



“College Life Class”

Christology: Jesus’ Crucifixion & Resurrection

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First Baptist Church, Golden

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Minimal Facts Approach in Considering Jesus' Death and Resurrection

The “minimal facts approach” considers only data that meet two criteria:

- (1) the data are strongly evidenced;
- (2) the data are granted by virtually all scholars on the subject, even the skeptical ones.

1st fact: Jesus died by crucifixion.

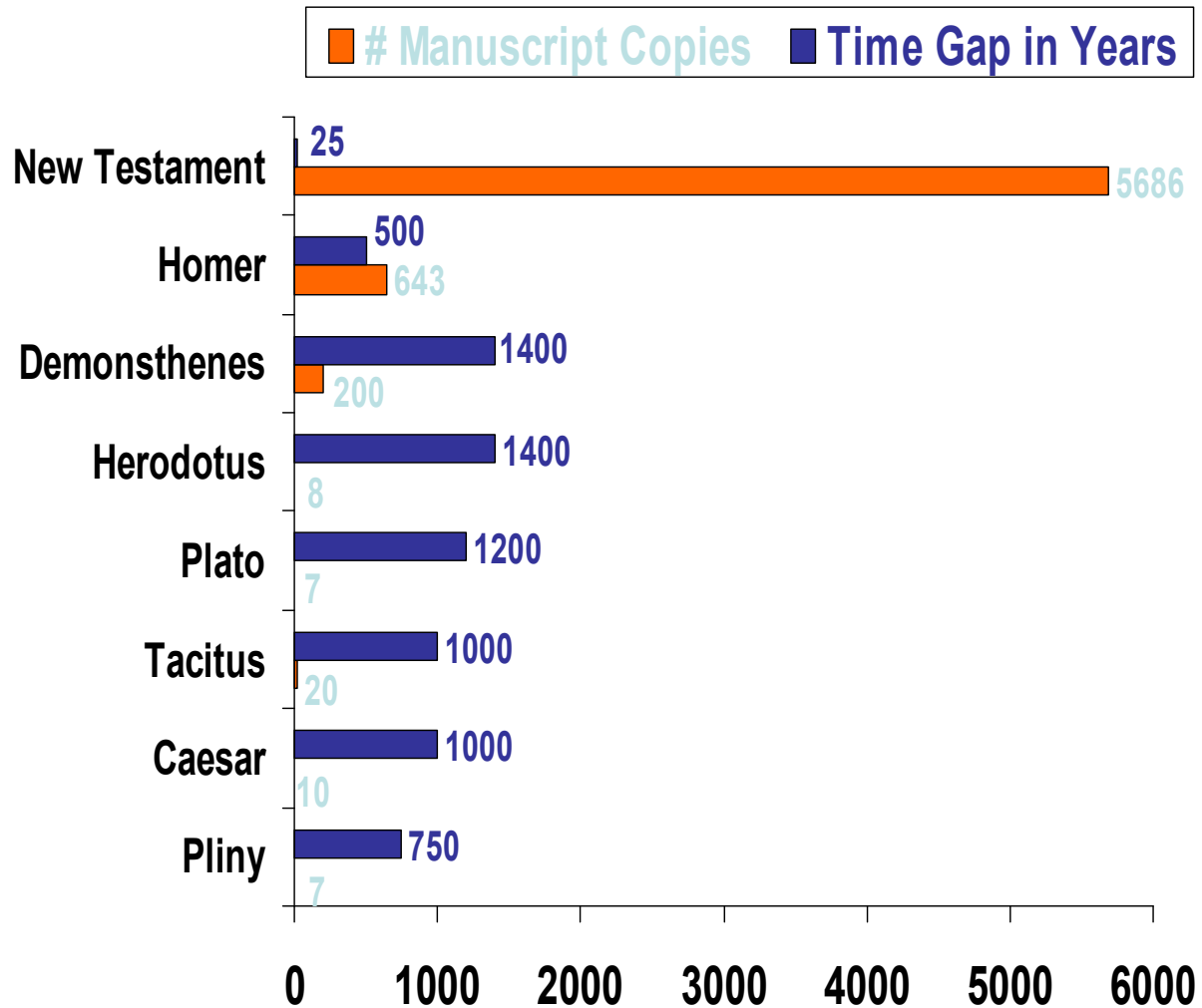
2nd fact: Jesus' disciples believed that He rose and appeared to them.

