

The background of the slide is a photograph of a field of tall grass with a bright, glowing light source in the center, creating a warm, golden glow and lens flare effects. The sky is a soft blue with wispy clouds.

# Welcome

—We are glad you are here—

## Matthew 28:5-6

<sup>5</sup> But the angel answered and said to the women,  
“Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was  
crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; for **He is risen**, as He said.  
Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

# Still

Hide me now, under Your wings  
Cover me, within Your mighty hand

When the oceans rise and thunders roar  
I will soar with You above the storm  
Father you are King over the flood  
I will be still, know You are God

Find rest my soul, in Christ alone  
Know His power, in quietness and trust



Let's face it. The Resurrection is hard to believe. After all, we're speaking of a man who endured horrible beating, cruel impalement, and heart-breaking death, then came back to life and appeared to scores of people. Doubt is understandable. But because something is hard to believe, it does not follow that it is false.

1. Early medical practitioners had trouble believing that creatures invisible to the eye could be responsible for infection and disease. In 1872, Pierre Pachet, professor of physiology at Toulouse said, "Louis Pasteur's theory of germs is ridiculous fiction." Today we call those germs bacteria and viruses.
2. Some things stretch the imagination too much. Tom Watson, chairman of IBM in 1943, said, "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."
3. Naysayers abound, and the stories of their failed predictions are legendary. The Beatles were told guitar music was on the way out.
4. Fred Smith was informed by his Yale University professor that his concept of overnight delivery was not feasible, but Federal Express was

founded anyway.

5. Alexander Graham Bell was told the telephone was impractical.

These are doubts about technology, society, and business, all of which pale in comparison with what people are asked to believe about the Resurrection. Still, the facts are there, and **the Resurrection is beyond doubt** to those who take the time to look at the evidence.

Yet, every few years someone publishes "proof" that the Resurrection never occurred. Most of these have the same credibility level as urban myths.

1Corinthians 15:12-19

## The Risen Christ, Our Hope

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

<sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

<sup>14</sup> And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also empty.

<sup>15</sup> Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.

<sup>16</sup> For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.

<sup>17</sup> And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins!

<sup>18</sup> Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

<sup>19</sup> If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

The Resurrection and the appearances of Christ were **the centre of apostolic preaching**. Christian preaching is an empty thing without the Resurrection. So those doubters in the Corinthian church had heard the message time and time again, yet it rubbed their sensibilities the wrong way. Some may have accepted the resurrection of Christ but denied that the Christian will also be resurrected at Christ's coming.

The problem rests in an assumption made then and often made today: Christianity can exist without the Resurrection. In other words, the Resurrection is dispensable.

Paul didn't think so. He ticked off a short list of what the faith loses if there was no Resurrection:

- Preaching is without foundation.
- Faith is without foundation.
- We become false witnesses about God.
- Our faith is worthless.
- We are still in our sins.

- Those who have fallen asleep in Christ (died) have perished.
- We are to be pitied.

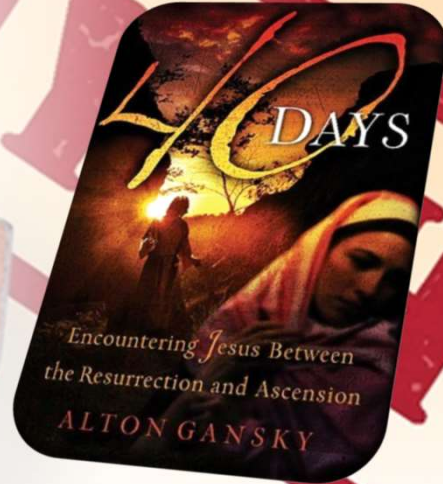
Quite a list.

On a hill in Athens, Paul preached his short but famous **unknown god sermon**. As usual, he included the resurrection of Christ. The response? A few believed, but most ridiculed him (Acts 17:32). Ridicule is the first response of doubters. Nothing has changed.

Those that don't ridicule do their best to explain away the Resurrection. They offer ideas that are more "reasonable." Ironically, the ideas are so contrived and lacking in historical integrity as to be ridiculous.

## Myths of the Resurrection

- Mostly Dead Theory
- Twins Theory
- Big Cover-Up Theory
- The Gullible Gentlemen of Galilee



<https://www.crosswalk.com/special-coverage/easter/myths-of-the-resurrection-11571385.html>

Excerpted from 40 Days: Encountering Jesus Between the Resurrection and Ascension, by Alton Gansky. B & H Publishing Group, 2006. Used with permission.

### 1. Mostly Dead Theory

The most popular theory used to dispel the Resurrection can be called the mostly dead theory. Usually it goes by the more formal title the swoon theory.

The idea was propagated through Hugh Schonfield's 1965 book *The Passover Plot*. In the widely read work, Schonfield suggested that Jesus contrived to be arrested, planned to be crucified, and did so knowing that he would be taken down before the Sabbath. Instead of dying on the cross, Jesus merely swooned—he passed out. Once in the cool tomb, he revived and made his way out of the sepulchre.



## 2. Twins Theory

As difficult to accept as the plot/swoon theory is, what Robert Greg Cavin of Cypress College offers is even more ludicrous. He suggests that Jesus had a twin whom he calls Hurome. In a nutshell, Jesus and his twin were separated soon after birth. Hurome arrived in Jerusalem in time to see his twin brother Jesus crucified. It seemed a good idea to him to take Jesus' place as Messiah. He, therefore, stole the body and picked up where Jesus left off.

## 3. Big Cover-Up Theory

After Jesus' death and burial, the disciples got together and devised a scheme that would make the world think that Jesus rose from the dead as he said he would.

Thinking that the last three years of ministry were better than fishing or tax collecting, they conspired to keep things going. They stole the body and buried it elsewhere, then told people they'd seen Jesus alive again and witnessed him rise into heaven forty days later. Now they're the leaders, and the fame that had been Jesus' would now be theirs.

## 4. The Gullible Gentlemen of Galilee

One popular theory is that the disciples were the victims of **mass hypnosis**. So eager were they to believe that Jesus would rise as he said he would, they began—as a group—to "see" him.

A variation of this idea suggests that Jesus selected people who had highly suggestible personalities whose imaginations would lead them to see things, hear things, and touch things that were not there.

1Corinthians 15:1-11

## The Risen Christ, Faith's Reality

<sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

<sup>5</sup> and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

### Full Confidence

Two millennia after the event, contemporary Christians can state their belief in the resurrection and post-resurrection appearances of Christ without bowing their heads in shame. No argument exists that has put the smallest dent in the armour of truth.

The Resurrection and appearances are **reasonable—the result of reason**. While there are those who wish to cast the believer as a gullible supporter of myths, the evidence shows otherwise. The ridiculous theories put forth to explain away the Resurrection are easily seen for what they are: desperate attempts to avoid the supernatural intervention of God. The Resurrection is **a historical fact** replete with **eyewitnesses**. The fact that the church meets on Sunday is just one piece of evidence the early believers took the Resurrection literally.

There will always be critics. Detractors plagued Jesus during his ministry and the disciples in the early church and **will continue to do so until Jesus returns**.

The Resurrection requires an ability **to believe in the supernatural work of God**. For those who dismiss such things, no amount of evidence or logic will serve as proof. While we should **show patience** with those who have doubts—remember, the Resurrection is a difficult concept—we need not be embarrassed by the biblical account.