

MANY CONVINCING PROOFS (Ed O'Leary)

INTRODUCTION.

THE PHYSICAL, ~ BODILY, ~ RESURRECTION OF JESUS ~ IS NOT ~ ~ ¶¶

▶▶ a religious myth, ~ which coincides with springtime ~ to inspire us ~ with hope and positive thinking.

▶▶ Rather, ~ it is a historic ~ fact ~ that Jesus of Nazareth ~ rose from the dead.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, ~ IF GENUINELY INVESTIGATED, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ strips away ~ the arguments and theories ~ behind which ~ people have always tried ~ to hide from God.

▶▶ Paul's statement ~ to the men of Athens, ~ in [Acts 17: ~ 30-31](#), ~ presents the implications of Jesus' resurrection ~ with absolute precision.

↳↳ The times of ignorance ~ God overlooked, ~ but now ~ he commands all people everywhere ~ to repent, ~ because ~ he has fixed a day ~ on which ~ he will judge the world in righteousness ~ by a man whom he has appointed; ~ and of this ~ he has given assurance to all ~ by raising him from the dead.

▶▶ Jesus' resurrection proves ~ that ~ all are accountable to Him ~ and ~ none ~ are exempt from His authority.

▷▷ To the Jews ~ Jesus said, ~ the Father judges no one. ~ Instead, ~ he has given the Son ~ absolute authority to judge.

▷▷ And before ascending back to heaven, ~ he said, ~ All authority ~ in heaven and on earth ~ has been given to me. ¶¶ 1/10

▶▶ And people don't want to be held accountable.

▶▶ Is it any real wonder then, ~ 77

▷▷ that people come up with ~ all sorts ~ of false theories ~ to explain away Christ's resurrection?

↪↪ E.g., ~ wrong tomb

▷▷ I would suggest ~ that it takes more faith ~ to believe in these false theories ~ 77

↪↪ than to believe ~ in the resurrection.

NOW, ~ I MUST DIGRESS HERE ~ BEFORE WE CONTINUE TO TALK ABOUT THE RES.

BECAUSE ~ WE NEED TO CLEAR UP ~ THREE COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ~ people have about God and Salvation.

▶▶ 1st, ~ cosmic policeman

▷▷ Rich in mercy.

▷▷ This implies ~ that He is much more interested ~ in being merciful to humans ~ 77

↪↪ than in bringing His wrath down upon our heads.

▷▷ To put it differently, ~ God would much rather people face ~ 77

↪↪ His mercy, ~ love, ~ and grace ~ than His wrath. 77 2/10

Scripture makes this abundantly clear.

↳↳ In Jn. 3: ~ 17, ~ Jesus said, ~ For God ~ did not send his Son into the world ~ to condemn the world, ~ but ~ in order that ~ the world ~ might be saved through him.

↳↳ In 1 Tim. 2: ~ 4, ~ Paul tells us that ~ God ~ desires ~ all people ~ to be saved ~ and ~ to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⇨⇨ Please understand. ~ Not saying

↳↳ And in Ezek. ~ 33: ~ 11a, ~ God says, ~ ¶¶

→→ Say to them, ~ As I live, ~ declares the Lord God, ~ I have no pleasure ~ in the death of the wicked, ~ but ~ that the wicked turn from his way ~ and live."

▷▷ God would much rather people face ~ His mercy, ~ love, ~ and grace ~ than His wrath.

▷▷ But having said that, ~ it is also true ~ that when those who have rejected Jesus die, ~ will face God's wrath.

↳↳ God has no choice

↳↳ Jn. 3:36 (NIV) brings both these truths out.

→→ "Whoever believes in the Son ~ has eternal life, ~ but whoever rejects the Son ~ will not see life, ~ for God's wrath remains on them."

▶▶ The 2nd misconception ~ people have about God and Salvation. ⇨⇨ Cosmic Killjoy

▷▷ Jn. 8:31-36

▷▷ Jn. 15:11, ~ I have told you these things ~ so that ~ my joy may be in you ~ and your joy ~ may be complete. ¶¶ 3/10

▷▷ Jn. 16:22, ~ So also you have sorrow now, ~ but I will see you again, ~ and your hearts will rejoice, ~~ and no one ~ will take your joy from you.

