

The Historical Resurrection

"The word *god* for me is nothing more than the expression and product of human weaknesses, the Bible a collection of honorable, but still primitive legends which are nevertheless pretty childish. No interpretation no matter how subtle can (for me) change this."

— Albert Einstein

"Is there an intelligent man or woman now in the world who believes in the Garden of Eden story? If there is, strike here (tapping his forehead) and you will hear an echo."

— Robert Green Ingersoll

"I think that the people who think God wrote a book called the Bible are just childish."

— Bill Maher

Sermon Questions

1. People in the 1st century (0-99 AD) were much more likely to believe in an historical resurrection than people would today in the 21st century. (Yes/No)
2. If the resurrection of Jesus is not historically true, then Christianity is worthless. (Yes/No)

Heads Up: These are the questions we will ask to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the eye-witnesses to the resurrection.

- Were the eye-witnesses even there?
 - Can their stories be corroborated?
 - Do we have the original account preserved for us today?
 - Were they telling the truth?
3. Circle four reasons why we know the gospels were written early (around 50AD) and not hundreds of years later:
 - a. The gospels do not mention the destruction of the _____.
 - b. There is not a single piece of evidence that ever attributes any of the four gospels to anyone other than the historical Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
 - c. The New Testament does not record the deaths of Peter or Paul.
 - d. The Gospel of Luke was written before his second book, Acts.
 - e. The church has always accepted these gospels (there were other gospels written later that the church rejected as false).
 - f. Luke's gospel was written after Matthew and Mark's gospel.
 4. Since the gospels do not describe each event identically, we have to question their reliability. (Yes/No)
 5. The following non-Christian sources also attest to the events mentioned in the gospels:
 - a. Josephus (Jewish historian who lived from 37–100AD)
 - b. Tacitus (Roman historian who lived from 56–117AD)
 - c. Thallus (Samaritan historian who lived from 5–60AD)
 - d. Mara Bar-Serapion (Syrian philosopher who lived from 70–??AD)
 - e. Phlegon (Roman historian who lived from 80–140AD)

6. The uncontrolled copying of the Scriptures ensures that we have an uncorrupted copy today.
(Yes/No)

7. Circle all the possibilities that could have motivated *all* disciples of Jesus to lie about his resurrection and *all* die for that lie:

- a. Money.
- b. Controlling the people.
- c. Fame.
- d. They really wanted it to be true.

8. Do you have any questions about the historicity of Jesus' resurrection?

9. What's more in keeping with where your heart is at? The quotes that begin this handout, or the desire to give up all and be labeled a "fool" for Jesus who died and rose again?