3rd fact: The church persecutor Paul was suddenly changed.

4th fact: The skeptic James, brother of Jesus, was suddenly changed.

5th fact: The tomb was empty.

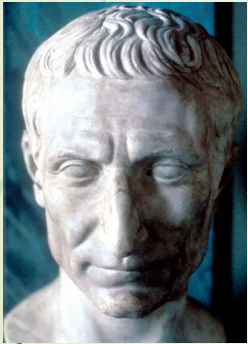
Reliability of NT Documents





authors who mention Jesus w/in 150 years after His death:

	Total #	# non-Christian
Jesus	42	9
Julius Caesar	5	5
Tiberius Caesar (BC 42 – AD 37)	10	9



Historic non-Christian references to the crucifixion:

According to ***Julius Africanus*** (ca. 221), the 1st century Samaritan-born historian, ***Thallus*** (ca. 52) wrote: “when discussing the darkness which fell upon the land during the crucifixion of Christ,” spoke of it as an eclipse.

Lucian, a 2nd century Greek writer, speaks of Christ as “the man who was crucified in Palestine because he introduced a new cult into the world.”

A letter of ***Mara Bar Serapion*** (ca. AD 73), speaks of Christ’s death, asking: “What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their wise King?”

Phlegon (b. AD 80), a Roman writer, who spoke of Christ’s death and resurrection in his *Chronicles*, saying, “Jesus, while alive, was of no assistance to himself, but that he arose after death, and exhibited the marks of his punishment, and showed how his hands had been pierced by nails” (cited by Origen, 4:455).



Earliest Christian writers referencing the crucifixion:

Polycarp, (A.D. 70-155) a disciple of the apostle John, repeatedly affirmed at the death of Christ: “our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sins suffered even unto death” (Polycarp, 33).

Ignatius (A.D. 30-107), a friend of Polycarp, wrote: “And he really suffered and died, and rose again.” He also wrote about the sufferings of the apostles, “But, (in truth) none of these sufferings were in vain; for the Lord was really crucified by the ungodly.” (Ignatius, 107)

Justin Martyr (ca. 100-165) noted that Jews of his day believed that “Jesus [was] a Galilean deceiver, whom we crucified” (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 253).



OT prophecies about Messiah's death:

Ps. 22:16; Isa. 53:5-10; Dan. 9:26; Zech. 12:10

Psalms 22:16-18

¹⁶For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil doers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. ¹⁷I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; ¹⁸They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

Dan. 9:26

²⁶“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing,

Zech. 12:10

¹⁰“And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for and only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.”

Isaiah 53:5-10

⁵But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening of our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. ⁶All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. ⁷He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.

⁸By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? ⁹A grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.



Jesus on His death & resurrection:

Matt. 12:40; Mk. 8:31; Jn. 2:19-21; 10:10-11; Mt. 17:22-23

Matt. 12:40


⁴⁰for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Mark 8:31

³¹And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and describes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

Matt. 17:22-23

²²And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; ²³and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day.”



Jesus on His death & resurrection: (cont.)

Matt. 12:40; Mk. 8:31; Jn. 2:19-21; 10:10-11; Mt. 17:22-23

John 2:18-22

¹⁸The Jews therefore answered and said to Him, “What sign do You show up to us, seeing that You do these things?”

¹⁹Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”

²⁰The Jews replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and You are going to raise it in three days?” ²¹But the temple He had spoken of was His body.

²²After He was raised from the dead, His disciples recalled what He had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words He had spoken.

John 10:17

¹⁷“For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.”



OT verses concerning resurrection – a General resurrection

Job 19:25-27

I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see Him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Psalms 16:10

My heart is glad...because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. (cited in Acts 2:25-28 in reference to Jesus)

Daniel 12:2

Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake; some to everlasting life, others shame and everlasting contempt. (NIV)



Possible Explanations of the Data of Christ's Resurrection:

The Swoon Theory – Jesus was drugged on the cross and never really died

The Conspiracy Theory – the disciples overpowered the guard & stole the body

The Hallucination Theory – Jesus' post-resurrection appearances were mere hallucinations

The Myth/Legend Theory – legend developed over time about Jesus' resurrection; attempts to imitate other god-myths from other cultures

The Resurrection Theory (historical view) – a supernatural resurrection

The nature of Christ's resurrection: a physical body made perfect

Lazarus (John 11:1-44) was raised from the dead—subject to weakness, aging, and eventually death.

