

Intellectual Honesty
Question: "Was Jesus Raised?"



Intellectual Honesty

Evidence that demands a verdict.

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is fundamental to the Christian faith. Having faith that Jesus rose from the dead is what makes people Christians.

Romans 10:8-10

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

NKJV

You can believe good things about Jesus.

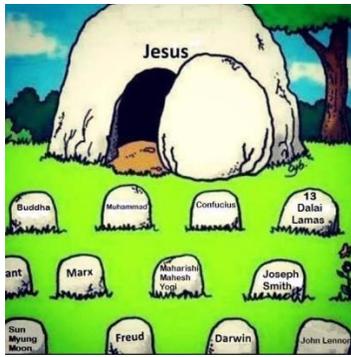
- You can believe He was a wise moral teacher.
- You can believe He did good deeds for others.

But if you do not believe that He rose from the dead, you are not a Christian.

Why is the resurrection of Jesus fundamental to the Christian faith?

If Jesus rose from the dead, it confirms His claims.

- If Jesus rose from the dead, it confirms His claim that He is God and has power over death.
- If Jesus rose from the dead, it confirms His claim that His suffering and death atoned for the sins of the world.
- If Jesus rose from the dead, it confirms His that those who follow Him will be raised with Him.
- If Jesus rose from the dead, it confirms His claim that no one goes to the Father except through Him.



The resurrection of Jesus from the dead establishes the credibility of Jesus over all other religious leaders and philosophers that have ever lived.

- If Jesus rose from the dead, it confirms His claim that those who believe in Him will be born again and walk in newness of life.

If Jesus is God, He has power to change who you are!

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, none of His claims are true. He was either a liar or a lunatic.

1 Corinthians 15:17-19

17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

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Why should you believe in the resurrection of Jesus?

We could talk about...

- The empty tomb.
- His body has never been found.



Joseph Ben Caiaphas, known simply as Caiaphas in the New Testament, was the Jewish high priest who organized a plot to kill Jesus. Caiaphas was involved in the Sanhedrin trial of Jesus. The primary sources for Caiaphas' life are the New Testament and the writings of Josephus.

Archaeologists found the tomb and body of Caiaphas who plotted the death of Jesus, but they have never found the body of Jesus. Don't you think that Caiaphas and every high priest that succeeded him would have done everything in his power to find it? Don't you think Nero would have done everything in his power to find it? I assure you they were giving as much effort to find it as some democrats are giving to find evidence of Russian collusion by President Trump in the last election.

- His church remains.
- The list of witnesses.

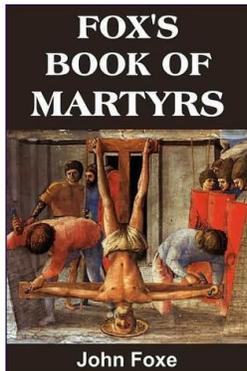
Did People Experience Appearances of Jesus?	Appeared to:	Where	References
1	Mary Magdalene	Jerusalem	Mark 16:7-11; John 20:11-18
2	Other Women	Jerusalem	Mark 16:9-10
3	Peter	Jerusalem	Luke 24:33; 1 Cor. 15:5
4	Emmanuel Disciples	Emmaus	Luke 24:13-35; Mark 16:12
5	10 Disciples	Jerusalem	Mark 16:7; Luke 24:36-42; John 20:19-25
6	11 Disciples	Jerusalem	John 20:26-31; 1 Cor. 15:5
7	7 Disciples	Galilee	John 21:1-25
8	500 Brethren	Galilee	1 Cor. 15:6
9	James	?	1 Cor. 15:7
10	11 Disciples	Galilee	Mark 16:7; Mark 16:15-18
11	11 Disciples	Jerusalem	Acts 1:3-12
12	Paul	Road Emmaus	Acts 9

On this list, who do you think are the most credible eye witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus?

Most of them should have some credibility in your mind for the following reason.

Many of them were killed due to their testimony that they were eyewitnesses of the resurrection. The list of martyrs includes ten of the first twelve disciples of Jesus.

There were over 500 first hand witnesses to the resurrection and many of them were killed due to their testimony that they were eyewitnesses of the resurrection.



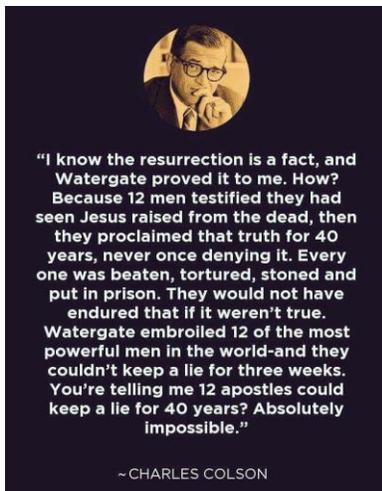
(You can read about many of them in a book called Foxes Book of Martyrs that was written in 1563.)

These first hand witnesses passed their eye witness account of the resurrection on to thousands of others without any regard for their life.

