

The Resurrection

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Early in 1926 the hardest boiled of all the atheists I ever knew sat in my room on the other side of the fire and remarked that the evidence for the historicity of the Gospels was really surprisingly good. ... To understand the shattering impact of it, you would need to know the man ...

*– C. S. Lewis (1898 – 1963),
Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*

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(who has certainly never since shown any interest in Christianity). If he, the cynic of cynics, the toughest of toughs, were not—as I would still have put it—‘safe’, where could I turn? Was there then no escape?

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- The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a wonderful miracle – but it is not only that.
- It is a fitting solution to the human problem as presented in the Bible – a solution traceable to a given time and place.
- To understand this, it will be helpful to begin in the book of Genesis.

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- **Genesis 2:8-9** (ESV)

⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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- **Genesis 2:15-16** (ESV)

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

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Knowledge of good and evil would open their eyes to the possibility of evil and, as later events confirm, would have the power to corrupt their lives.

*– Jesudason Baskar Jeyaraj,
South African Theological Seminary*

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- Sadly, our first parents ate of the prohibited tree.
- Had they eaten of the tree of life, the story would have turned out differently.

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Free will is one of his gifts to us, an intrinsic part of being made in his image. God wanted the man and the woman to use their free will to choose to do what he wanted. The fullness of his blessing included the power to resist temptation. Their obedience, not the fruit, was the key issue.

*– Jesudason Baskar Jeyaraj,
South African Theological Seminary*

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- Obedience to God is something the human race has had in very short supply since that time.
- We are capable of remarkable good – but we engage in equally remarkable evil.

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- By nature we are alienated from God – knowing both good and evil – and incapable of consistently choosing the good.
- **Death** is the inevitable result.

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- But then came Jesus.
- Let's turn to **Luke 24**.

The Empty Tomb 24:1-12

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- 24:6-8 The angels remind them what Jesus had been saying all along.
- Evidence for the Resurrection is found in the fact that none of His followers expected it to happen.

The Empty Tomb 24:1-12

- For example, the women fully expected to find a dead body.
- The disciples didn't believe the women when they told them what they found.

The Empty Tomb 24:1-12



All four gospels agree on one vital detail about Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion and resurrection: women were present. The specifics of their presence may vary from one gospel to another, ... but the presence of the women is a constant. These ... women are both the first witnesses to the resurrection and the first missionaries of the church.

– Paul John Isaak, Namibian Bible Teacher, Missions Professor

The Empty Tomb 24:1-12

- Belief in the resurrection was not wish-fulfillment.
- Christ's closest followers – both women and men – were just as surprised as anyone else would have been.

Jesus Appears to Two 24:13-35

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- **24:14** We can only imagine their confusion and disappointment.
- **24:17-19** Jesus just plays along. He lets them tell the whole story.

Jesus Appears to Two 24:13-35

- 24:25 Jesus points out their root problem: They are slow of heart to believe.
- Jesus is right, of course: Unbelief is more an issue of the heart than of the head.
- Once our hearts are open, our heads follow along.

Jesus Appears to Two 24:13-35

- 24:27 The Bible is mainly about Jesus.
- 24:28-31 Jesus reveals himself.
- Some suggest that when Jesus gave them the bread, they saw the wounds on His hands – and then recognized Him.
- 24:32-35 Back to Jerusalem

Jesus Appears to the Group 24:36-43

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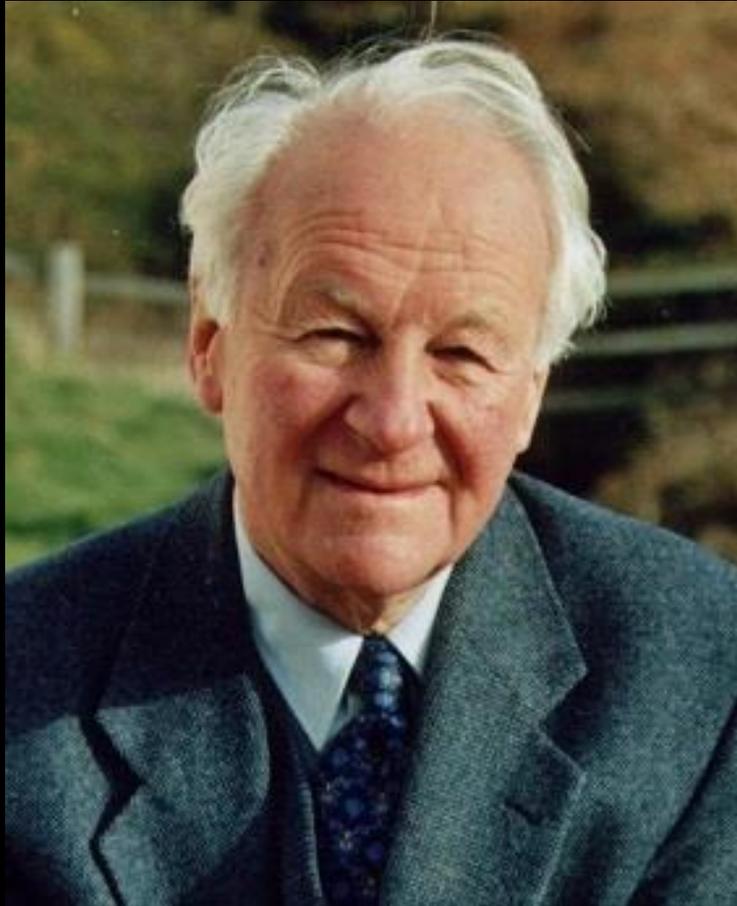
- 24:39-40 This event gives meaning to John's words as he begins his first letter.

- 1 John 1:1 (ESV)

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

One Last Teaching 24:44-49

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So these are the two components of salvation. Forgiveness eradicates our past, and the Spirit transforms our future.

– John Stott (1921 – 2011), All Souls Church, Langham Place, London

One Last Teaching 24:44-49

- 24:49 the promise of my Father

- John 14:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

Jesus Returns to Heaven 24:50-53

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- May we find the same encouragement that those early disciples found.
- Let's read 24:52-53 again.

Things We Need to Believe

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- Jesus really died as an offering for our sins.
- Therefore, “repentance and forgiveness of sins” are a vital part of the gospel message (24:47).

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 - The resurrection changed the lives of these early followers.
 - It is what separates Christianity from all other world religions.

Things We Need to Believe

Sir Lionel Luckhoo (1914 – 1997),
successfully defended 245 consecutive
murder cases. He said,

*I have been fortunate to secure a
number of successes in jury trials and I
say unequivocally the evidence for the
resurrection of Jesus Christ is so
overwhelming that it compels
acceptance by proof which leaves
absolutely no room for doubt.*



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- Once we believe certain facts we have to personally trust Christ with our eternity.

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- Once we believe certain facts we have to personally trust Christ with our eternity.
- Personally practice repentance and receive remission of sins. Jesus wants a pure church.
- Personally serve Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- This will look different for each of us, but it will always be a benefit to others.

The Resurrection Final Thoughts

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- Let's close with the encouragement that Paul gave to the Corinthian church – followed by a prayer.
- **1 Corinthians 15:42-57**

A Prayer Expressing Faith in Christ

- *Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and that I need Your forgiveness.*
- *I believe that You showed your love for me by dying for my sins when You died on the cross.*
- *I believe You rose from the dead.*
- *I want to turn away from my sins and follow You. I invite You to come into my life. I trust You as My Savior and honor You as my Lord.*
- *Thank You Lord, for hearing my prayer. Amen.*