

LESSON THREE - THE RESURRECTION

TEXT: **John 2:17-22**

INTRODUCTION:

A. WE MUST BE READY ALWAYS TO DEFEND OUR FAITH(**1 Peter 3:15**).

1. The focal point of the Christian's hope is the resurrection from the dead.
2. This hope springs from the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.
3. If Jesus was not raised from the dead bodily, then we have no hope of a resurrection from the dead for ourselves at the end of time.

B. IN THIS LESSON WE WANT TO CONSIDER THE SUPREME DIVINE TESTIMONY - **THE RESURRECTION**.

C. BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION RESTS TESTIMONY.

1. Is the testimony of the witnesses without flaw? Were they influenced by some ulterior motive?
2. Is the testimony strong enough to produce faith?

D. AT THIS TIME WE WANT TO CONSIDER THE TESTIMONY CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION.

I. OUR PROPOSITION DEFINED.

A. THREE **UNAVOIDABLE** FACTS:

1. Jesus died and was **buried**.
2. On the third morning or before, **His body disappeared**.
3. The **disciples came to believe** firmly that He was raised.

B. THE EXACT ISSUE HAS REFERENCE TO THE LAST TWO FACTS AND MAY BE STATED BY THESE TWO QUESTIONS:

1. **Did the body disappear by a resurrection or some other way?**
2. **Did the belief of the disciples originate from the fact of the resurrection or from some other source?**

II. HOW DID THE TOMB COME TO BE EMPTY? CONSIDER MAN'S EXPLANATIONS:

A. **"THE DISCIPLES STOLE THE BODY."**

1. Used by the priests in **Matt. 28:11-15**.
2. Contrary to the character of the disciples - it would mean they started a lie that cost millions their lives.
3. **2 Corinthians 4:7-10**. Men will die for what they believe to be true, though it actually be false. They will not die for what they know to be false. If the disciples had moved the body, they would have known their deaths were for a false cause.

B. **"THE JEWISH OR ROMAN AUTHORITIES MOVED THE BODY."**

1. Why place guards at the tomb so that the body would not be moved if they were going to move it anyway?
2. **Acts 4:13-18**. The Jews said they could not deny that which the apostles were teaching, so they merely commanded them not to teach anymore in the name of Christ. If they had moved the body, they would know where it was, and could have easily refuted everything the apostles taught.

C. **"THE MOURNERS WENT TO THE WRONG TOMB."**

1. The enemies still could have produced the body.
2. Joseph of Arimethia could have shown the right tomb.
3. It was a private burial ground with a minimum of tombs.

D. **"THE SWOON THEORY."** 18th CENTURY.

1. Both friends and enemies certain He was dead. **THE SPEAR!**
2. Conditions in the tomb would have killed a man in his supposed condition. No food, water, medical attention of any kind,

bound up in grave clothes, damp & cool of the tomb.

3. Would he have had the strength enough to extricate himself from the grave clothes, push away the heavy stone from the tomb's door, overcome the Roman guards, and walk miles on feet that had pierced with spikes?

4. David Strauss, an atheist, rejects this idea as incredible. He says, "It is impossible that one who had just come forth from the grave, half dead, who crept about weak and ill, who stood in need of medical treatment...could ever have given the disciples the impression that he was a conqueror over death and the grave; that he was the Prince of Life. This lay at the bottom of their future ministry. Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression which he had made on them, but by no means have changed their sorrow into enthusiasm or elevated their reverence into worship."

E. THE ONLY POSSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR THE EMPTY TOMB IS THAT JESUS REALLY WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

III. THE ALLEGED APPEARANCES OF JESUS AFTER HIS DEATH...WERE THEY REAL?

A. These appearances took place over a period of 40 days with a great deal of variety as to time and place. 10 distinct appearances.

B. He appeared to both groups and individuals; 500 at once.

C. They were convinced...They GAVE their lives(**1 Cor. 15:6-7**).

D. The only alternative is that they suffered from **hallucinations**. This is impossible, however. Why? Because of the nature of hallucinations:

1. occur generally in people who tend to be vividly imaginative and of a nervous make-up. Jesus appeared to all sorts, mostly hard-headed skeptics.
2. are subjective and individual; no 2 have the same experience.
3. usually occur only at peculiar times and places. Suggestion!
4. occur over a long period of time with some regularity...Jesus stopped appearing abruptly after 40 days.
5. must be desired events or at least expected.

E. **WHAT ABOUT THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS?**

1. The disciples were skeptical - They were persuaded against their wills that Jesus came forth. Mary went to the tomb to anoint a dead body. She thought that Jesus was a gardener.

2. The others refused to believe her story (**Luke 24:10-11; Mark 16:9-14**).

3. When he did appear to the disciples, they thought at first that he was a ghost, but he changed their minds(**Luke 24:36-43**).

4. Thomas was an honest unbeliever, he had to see to believe(**John 20:24-29**).

E. WE MUST REJECT THIS THEORY!

CONCLUSION:

The only possible explanation is that offered by the apostles for the empty tomb and their strong belief in him(**Acts 10:39-43**).