

The Resurrection: True or False

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Today we continue with our series of The Resurrection Tor F

There is a theory called Naturalistic theory. The basic idea is to suggest an alternative explanation in place of divine connection. Thus, a naturalistic theory is an assertion something like this: "Jesus didn't rise from the dead. What really happened is (fill in the blank)." Tonight the Myth or legend theory.

The myth argument against the resurrection is the view that the disciples and other followers of Christ were so emotionally involved with him that is possible that they made up the legend idea to keep the teaching alive after his death. To do this they invented stories of his bodily resurrection and appearances to give framework for presenting his teaching and draw attention to them.

Just the facts...

From our six facts checklist this version of the legend theory fails to explain 3 of the minimal facts.

It does not account for the fact that the tomb was found empty and it doesn't make sense of why both friends and enemies of Jesus believed they saw him after his death and burial. >>>

Rejection of the Myth Theory:

One author explained it this way....The style of the Gospels is completely and clearly different from the style of all the myths. Any literary scholar who knows and appreciates myths can verify this. There are no overblown, spectacular, childishly exaggerated events. Nothing is random. Everything fits in. Everything is meaningful. The hand of a master is at work here.

Spiritual depth is at a maximum. In myth it is at a minimum. In myth, such spectacular external events happen that it would be distracting to add much internal depth of character. That is why it is ordinary people like Alice who are the characters of extra-ordinary adventures like Wonderland. That character depth and development of everyone in the Gospels—especially, of course, Jesus himself—is remarkable. It is also done with an incredible economy of words. Myths are wordy; the Gospels are brief.

In the historical roots of Christianity there are eyewitness experiences of the first Christians, who understood them as appearances of Jesus, raised by God from the dead. And they were not merely speaking about an internal realization or conviction: "they clearly meant that something had happened to Jesus himself. God had raised him, not merely reassured them."

Even the more skeptical scholars often grant the grounds for the appearances. Norman Perrin concluded, "The more we study the tradition with regard to the appearances, the firmer the rock begins to appear upon which they are based."

Helmut Koester concurs: We are on much firmer ground with respect to the appearances of the risen Jesus and their effect. . . . that Jesus also appeared to others cannot very well be questioned.

A little detail, seldom noticed, is significant in distinguishing the Gospels from myth: the first witnesses of the resurrection were women. At the time of Jesus death the culture treated women so poorly that they were not seen as being trustworthy enough to testify in court. If the empty tomb were an invented legend, its inventors surely would not have had it discovered by women, whose testimony was considered worthless. If, on the other hand, the writers were simply reporting what they saw, they would have to tell the truth, however socially and legally inconvenient.

Scripture and details. The Gospels also show an intimate knowledge of Jerusalem prior to its destruction in A.D. 70. The Gospels are full of proper names, dates, cultural details, historical events, and customs and opinions of that time.

The point is that this is what you get when the imagination goes to work. Once the boundaries of fact are crossed we wander into fairyland. And very nice too, for amusement or recreation. But the Gospels are set firmly in the real Palestine of the first century, and the little details are not picturesque inventions but the real details that only an eyewitness or a skilled realistic author can give. (Thinking About Religion, p. 75-76)

The New Testament (2 Peter 1:16) When we told you about the power and the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, we were not telling clever stories that someone had made up. But with our own eyes we saw his true greatness. Since it explicitly says it is not myth, if it is myth it is a deliberate lie rather than myth. The dilemma still stands. It is either truth or lie, whether deliberate or non-deliberate There is no escape from this dilemma. Once the New Testament distinguishes myth from fact, it becomes a lie if the resurrection is not fact.

If the disciples created the story of the resurrection then what happened to the body? If the body was still in the tomb all the romans needed to do was open the tomb. The Legend theory cannot explain why the disciples would give up everything to spend their lives spreading a lie and dying horrible martyr's deaths.

mystic non-Christians go beyond scripture to discredit deny and refute to extreme; the Word of God and Jesus. Almost to the point that they except everything but scripture and deny scripture for every other idea as out there.

Discern the spirit and know the truth

By grace alone - God loves the people of the world, even though they are sinful, rebel against Him and do not deserve His love. He sent Jesus, His Son, to love the unlovable and save the ungodly.

By faith alone - By His suffering and death as the substitute for all people of all time, Jesus purchased and won forgiveness and eternal life for them. Those who hear this Good News and believe it have the eternal life that it offers. God creates faith in Christ and gives people forgiveness through Him.

By scripture alone - The Bible is God's inerrant and infallible Word, in which He reveals His Law and His Gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is the sole rule and norm for Christian doctrine.

Joh 1:14 The Word became a human being and lived here with us. We saw his true glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father. From him all the kindness and all the truth of God have come down to us.

Joh 17:17 Your word is the truth. So let this truth make them completely yours.

Joh 8:32 You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

The truth is Jesus is your risen Lord and your Savior