die, leave the body, and live in the soul. The Greeks had no desire for a resurrection and in fact the exact opposite was true. Oxford graduate and St. Andrews professor N.T. Wright has published the most thorough academic work on the concept of resurrection throughout history. He says, "Christianity was born into a world where its central claim was known to be false. Many believed that the dead were non-existent; outside Judaism, nobody believed resurrection...." ⁶

N.T. Wright continues, "Nobody in the pagan world of Jesus' day and thereafter actually claimed that somebody had been truly dead and had then come to be truly, and bodily, alive once more." ⁷

Noted historian and professor Edwin Yamauchi who has immersed himself in twenty-two languages, ancient archeology, and history says that there is no possibility that the idea of a resurrection was borrowed by Christians from pagans because there is no definitive evidence for the teaching of a deity resurrection in any of the mystery religions prior to the second century. Apparently, the pagans stole the idea of resurrection from the Christians, and not vice-versa. ⁸

The lily is representative of Christ's resurrection. It speaks of purity and innocence, being untainted by the world. It also represents a new season, a new birth, blooming in Easter season.

19. Jesus' resurrection defies any potential alternative explanation. The earliest explanation to disprove Jesus' resurrection was that the body was stolen – which could not have happened with Roman soldiers guarding the body, and still does not explain how the dead body came back to life. Other explanations over the years include that Jesus swooned on the cross, which is impossible without a beating heart, or that everyone who saw Him “alive” suffered from a group hallucination which is impossible because those are private events for one person and not public events for up to five hundred people at a time. Thomas Arnold, former professor of Modern History at Oxford, says, “No one fact in the history of mankind . . . is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort” than the fact that “Christ died and rose from the dead.”⁹



The Resurrected Christ Appearing
to the Marys c.1465
Bartolomeo Rigossi da Gallarate

