

The Resurrection of Jesus

Introduction: “*Christianity’s Sine Qua Non*”

What if Christ is not risen?



I. The Historicity of the Resurrection

-- Sources --

A. Sources Outside the New Testament

See: Gary R Habermas. *Ancient Evidence for the Life of Jesus: Historical Records of His Death and Resurrection* (Nelson Publishers, 1984).

I- Misconceptions Concerning the Historicity of Jesus

- A. *We can't know whether Jesus ever lived.*
- B. *We can know little about the historical Jesus.*
- C. *We accept a historical Jesus without theology or miracles.*
- D. *We have no extra-NT sources for Jesus' life.*

2- Historical Data Concerning the Life of Jesus

A. Ancient Non-Christian Sources

Ancient Historians

Tacitus

Suetonius

Josephus

Thallus

Government Officials

Pliny the Younger

Trajan

Hadrian

Jewish Sources

Talmud

Toledoth Jesu

Gentile Sources

Lucian

Mara Bar-Scrapion

Gnostic Sources & Lost Works

Gospel of Truth

Gospel of Thomas

Acts of Pilate

B. Creeds and "Core" Facts

C. Ancient Christian Sources [Non-New Testament]

90-126 AD

Clement of Rome

Quadratus

Ignatius

126-155AD

Barnabas

Justin Martyr

D. Archaeological Sources

Yohanan Skeleton

Nazareth Decree

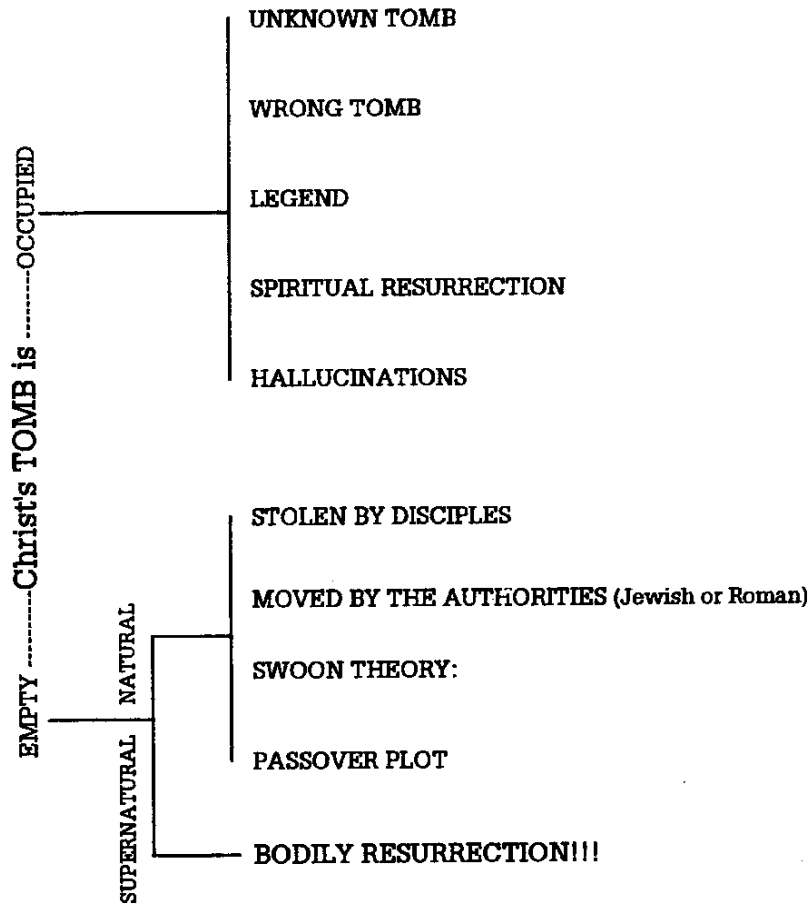
Shroud of Turin

B. Sources Inside the New Testament

1. Reliability of the Documents
2. Corroboration of Eyewitnesses
3. Integrity of the Writers and Eyewitnesses
4. Congruence with non-New Testament Sources

II. The Historicity of the Resurrection -- Alternatives --

See: Josh McDowell. *The Resurrection Factor* (Here's Life Publications, 1981).