It is common for people to die for what they believe but who will die for something they know is a lie?

Charles Wendell Colson (October 16, 1931 – April 21, 2012) served as Special Counsel to President Richard Nixon from 1969 to 1970. Once known as President Nixon's "hatchet man," Colson gained notoriety at the height of the Watergate scandal, for being named as one of the Watergate Seven, and pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice for attempting to defame Pentagon Papers defendant Daniel Ellsberg.^[1] In 1974, he served seven months in the federal Maxwell Prison in Alabama as the first member of the Nixon administration to be incarcerated for Watergate-related charges.^[2]

Colson became an Evangelical Christian in 1973. His mid-life religious conversion sparked a radical life change that led to the founding of his non-profit ministry Prison Fellowship and, three years later, Prison Fellowship International, to a focus on Christian worldview teaching and training around the world. Colson was also a public speaker and the author of more than 30 books.



Most of them should have some credibility in your mind for the following reason because were killed due to their testimony that they were eyewitnesses of the resurrection.

Number	Who	Where	References
1	Mary Magdalene	Jerusalem	Mark 6:9-11; John 20:11-18
2	Other Women	Jerusalem	Matt 28:9-10
3	Peter	Jerusalem	Luke 24:32; 1 Cor. 15:5
4	Emmaus disciples	Emmaus	Luke 24:13-35; Mark 16:12
5	10 disciples	Jerusalem	Mark 16:14; Luke 24:26-42; John 20:19-25
6	11 disciples	Jerusalem	John 20:26-31; 1 Cor. 15:5
7	7 disciples	Galilee	John 21:1-25
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On this list, who do you think are the most credible witnesses?

1. Paul

Here is why I chose him?

Paul was Jew. He lived from about 4BC to 64AD. He was a legalistic self-righteous religious zealot that strictly adhered to the laws of Moses. He belonged to a Jewish sect in Israel that was called the Pharisees. They believed they were called by God to protect and preserve the law of Moses in the nation of Israel. The Pharisees were like the secret police in Israel.

They believed there was a heaven and that the way to heaven was obeying every command in the law of Moses. Paul was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He was known as an expert in the Torah.

For over 1500 years, in the spring of each year, the Jews had an annual celebration in Jerusalem called the day of Pentecost. On the day of Pentecost, in Jerusalem, the Jews celebrated the giving Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai. In this annual celebration every Jew was reminded of the importance of the law of Moses. The law was read in its entirety during the celebration. For Paul, for the future of Israel, Pentecost was the most important of all the Jewish celebrations.

53 days after the death of Jesus was the celebration of Pentecost. The followers of Jesus upset this celebration by preaching publicly in Jerusalem that Jesus rose from the dead.

They declared that His resurrection was a fulfillment of prophecy about the messiah of the Jews and that Jesus was their messiah. In one day, 3000 Jews believed their message.

Paul was very familiar with all 300+ prophecies in the law of Moses and the prophets about the messiah and he did not believe that Jesus was him. He believed Jesus was a false teacher, a blasphemer, a magician, and a demon possessed lunatic.

He was furious. He made an oath to God, to others, and to himself that he would do whatever was necessary to eradicate this false teaching from Israel.

He was appointed by the same Jewish council that had arrested and condemned Jesus to die. They were called the Sanhedrin. Paul was appointed to contain the movement. He was given authority by the Sanhedrin to arrest and imprison Christians. He would also use his authority to conspire with others to have Christians assassinated.

Then Paul became a Christian. (This would be like Osama Bin Laden becoming a follower of Jesus. This would be like Nancy Pelosi becoming a follower of Donald Trump.)

Paul became a Christian because He claimed that Jesus appeared to Him on a trip to Damascus to arrest and imprison Christians.

In 1 Cor. 15, in his own words, Paul said he was the most credible witness to the resurrection of Jesus because....

- He at one time persecuted those who claimed it was true. (1 Cor. 15:9)
- He labored more for to preach the resurrection of Jesus than any other apostle. (1 Cor. 15:10)

Paul became the greatest Christian missionary that has ever lived. He flipped in his teaching. Instead of teaching that eternal salvation would only come through the law of Moses, he taught that eternal salvation would only come through faith in Jesus. He accomplished more for the spread of the message about Jesus than any other disciple of Jesus in world history. I believe he was the most credible eye witness of the resurrection of Jesus because he was at one time the greatest enemy of Jesus in all of Israel.

The exclamation point on Paul's credibility is after being arrested by the same council that he used to work for and spending years in prison, he was beheaded by the Romans due to his faith in the resurrection of Jesus.

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Who do you think is the second most credible witness?

2. James, the brother of Jesus

Jesus had several siblings. We don't know all their names. Here are the names of the ones we know. James, Joses (or Joseph), Jude and Simon **were the brothers of Jesus**. Jesus also had sisters, but we do not know their names.

James was the next younger brother of Jesus. He knew Jesus better than any of the disciples knew Him because he grew up with Him.