NEW TESTAMENT ERA

CHRISTIAN MILESTONES

Birth of
Jesus Christ
0 -4 AD

Paul converts to
Christianity
33-36 AD

Temple destroyed
70 AD

John, the last living
apostle, martyred
100 AD

Edict of Milan makes
Christianity the religion
of Rome
313 AD

Nicene Creed
325 AD

Chalcedonian Creed
451 AD

Thomas Aquinas publishes
Summa Theologica
1274 AD

John Wycliffe's
Middle English
Bible translation
1380 AD

29-33 AD
Pentecost

49 AD
Council at
Jerusalem

90s AD
Revelation, last
book of the Bible,
written

120-150 AD
Apostles' Creed

354-430 AD
Augustine of Hippo

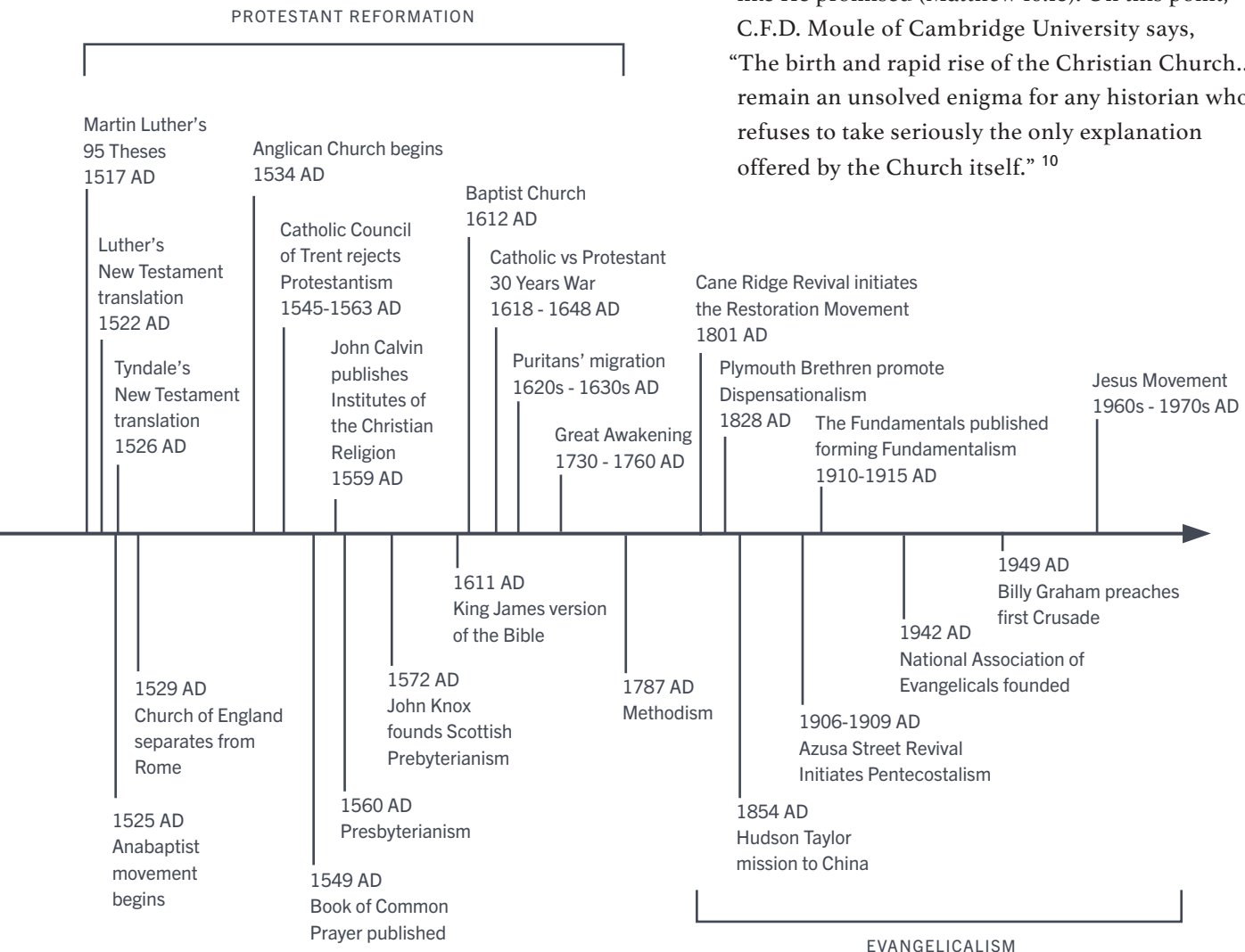
1054 AD
Great Schism divides
Eastern Ortodoxy and
Western Catholicism

1455 AD
Gutenberg printing
press completes
the Bible

The peacock is a symbol used by the early church. It loses its beauty during molting, only to have a more beautiful tail appear.

20. Jesus' Church has stood the test of time.

In the wake of Jesus' resurrection, Christianity exploded on the earth and a few billion people today claim to be Christians as the largest, longest lasting, and most diverse movement of any kind on planet earth. The Church of Jesus Christ has not thrived and survived because Christians are smart, organized, or powerful, but only because Jesus Christ is alive and building His Church just like He promised (Matthew 16:18). On this point, C.F.D. Moule of Cambridge University says, "The birth and rapid rise of the Christian Church... remain an unsolved enigma for any historian who refuses to take seriously the only explanation offered by the Church itself." ¹⁰



21. Jesus is alive and still changing lives to this day.

Throughout life, we reach a lot of conclusions about everything from what car to drive to what food to eat based upon the testimony of friends and family who share their experiences with us. The reason Christians share their testimony about how Jesus changed their life is because they want the people they know and love to come to know the Jesus who loves them. If you know a Christian, ask them about their testimony and you will see that Jesus is alive and still changing lives to this day.


My testimony is that, at the age of 17, a kind pastor's daughter gave me a Bible. At the age of 19, I was reading that Bible and stopped to ask Jesus to forgive my sin and make me a Christian. That day was the most important day of my life, and that decision was the most important one I have ever made. God changed me, along with my desires, and my mind. Without Jesus, nothing in my life would be the same, and everything in my life would be worse. I married the girl who bought me the Bible, and we have been faithfully married to one another since 1992. Today, we have five children. Everyone in our family loves Jesus, seeks to obey the Bible, serves in ministry at the church we started together, feels richly blessed by God and is not afraid of death because we know that Jesus awaits us there. Jesus has changed our lives!

Jesus would love to also change your life and will do so gladly. To start a relationship with Jesus, you need to talk to Him, which is called prayer. Jesus is alive in

Heaven and will hear you. You need to apologize to Him for the reason you have not had a relationship with Him—because of your sin which broke that relationship. Then, thank Him for dying on the cross for your sin, and thank Him for raising from the dead for you. Right now, you can be forgiven, loved, made new, and start your eternal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This eternal relationship with Jesus continues every day of this life and through death into eternity. If you believe in Jesus and belong to Jesus, there is guaranteed eternal life for you. One day your body will rise from death, and you will live as the perfect person God intends for you to be, in a perfected world, filled with joy forever and ever. Jesus loves you, and is waiting to hear from you right now, so ask Him to forgive your sin and change your life!

