

[The Validity of the Resurrection: Preached](#)



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There is simply no way to overemphasize the importance of the resurrection to the Christian faith, for the resurrection of Jesus is the Christian faith. Christianity stands or falls on the validity, the historical reality of the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus is either the greatest event in the history of mankind, or it is the cruelest hoax that has ever been perpetrated. Which is it, truth or fantasy?

I have a friend in Lexington, Kentucky who refers to cemeteries as resurrection ground. I like that terminology because the Bible teaches that a day is coming when these graves will open and those who have died with their faith placed in Jesus as Lord and Savior will come back to life and receive glorified, immortal bodies. What a glorious day that will be.

The Bible also says that the Christian hope of resurrection is based upon the resurrection of Jesus. The apostle Paul put it this way in I Corinthians 15, *"If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless."* Peter makes a similar statement in I Peter 1 where he states that the Christian hope is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Based on these statements from Scripture, I don't think it is any exaggeration to say that the resurrection of Jesus is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Christianity stands or it falls on the assertion that Jesus rose from the dead. So, I think it's only proper to ask, is there any evidence of the resurrection of Jesus, or must it be accepted by blind faith? And if there is evidence, what is it?

The Apostles Preached It

I'd like to begin our consideration of this epic event by taking a look at the preaching of the apostles. Because the resurrection is the cornerstone of the Christian faith, it was the central theme of the apostle's preaching. We are told for example in Acts 4 that with great power the Apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Apostle Peter preached the first Gospel sermon, the focal point of the message was the resurrection. He boldly proclaimed, *"This man Jesus of Nazareth, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to*

a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death, and God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."

And likewise, the Apostle Paul made it crystal clear that the heart of his Gospel message was the resurrection. He defined the Gospel in I Corinthians 15 in the following terms, and I quote, *"That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."*

If you will turn to the book of Acts and read the sermons recorded there, you will find that the climax of each one is the assertion that Jesus has risen from the dead. It was this breathtaking, miraculous fact that energized and motivated the Apostles to preach the Gospel fearlessly.

There was no doubt about that whatsoever. Again, the Apostles focused on this event because they present the fact of the resurrection as the event that sets Christianity apart from all other world religions.

The resurrection is the unique stamp of Christianity, for only Christianity claims an empty tomb for its founder. No resurrection has ever been claimed for Abraham, Buddha, Confucius, or Mohammed.

Again, as Paul puts it in Romans 1, *"Jesus was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead."* In other words, it is the resurrection that validates Jesus as God in the flesh.

There's just no way to get around the fact that the resurrection of Jesus is either one of the most wicked, vicious, heartless, hoaxes ever foisted on the minds of men, or it is the most fantastic truth of history. It has to be one or the other, truth or fantasy. And I believe it is truth.