

Did Jesus Really Rise From the Dead?

Two questions have driven me deeper into my relationship with Jesus Christ.

- How did we get here?
- What do we do with the resurrection of Jesus?

I became a Christian at a young age, but as a young adult, I chased the questions of the Christian faith. I was never a skeptic, but I wanted to know *why* I believe. Did I believe in Jesus simply because that was how I was raised? Or could I say with confidence that I *know* what I believe—and why?

The two questions I mentioned earlier are the ones I cannot explain apart from what the Bible teaches.



1. How did we get here? I cannot look at any aspect of science and not see the presence of an Intelligent Designer. Skeptics say science and faith don't mix, but I

disagree. In fact, I contend it takes more faith to believe all this happened by chance than it does to believe in an Intelligent Designer who created with intention and purpose.

2. What do we do with the resurrection of Jesus? This is the question I want to focus on. Did the resurrection really happen? Or is it something we just choose to believe because we want to?



- Thomas Arnold, who taught at Oxford University, said: "I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead."
- Harvard Law School professor, Dr. Simon Greenleaf, was a skeptic; He mocked Christians in his classroom until some students challenged him to put the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus through the filter of the law. He took up the challenge and found the evidence so convincing he

became a believer. He concluded the resurrection of Jesus is one of the best established facts of history.

- Lee Strobel, an investigative journalist and committed atheist, set out to debunk the resurrection of Christ. He used the tools he had used in his investigative writing, and he came to the conclusion that Jesus died—and He rose again. (The movie of Lee Strobel's life, *The Case for Christ*, released in theaters on April 7.)

Each spring, churches have a big celebration around the resurrection of Christ. That's great, but I've discovered that most Christians join in the celebration without asking themselves why. They just *assume* the resurrection is true. So every year around Easter, I raise the question:

Did Jesus really rise from the dead?

My goal is not to create skeptics, but to get believers to realize faith in Jesus is not a blind faith. It is grounded in historical reality that cannot simply be washed away.

It's been a rich experience every time I've done this exercise with a Bible study group. Space limits me from mentioning all the passages that help me see the historicity and validity of Christ's resurrection. Consider this from just one passage—Luke 24:

- Verses 1-6. The empty tomb points to the resurrection of Jesus.
- Verses 6-8. Jesus foretold His resurrection.
- Verses 9-12. The disciples did not invent the story; in fact, they didn't believe it at first.
- Verses 13-35. The disciple spoke with Jesus.
- Verses 36-40. The disciples saw Jesus physically.

Don't take my word for it. Research the resurrection yourself. Here are some books I've valued through the years on this topic:

- *The Case for Christ*, Lee Strobel
- *More Than a Carpenter*, Josh McDowell
- *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell
- *Buried Hope or Risen Savior*, Charles Quarles