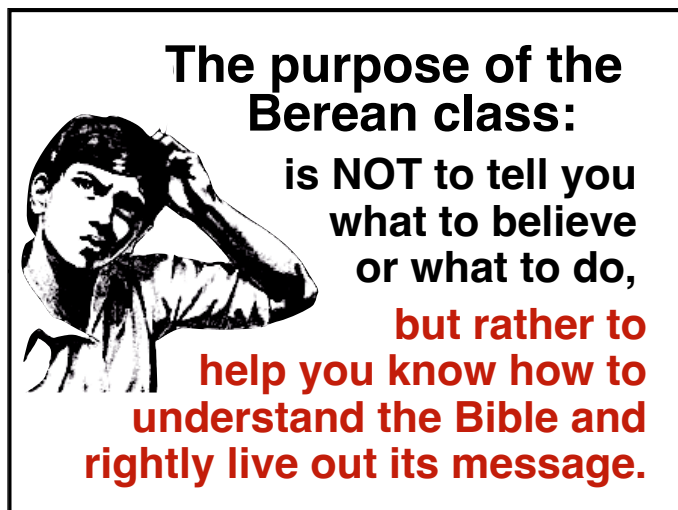




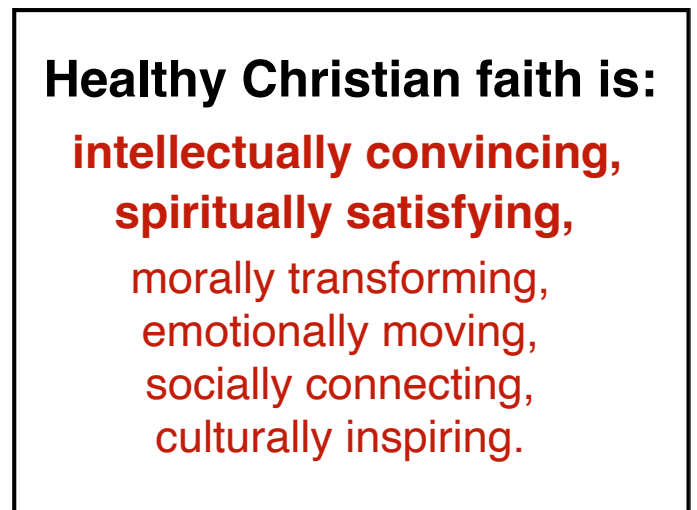
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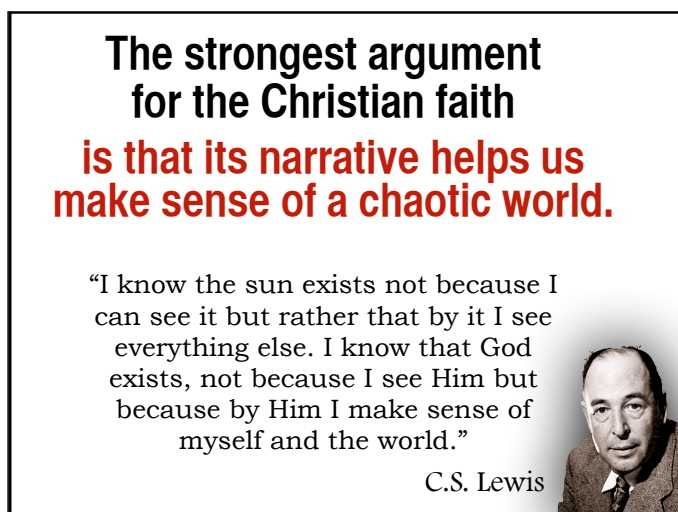
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4



5



6

Jesus' Resurrection

is a major element in the Christian faith.



1 Corinthians 15:14

"If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith."

This week

(Affirmation of what Christ has done **FOR** us)

The fact of the resurrection of Christ.

Next week

(Application of what Christ can do **IN** and **THROUGH** us)

The force of the resurrection of Christ.

7

1. This is a "main thing."

1 Corinthians 15:1-5

"Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, . . . For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, 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, and that he appeared to . . ."

8

2. This is a "historical event."

Acts 4:33

"And with great power the apostles **were giving testimony to the resurrection** of the Lord Jesus,"

1 Corinthians 15:17

"and **if Christ has not been raised**, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins."

9

3. This "our indwelling hope."

1 Peter 3:15

"but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always **being ready to make a defense** to everyone who asks you to give an account for **the hope that is in you**, yet with gentleness and reverence,"

10

Christian faith exists

The disciple's belief in Jesus' resurrection is the best explanation for the Christian faith.

The empty tomb and eyewitnesses to Jesus are the best explanation of the disciple's belief.

Jesus resurrection is the best explanation for the empty tomb and his appearances.

11

The evidence for Jesus' resurrection



✓ **The historical testimony of the Disciples** - who died for their beliefs.

✓ **The empty tomb** - Jewish witnesses Matt.28:11-15

✓ **Early creeds** - too early if a legend.

✓ **Multiple independent witnesses** - Mary, Peter, 12 disciples, 500 believers.

✓ **Conversion of skeptics** - James & Paul

✓ **Birth & growth of the church** - unexpected

12

Why is the physical resurrection of Jesus **CHALLENGED**?

1. **It is impossible** - A miracle is the most improbable explanation.
2. **Its evidence is suspect** - The Biblical testimony is from a faith bias and is inconsistent.
3. **It does not matter** - Christian faith is based upon one's subjective feelings, and Jesus' teaching on social justice.

13

Challenge #1 - A miracle is the most improbable explanation.

1. We fail to respect the **limits** and **bias** of historical criticism.



14

Challenge #1 - A miracle is the most improbable explanation.