Conclusion: The Four-fold Witness

The Empty Tomb
The Eye-Witnesses
The Origin of Christianity
The Prophets of Old



Resurrection of Jesus Quotes

CORNELIUS TACITUS, Annals [covering the period AD 14 to AD 68] recounts Nero's blaming the followers of Christ for the fire of Rome. In so doing, he makes an important aside:

"Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted most exquisite tortures on a class, hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome ...

JOSEPHUS, Antiquities (ca. AD 90 to AD 95) writes:

"Now, there was about the time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of principle men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive on the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of the Christians named from him are not extinct to this day."

In 1972, professor **Schlomo Pines** of Hebrew University published an Arabic **manuscript** of this passage in **JOSEPHUS** which reads:

"At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good and [he] was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly, he was perhaps the messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders."

JULIUS AFRICANUS (ca. AD 221) interacts with a portion of a work by **THALLUS** (ca. AD 52):

"Thallus, in the third book of his histories explains away the darkness [around the time of Christ's crucifixion] as an eclipse of the sun -- unreasonably as it seems to me."

JUSTIN MARTYR, Apology (ca. AD 150) claims that the details of Christ's crucifixion could be verified in the Acts of Pontius Pilate [which is no longer extant]:

"And the expression, *They pierced my hands and feet*, was used in reference to the nails of the cross which were fixed in His hands and feet. And after He was crucified, they cast lots upon His vesture, and they that crucified Him parted it among them. And that these things did happen you can ascertain in the 'Acts' of Pontius Pilate.

HUGH SCHONFIELD, The Passover Plot states:

"We are now claiming for our reconstruction that it represents what actually happened, but that on the evidence we have it may be fairly close to the truth. We have to allow the gospel accounts to come to us from a time when the figure of Jesus has become larger than life, and his story had acquired in telling and retelling many legendary features. Yet we must not treat them as wholly fictitious as they have preserved valuable indications of what transpired. We can almost see the process at work which transformed the deep despondency of the companions of Jesus into the joyful conviction that he triumphed over death as he said he would. What emerges from the records is that various disciples did see somebody, a real living person. Their experiences were not subjective." [pp. 165-6, *emphasis is mine*.]

CHUCK COLSON, Loving God (pp. 67-69.)

“With the most powerful office in the world at stake, a small band of hand picked loyalists, no more than ten of us, could not hold a conspiracy together for more than two weeks... Take it from one who was inside the Watergate web looking out, who saw first hand how vulnerable a cover-up is: Nothing less than a witness as awesome as the resurrected Christ could have caused those men to maintain to their dying whispers that Jesus is alive and Lord.”

F. F. BRUCE, The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?, p. 15.

“The evidence for the New Testament writing is ever so much greater than for many writing of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning... And if the New Testament were a collection of secular writings, their authenticity would be regarded as beyond all doubt.”

GARY HABERMAS, Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, p. 941.

“First, naturalistic theories have failed to explain away this event, chiefly because each is disproven by the known historical facts. Additionally, critics themselves have attacked each theory. For instance, the nineteenth century David Strauss disarmed the swoon theory while Theodor Keim and others pointed out the weaknesses of the hallucination theory. Form critical studies later revealed the futility of the legend theory popularized by the history of religion school of thought. In the twentieth century such diverse thinkers as Barth, Tillich, Bornkhamm, and Pannenberg are examples of higher critical theologians who have rejeced these alternative hypotheses.”

B. F. WESCOTT, cited by Paul Little in Know Why You Believe, p. 30.

“Indeed, taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no historic incident better or more variously supported than the ressurection of Christ. Nothing but the antecedent assumption that it must be false could have suggested the idea of deficiency in the proof of it.”

PAUL LITTLE, Know Why You Believe, p. 23.

“If Christ rose, we know for certainty that God exists, what he is like, and how we may know him in personal experience; the universe takes on meaning and purpose, and it is possible to experience the living God in contemporary life. These and many other things are true if Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead.

On the other hand, if Christ did not rise from the dead, Christianity is an interesting museum piece -- nothing more. It has no objective validity or reality. Though it is a nice wishful thought, it certainly isn't worth getting steamed up about. The martyrs who went singing to the lions, and contemporary missionaries who have given their lives in Ecuador and the Congo while taking this message to others, have been poor deluded fools.”