James was also a very conservative Jew that adhered strictly to the laws of Moses. His nickname was James the Just.

After Jesus decided to become a Jewish rabbi and left home, James began to hear stories about what His brother was teaching. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God.

At one point, James and his family tried to do an intervention.

Mark 3:21

21 But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "He is out of His mind."

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They believed he had lost His mind. They had seen what happened to religious leaders and political zealots that were not in compliance with the Sanhedrin. Their intervention failed.

On another occasion when His family came to see Him, Jesus even told His disciples that those who followed Him were His brothers and sisters. How do you think that made James feel?

Then after the death of Jesus, James becomes a follower of Jesus. James became a follower of Jesus because He claimed that he saw Jesus after He rose from the dead.

James was a credible witness to the resurrection of Jesus because...

- He was the brother of Jesus and a sceptic (John 7:5)
- He changed from a skeptic to the leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15)
- He called himself a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. (James 1:1)
Who calls themselves a bondservant of their brother?

The exclamation point on James credibility is that he was stoned to death by the Jews due to his faith.

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1 Mary Magdalene	Jerusalem	Mark 16:7-11; John 20:11-18
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Who do you think is the third most credible witness?

3. Mary Magdalene.

She was a onetime prostitute that started following Jesus during His rabbinical ministry. She claimed He delivered her from demons.

She claimed she was the first witness to His resurrection.

Mary Magdalene was a credible witness to the resurrection of Jesus because....

- She showed no regard for her life by being a witness
- She was a woman

The testimony of women was less reliable than that of a man. A woman's testimony ranked just above the testimony of a child or a slave.

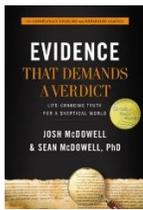
Why? At that time women were dependent upon men for their survival. It was commonly believed that women would say whatever they needed to say and do whatever they needed to do in order to survive. Mary Magdalene was an example of this. She became a prostitute.

The fact that she is the first witness to the resurrection gives credibility to the gospel accounts. At that time, if you were a part of a conspiracy to lie that Jesus rose from the dead you would never use a woman as a witness much less your first witness.

The exclamation point on Mary's credibility is that she was not the same person after she met Jesus.

There are several types of people in this room.

- There are those of you who do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus. What I have shared has not convinced you that it is true.



I know you have heard what skeptics have said.

I challenge you to be Intellectually Honest and read Evidence That Demands a Verdict by Josh McDowell.

- There are those of you who are convinced that Jesus rose from the dead. But you have not taken the next step. You have not followed Jesus in baptism. I challenge you to do that this morning. You can do that today.
- There are those of you who say you are convinced and have followed Jesus in baptism.

Has what you say you believe about the resurrection of Jesus changed who you are?

Jesus said believing in Him would change who you are.

John 3:1-8

3 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

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Jesus said by His Spirit He dwells in those who believe in Him. He said being filled with His Spirit immediately changes your nature.

Because your nature changes, your values immediately change. Of all the things that you value, what you value most in the Kingdom of God.

This change of nature makes you feel like a hypocrite when you sin. You feel miserable when you sin. It is not just a guilty conscience. Anyone can have a guilty conscience. It is not shame. Jesus took care of our shame. When you know you have sinned you have a feeling of disappointment that you are not being who you are created to be.

I used to feel this disappointment as an athlete. I did not doubt who I was. I knew what I could do. It was this belief that enabled me to be successful. When I did not perform well, I did not feel guilt or shame or self-condemnation. I knew who I was. I felt disappointed that I was not being who I was created to be. Based on who I was, I would acknowledge I did not play well, pick myself up, and go back to work. When you receive Jesus, your change of nature causes you to feel this way about sin. It makes you miserable to live in sin.

This change of nature also causes you to enter into a process of change called sanctification. Sanctification is growing in faith and love. Your beliefs about God start changing. Your beliefs about who you start changing; your beliefs about what is right and wrong start changing; your choices start changing; your start changing who you choose for best friends.

Has what you say you believe changed who you are?

If it has not, then I would challenge you to reconsider what you believe and why you believe it. Why were you baptized? Were you baptized because you wanted a new life in Jesus? Were you baptized because you wanted to live a sinful life but be at peace at about what was going to happen to you when you died?

Pharisees came to John the Baptist to be baptized by him and he refused. He recognized that they had no intention of repenting of their sins. Were you like them when you were baptized?

They were far more righteous than you are, and John and Jesus confronted them because they had no intention of repenting of their sins. Were you like them when you were baptized, and you think that you are safe now that you are baptized?

You can fool me. But you cannot fool God. If what you said you believed about Jesus the day you were baptized has not changed who you are, you need to reconsider what you believe and why you believe it. I would be glad to talk to you about it and help you resolve it.

But know this. There is a direct connection between being repentant of your sin and having saving faith. You cannot have one without the other.

I assure you if you come to Jesus because you are ashamed of who you are and you want a new life in Christ and you put your faith in Jesus to save you, what you believe will change who you are!

Romans 10:8-10

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

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