1. We fail to recognize the **limits** of and **bias** in historical criticism.
2. Some of the **most important issues** in life will not and cannot be resolved through a scientific lens alone.
 - ★ **Mortality** - Why do we die?
 - ★ **Meaning** - What do we live for?
 - ★ **Morality** - What defines good & evil?
 - ★ **Mankind** - Why are humans so unique?
 - ★ **Management** - Why is life such a struggle?
 - ★ **Mysticism** - Why are we instinctively religious?

15

Challenge #1 - A miracle is the most improbable explanation.

1. We fail to recognize the **limits** of and **bias** in historical criticism.
2. Some of the **most important issues** in life will not and cannot be resolved through a scientific lens alone.
3. **PROOF** is a function of **COMMITMENT** based on:
 - the breadth of **DATA**,
 - **FAITH** (presuppositions) and
 - **REASON** (common sense logic).

Hebrews 11:3

“By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by that word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

16

Challenge #2 - The Biblical testimony is inconsistent and comes from a faith bias.

1. The testimony does not have expected marks of **bias** or **distortion**.
 - Jesus' new body is described as unique (not easily recognized).
 - Failed to tie the accounts to the Old Testament.
 - Women were the first witnesses.
 - Emphasis is on Jesus' credentials not our benefits (which came later with Paul's writing).
 - The early church was unanimous and convinced of it.
 - The apostles lived for it and died for it.
 - The alternative explanations are weak.

17

Challenge #2 - The Biblical testimony is from a faith bias and is inconsistent.

1. The testimony does not have expected marks of **bias** or **distortion**.
2. The **faith** did not precede the evidence but followed it.
3. The testimony **bore the test of authenticity** in the 1st century.

1 Corinthians 15:6

“After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep.”

18

Challenge #2 - The Biblical testimony is from a faith bias and is inconsistent.

1. The testimony does not have expected marks of bias or distortion.
2. The faith did not precede the evidence but followed it.
3. The testimony bore the test of authenticity in the 1st century.

4. The “inconsistent” testimonies can be explained.

Matthew 28:1-4

“... the angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. His face was like lightning, his robe white as snow...”

Mark 16:2-5

“On entering the tomb they saw a young man in a white robe seated at the right-hand side.”

Luke 24:1-4

“As they stood there not knowing what to think, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side...”

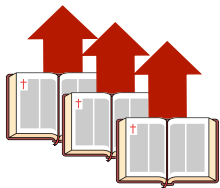
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Are the resurrection accounts really “impossible” to reconcile?

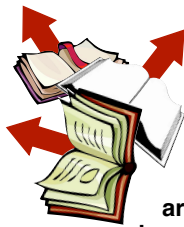
An angel, appearing as a young man dressed in white, came and rolled away the stone (**Matthew 28:1-4**). Later, when the women came, they saw him there (**Mark 16:2-5**) and surmised what had happened. As the women were trying to make sense of all this, a second man appeared (**Luke 24:1-4**) and explained it.

20

Critics say we cannot trust the records because:



The Gospels were created to support the prevailing theology of Paul.



The Gospels are hopelessly inconsistent and contradictory.

“If the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt.”

F. F. Bruce Manchester University

21

Challenge #3 - Faith is based upon subjective feelings, and Jesus’ ethics.

1. Authentic Christian faith is tied to **historical events** and the affirmation of their significance.

1 Corinthians 15:14

“If Christ has not been raised, **our preaching is useless, and so is your faith.**”

22

Challenge #3 - Faith is based upon subjective feelings, and Jesus’ ethics.

2. Inner enlightenment and social ethics are the essence of **other religions**, but not the basis of authentic Christianity.

Acts 17:31

“... He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having **furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.**”

23

Challenge #3 - Faith is based upon subjective feelings, and Jesus’ ethics.

3. The Gospel is rooted in **imputed righteousness**, not dramatic feelings, or social ethics.

Romans 4

“²⁴ (**righteousness**) **will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him** who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵ He who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was **raised because of our justification.**”

24

Challenge #3 - Faith is based upon subjective feelings, and Jesus' ethics.

2. Inner enlightenment and social ethics are the essence of other religions, but not the basis of authentic Christianity.

4. The Gospel is focused on what Christ has done **not on what we must do.**

Romans 4:5

"But to the one who **does not work, but believes** in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness,"

25

Challenge #3 - Faith is based upon subjective feelings, and Jesus' ethics.

5. A renewal of faith came as a **result of the resurrection of Jesus.**

1 Corinthians 15:14

"If Christ has not been raised, **our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.**"

26

Was the resurrection of Jesus **or of faith in Jesus?**

1.

The disciples had lost their faith at the cross. There is no indication that they were trying to find some reason to hang on to it.

2.

The resurrection of Jesus is described as both a historical (space time) event that resulted in an experience of hope and power.

3.

Faith, according to I Cor.15 was based not on an existential encounter but on a historical event.

4.

Paul's writings assume that the resurrection was an established fact too soon after the event for it to be an evolved legend.

27

Concluding observations

1.

Most critics agree that the rational theories are problematic and unlikely but are **BETTER** than the assumption of a miracle, which is impossible.

2.

The resurrection of Jesus is the most likely explanation **IF YOU ASSUME** that a miracle could have happened.

3.

It is hard to imagine the formation of "the Christ of faith" **WITHOUT** "the Jesus of history."

4.

Proof is tied to **COMMITMENT** to what we sense is most **PLAUSIBLE** based on the evidence we have.

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Hard Questions

Next week
Acts.12:33

Resurrection
benefits in
this life

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