

Essex Fells Apologetics Seminar  
November 8, 1989  
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## **EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST**

### **Evidence from Prophecy:**

Psalm 16: God will not abandon his Holy One to the grave, nor let him see decay

Psalm 22: one pierced in hands & feet, surrounded by enemies, laid in dust of death, is delivered and his deliverance becomes worldwide news down thru generations

Isaiah 53: unbelievable report of servant's exaltation; despised by Israel, suffered as sin offering, but then he will see his offspring, prolong his days

### **Evidence from History:**

Can't go back in time machine to see what really happened, but several significant lines of evidence:

#### **The Existence of the Church.**

The men and women who had followed Jesus were completely demoralized by his death.

--we had hoped that he was Messiah

--hiding from enemies

Within a few months they were boldly proclaiming Jesus in the very city where he was crucified.

Most of the apostles (all but John) died at the hands of enemies, but would not retract their testimony that they had seen (etc.) the risen Jesus.

The church's expansion to fill empire was made in face of persecution without using military forms of evangelism.

#### **The Existence of the New Testament.**

The NT comes from within a century of the events it records, as even liberals admit.

The external historical evidence of authorship points to two apostles and two of their associates for the four Gospels and to a former enemy of Xy for most of the letters.

Uniform testimony of NT is that many eyewitnesses to resurrected Jesus, including extended appearances to multiple witnesses, with multiple senses involved.

Unless one *a priori* rejects the miraculous, the evidence for the reliability of the NT is as good as for any ancient histories.

### **Responses of Opponents.**

Several attempts to avoid resurrection:

#### **Stolen Body Theory:**

Oldest alternative, but original version has soldiers (asleep) testifying!

Later versions invariably try to get rid of soldiers

Doesn't explain:

Tactics of apostles

Career of Paul

Content of NT

#### **Coma Theory:**

Various versions by Reimarus, Schonfield

But, how get out of tomb?

How get past soldiers?

How convince disciples death conquered?

Fatal objection in physiology of crucifixion

unconscious person will die of suffocation

#### **Hallucination Theory:**

Women go to wrong tomb, mistake gardener for angel

Disciples begin to have hallucinations of risen Jesus

But, how avoid authorities producing body when Xns begin preaching Gospel?

How mistake tomb in daylight?

How avoid correction from other disciples?

Grief-induced (or even drug-induced) hallucinations do not produce hour-long, multiple-sense, multiple-witness appearances.

### **Conclusions**

Evidence is about as good as one could get for controversial event in history.

Occurring in a time of more advanced technology would not avoid possible objections.

The importance of knowing God and finding out what He is like is so great that we must not go through life assuming it doesn't matter until we have thoroughly investigated matter.