▷▷ True freedom and joy ~ come only ~ through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

▶▶ And the 3rd misconception ~ people have about God and Salvation. ⇔⇔ Other ways

▷▷ Jn. 14:6, ~ I am ~ the way, ~ and the truth, ~ and the life

↳↳ No one ~ comes to the Father ~ except ~ through me.

▷▷ Acts 4:12 (NIV), ~ Salvation ~ is found in no one else, ~~ for there is no other name under heaven ~ given to mankind ~ by which we must be saved.

OK, ~ BACK TO DISCUSSING JESUS' RESURRECTION.

THE EVIDENCE ~ FOR JESUS' RESURRECTION ~ IS COMPELLING.

UNLESS, ~ OF COURSE, ~ SOMEONE HAS MADE UP THEIR MIND ~ THAT ~ THEY WILL never believe ~ no matter what.

▶▶ I believe ~ there is no truthful way ~ to read the four gospels ~~ and ~ 77

▷▷ to fairly account ~ for all of the evidence ~ without concluding ~ that Jesus did in fact ~ rise from the dead.

↳↳ C. S. Lewis ⇔⇔ Lee Strobel

THIS A.M., ~ WE'RE GOING TO EXPLORE ~ FIVE ~ OF THE MANY CONVINCING PROOFS ~ of the resurrection. ↯↯ 4/10

FIRST, ~ JESUS REALLY DIED.

▶▶ This counters ~ a false theory ~ which appeared ~ at the end of the 18th century.

▷▷ Before ⇨⇨ Swoon

▶▶ It asserts ~ that Jesus ~ just swooned/fainted ~ from ~ exhaustion, ~ pain, ~ and loss of blood.

▷▷ Still alive when placed in the tomb.

↪↪ Revived by the cool air, ~ arose, ~ and departed.

▶▶ However, ~ this does not stand up ~ to ~ honest ~ scrutiny.

▶▶ The Romans ~ were experts ~ at killing.

▷▷ They knew the difference ~ between ~ a dead man ~ and ~ an unconscious one.

▷▷ Convinced Jesus was dead. ⇨⇨ Did not break his legs.

▶▶ Pilate asked for assurance ~ before releasing the body.

▶▶ One would think Joseph, ~ Nicodemus, ~ and the women ~ would have noticed breathing ~ when they prepared Jesus' body for burial.

▶▶ And consider this.

▷▷ Jesus had had ~ no water, ~ no food, ~ had been severely beaten, ~ and ~ had hung on a cross 6 hrs. ↴↴ 5/10

▷▷ The swoon theory ~ asks us to believe ~ that ~ in His weakened condition, ~ 77

↳↳ Jesus ~ was able ~ to roll the stone away ~ and fight off experienced Roman soldiers.

▷▷ And how ~ would Jesus have known ~ the length of time He was in the tomb, ~ 77

↳↳ and ~ precisely ~ the right time to come out of the tomb? ⇨⇨ Rise 3rd day.

THE SECOND PIECE OF EVIDENCE, ~ THE EMPTY TOMB.

▶▶ It's interesting to note ~ that all ~ the contemporary witnesses ~ agree on this fact.

▷▷ The disciples, ~ the Jews, ~ and the Romans ~ all knew ~ that the tomb was empty.

▷▷ It's true ~ that each group ~ viewed that fact differently.

▷▷ But no one ~ disputed the basic assertion ~ that on Easter Sunday morning ~ Jesus ~ was no longer in the tomb.

▶▶ The Jewish leaders ~ never denied it ~ but did try ~ to cover it up.

▶▶ So someone came up ~ with the stolen body theory.

▶▶ But ~ who would have stolen the body?

▷▷ The Romans? ⇨⇨ Why?

▷▷ The disciples? ⇨⇨ Trembling in fear. ⇨⇨ Trained soldiers. ↓↓ 6/10

▷▷The Jewish leaders? ⇔⇔ Why?

↳↳They wanted Jesus to stay in the tomb ~ at all costs. ⇔⇔ Guard to prevent

↳↳And ~ if the Jewish leaders did steal it, ~ why not ~ produce the body on the day of Pentecost?

LET'S NOW CONSIDER ~ THE THIRD PIECE ~ OF EVIDENCE. ⇔⇔ Female witnesses.

