
The Case for Christ

Exploring the Evidence for Christ

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Did Jesus rise from the dead?

¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins... ¹⁹ And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

(1 Corinthians 15: 17, 19)

Jesus Was _____ at Point A

- Is Christianity a copycat religion?
- Some claim Jesus' resurrection never happened, it's merely a story Christians plagiarized from ancient myths.
- Others try to deny that Jesus ever lived in the first place.

*"The nearly universal consensus of scholars around the world is that there are no examples of any mythological gods dying and rising from the dead that came before Jesus. These resurrection myths came after Christianity, so Christianity could not have done the borrowing.... There is, as far as I am aware, no prima facie evidence that the death and resurrection of Jesus is a mythological construct." (TND Mettinger, Swedish Scholar, cited in *The Case for the Real Christ* by Lee Strobel)*

"The claim that Jesus was simply made up falters on every ground." (Did Jesus Exist? by Bart Ehrman, agnostic New Testament scholar)

Jesus Was _____ at Point B

- For the resurrection to be true, Jesus had to die. The Bible & History tell us that Jesus was executed by crucifixion under Pontius Pilate.

And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull"). They offered him wine drugged with myrrh, but he refused it.

Then the soldiers nailed him to the cross. (Mark 15:22 – 24)

- All four Gospels record Jesus' crucifixion, each written within the lifetimes of his contemporaries.
- Plus, five ancient sources outside the Bible record Jesus' crucifixion: Josephus, Tacitus, Lucian, Mara Bar-Serapion, and the Talmud.

Jesus Was _____ at Point C

Two strands of evidence establish that Jesus came back to life:

1. His tomb was _____.

"Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance." (John 20:1)

- The Jerusalem Factor
- The Criterion of Embarrassment
- Enemy Attestation

2. Jesus _____ to people.

An Early Creed of the Church

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles..." (v. 3 – 7)

KEY POINT:

The evidence that Christ rose from the dead is powerful and persuasive. We have overwhelming evidence to back up our faith!