Jesus was the “firstfruits” (1 Cor. 15:20,23) of a new kind of human life, a life in which His body was made perfect, no longer subject to weakness, aging, or death, but able to live eternally.

There was a considerable degree of continuity between the physical appearance of Jesus before His death and after His resurrection. Perhaps that difference in appearance was simply the difference between a man who had lived a life of suffering, hardship, and grief, and one whose body was restored to its full youthful appearance of perfect health. [Luke 24:13-35; 16 & 31]

Though Jesus' body was still a physical body, it was raised as a transformed body, never able again to suffer, being weak or ill, or die; it had “put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53). Paul says the resurrection body is raised “imperishable... in glory... in power... a spiritual body” (1 Cor. 15:42-44).

1 Cor. 15:42-44

⁴².... It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; ⁴³it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body (σωμα ψυχικον), there is also a spiritual body (σωμα πνευματικον).

sown a perishable body

raised an imperishable body

sown in dishonor

raised in glory

sown in weakness

raised in power

sown a **natural** body

raised a **spiritual** body

Paul does not mean “immaterial” but rather “suited to and responsive to the guidance of the Spirit.”

1 Cor. 2:14 “a natural man” = ψυχικος

“a spiritual man” = πνευματικος



Doctrinal Significance of the Resurrection

a. Christ's resurrection affirms the goodness of the material creation

We as resurrected people will live forever in “new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” 2 Peter 3: 13

We will live on a renewed earth where “we'll be set free from its bondage to corruption” Rom. 8: 21

In this very material, physical, renewed universe, it seems that we will need to live as human beings with physical bodies, suitable for life in God's renewed physical creation.

Specifically, Jesus' physical resurrection body affirms the goodness of God's original creation of man not as a mere spirit like the angels, but as a creature with a physical body that was “very good.”



Doctrinal Significance of the Resurrection (cont.)

a. Christ's resurrection affirms the goodness of the material creation

We must not fall into the error of thinking that non-material existence is somehow a better form of existence for creatures.

2 Cor. 5:2-4 ²For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; ³in is much as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. ⁴For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

When God made us as the pinnacle of His creation, He gave us physical bodies.

In a perfected physical body Jesus rose from the dead, now reigns in heaven, and will return to take us to be with Himself forever.

Doctrinal Significance of the Resurrection (cont.)

b. Christ's resurrection ensures our regeneration

1 Peter 1:3 “He has caused us to be born again to a living hope *through the resurrection* of Jesus Christ from the dead”

When Jesus rose from the dead He had a new quality of life, a “resurrection life” in a human body and human spirit that were perfectly suited for fellowship and obedience to God forever.

It is through His resurrection that Christ earned for us the new kind of life we receive when we are “born again.”

This is why Paul can say that God “made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved--and raised us up with Him,” Ephesians 2:5-6; cf. Col. 3:1.

Doctrinal Significance of the Resurrection (cont.)

b. Christ's resurrection ensures our regeneration (cont.)

When God raised Christ from the dead, He thought of us as somehow being raised “with Christ” and therefore deserving of the merits of Christ's resurrection.

Paul says his goal in life is:

“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection” (*Phil. 3:10*).

Jeremiah 9:23-24

Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he ***understands*** and ***knows Me***, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD.

Doctrinal Significance of the Resurrection (cont.)

c. Christ's resurrection ensures our justification

Romans 4:25 Jesus “was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification”. When Christ was raised from the dead, it was God's declaration of approval of Christ's work of redemption.

Because Christ “humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:8), “God has highly exalted Him” (Phil. 2:9).

By raising Christ from the dead, God the Father was in effect saying that He approved of Christ's work of suffering and dying for our sins, that His work was completed, and that Christ no longer had any need to remain dead.

If God “raised us up with Him” (Eph. 2:6), then by virtue of our union with Christ, God's declaration of approval of Christ is also His declaration of approval of us.



Doctrinal Significance of the Resurrection (cont.)

d. Christ's resurrection ensures that we will receive perfect resurrection bodies as well.

1 Cor. 6:14 "God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by His power"

2 Cor. 4:14 "He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence"

The most extensive discussion of the connection between Christ's resurrection and our own is found in 1 Cor. 15:12-58.

Absolutely something to ponder!