▶▶In all of the major resurrection narratives, ~ women ~ 77

▷▷are credited as ~ the first and primary ~ eyewitnesses.

▶▶In our modern culture ~ we don't appreciate the significance of this fact

▶▶But ~ this would be an odd invention ~ at that time ~ if the resurrection were not true.

▷▷Since in both ~ the ancient Jewish and Roman cultures ~ women ~ were thought very little of.

↳↳Their testimony ~ was regarded as ~ insubstantial ~ and dismissible.

▶▶Given this fact, ~ it is highly unlikely ~ that any perpetrators of a hoax ~ 77

▷▷in 1st century Judea ~ would elect women ~ to be their primary witnesses.

▶▶The only reason ~ to say that the women saw Jesus first ~ is because ~ that's what actually happened.

▷▷No one ~ would have made up ~ such a strange detail. 77 7/10

NOW THE ~ FOURTH ~ PIECE OF EVIDENCE, ~ THE POST RESURRECTION APPEARANCES,
~ which occurred ~ over a 40-day period.

▶▶ He appeared to ~ the women, ~ the 11 apostles, ~ the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus, ~ James, ~ Paul, ~ and also ~ 500 people at one time.

▶▶ Taken together, ~ this list ~ is impressive enough ~ that it cannot be carelessly dismissed ~ as wishful thinking.

▶▶ Writing to the Corinthian church ~ some 30 years later, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Paul commented ~ that ~ most of those who saw the risen Christ ~ ¶¶

↳↳ were still alive ~ and ready to testify ~ to what they had seen.

→→ IOW, ~ they could check it out.

▶▶ Well, ~ then, ~ a skeptic suggests, ~ perhaps the early Christians ~ ¶¶

▷▷ suffered some kind of mass psychosis ~ that caused all of them ~ to have visions or hallucinations ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that they mistook ~ for the risen Christ.

▶▶ This is difficult to square ~ with the facts as we know them ~ and ~ with the reality of human nature.

▷▷ Visions ~ tend to be ~ intensely ~ personal events.

↳↳ Two people ~ rarely ~ have visions that are ~ even remotely similar, ~ much less identical. ¶¶ 8/10

▶▶ But as we just saw, ~ Jesus appeared ~ many times to many people ~ over a 40-day period after his resurrection.

▷▷ And, ~ again, ~ to 500 people at one time.

▷▷ Its strains credulity ~ to believe ~ that 500 people ~ would have ~ the same vision ~ at the same time.

▷▷ Plus, ~ you still have the pesky fact ~ of the ~ missing ~ body.

↪↪ If Jesus' resurrection ~ was a vision, ~ then what happened ~ to the body?

NOW LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION ~ TO THE ~ FIFTH ~ AND FINAL ~ PIECE OF evidence, ~ the transformed disciples.

▶▶ Here is one of the most remarkable facts surrounding the resurrection.

▶▶ Whereas before that Sunday ~ the disciples were ~ ¶¶

▷▷ unsure, ~ timid, ~ doubting, ~ and ~ in general ~ a lackluster bunch, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ afterwards ~ to a man ~ they were ~ utterly, ~ radically ~ and completely ~ transformed.

▶▶ They were ~ quite literally ~ new men.

▶▶ Suddenly ~ these timid souls ~ became ~ absolutely fearless, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ totally dedicated ~ to spreading the good news about Jesus ~ to anyone who would listen. ¶¶ 9/10

▶▶ Persecution ~ didn't stop them, ~~ opposition ~ didn't faze them, ~~ hatred ~ didn't intimidate them, ~~ 77

▷▷ hardship ~ didn't slow them down, ~~ and the threat of martyrdom ~ didn't frighten them.

▶▶ What made the difference?

▷▷ I submit ~ that the only possible answer ~ is ~ that these men ~ met the risen Christ.

↪↪ And he changed their lives ~ forever.

CONCLUSION.

IN 1 COR. ~ 15: ~~ 3-4, ~ PAUL DEFINES THE GOSPEL ~ AND INFORMS US, ~ THAT IT consists ~ of two ~ essential facts.

▶▶ 1st, ~ Jesus died for our sins and was buried.

▶▶ And 2nd, ~ Jesus rose from the dead on the third day.

▶▶ This ~ is the gospel.

▷▷ This ~ is the absolute truth.

LET'S PRAY 10/10