If you have made a decision to become a Christian, have any more questions about Jesus, or anything we can be praying for you about we'd love to hear from you via email at hello@realfaith.com. Thank you for the honor of helping you learn the Bible, and we have thousands of other free Bible teaching resources at realfaith.com or on the RealFaith app. Jesus loves you, and we do too!



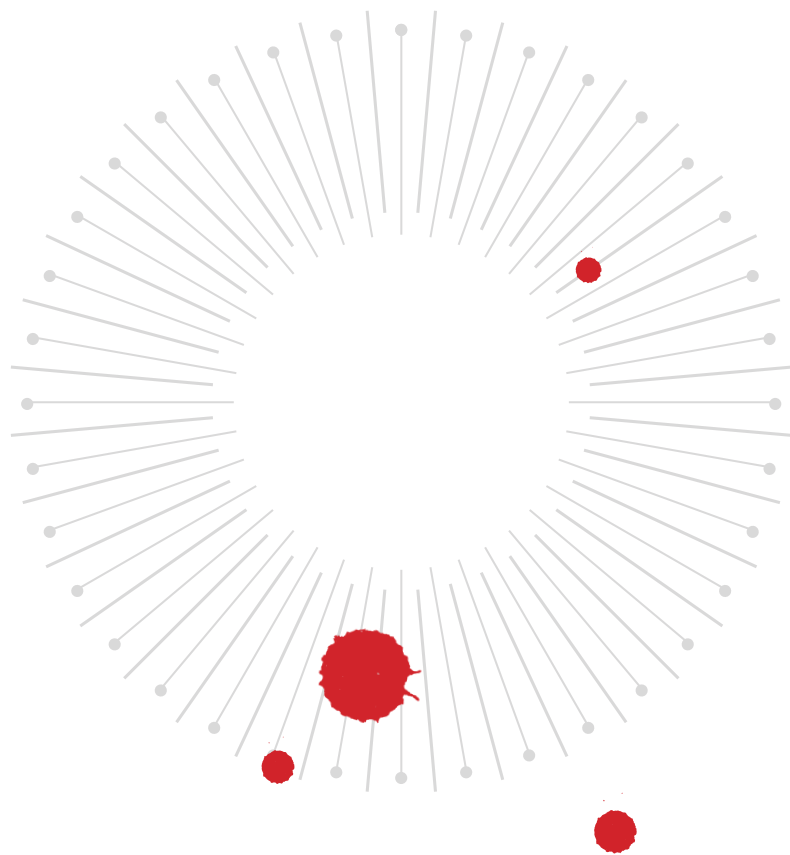


“I am the resurrection and
the life. Anyone who believes
in me will live, even after
dying. Everyone who lives in
me and believes in me will
never ever die.

Do you believe this...?”

JESUS CHRIST

JOHN II:25-26



ENDNOTES

¹ Mark Water, *The Life of Jesus Made Easy, The Made Easy Series* (Alresford, Hampshire: John Hunt Publishers Ltd, 2001), 35.

² N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 30–31.

³ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 7 vols., *The First Five Centuries* (New York: Harper, 1937), 1:59.

⁴ James D. G. Dunn, *The Christ and the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 67–68.

⁵ Flavius Josephus, “Jewish Antiquities,” in *The New Complete Works of Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1999), 18.63–64, emphasis added. There is great controversy about the authenticity of this text. Kostenberger, Andreas J.; Kellum, L. Scott; Quarles, Charles L. (2009). *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 104–108 is an excellent summary of the controversy.

⁶ N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 35.

⁷ N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 76.

⁸ Edwin Yamauchi, “Easter: Myth, Hallucination, or History?” *Christianity Today*, March 15, 1974 and March 29, 1974, 4–7, 12–16.

⁹ Thomas Arnold, “Christian Life, Its Hopes, Its Fears, and Its Close: Sermons Preached Mostly ...” 15–16.

¹⁰ C. F. D. Moule, *The Phenomenon of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1967), 13, emphasis in original.

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Pastor Mark Driscoll is a spiritual leader, prolific author, and compelling Bible teacher. But at his core, he is a family man. Mark and his wife Grace have been married and doing vocational ministry together since 1993 and, along with their five kids, planted Trinity Church in Scottsdale, Arizona as a family ministry.



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