

Your Life's Verdict

Introduction:

Always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence – I Peter 3:15

Two Facts About the New Testament

●The New Testament is h_____ reliable

1. The N.T. (except John's writings & maybe Jude) was written and circulated before the destruction of J_____ in 70 A.D.
 - a. Matt 24, Mark 13, & Luke 21 record Jesus' prophecy concerning the destruction of the temple, the sign of His c_____ and the end of the age.
 - 1) The prophetic words are so c_____ that scholars are divided over what goes with the destruction of the temple and what goes with the end times.
 - 2) If these accounts would have been written after 70 A.D., the writers would have recorded Jesus' words with clarity.
 - b. Paul & Peter were executed under the Roman Emperor, Nero, who k_____ himself in 68 A.D. (I Clement 3:12,13)
 - c. Paul's letters were immediately c_____ and widely circulated (2 Peter 3:15,16)
2. If there were any historical inaccuracies or errors, historians living in that day would have exposed them.
 - a. Christianity was turning s_____ upside down.
 - b. No historian living in those days tried to refute Christian records even though these historians opposed Christianity.
 - 1) Josephus (J_____ historian, 37-101 A.D.) – reports the crucifixion and r_____ of Jesus but without comment – Antiquities Book XVIII, 3:3)
 - 2) Tacitus (R_____ historian, 56-120 A.D.) – reports Nero's persecution of Christians, Christ as killed under Pontius Pilate, and the Christian faith as a superstition but without further comment (Annals 15:44)
 - 3) Pliny the Younger (Roman Historian, 61-113 A.D.) – describes Christians as d_____ to gathering together, singing to Christ as to a god, and swearing to live a life of purity (Letters volume 2:X:96)
 - c. It was not until all the eyewitnesses had died, that a_____ were made to rewrite the claims of the N.T.

●The original New Testament has not undergone any material changes

1. Modern Muslims teach that the gospel accounts were changed sometime after their p_____, Muhammed, died (632 A.D.)
 - a. The Koran states that the Gospels are i_____ (Surah 3:3)
 - b. The Koran states that Christians had the uncorrupted w_____ of God (Surah 2:75-79)
2. The N.T. was originally written in G_____
 - a. We have _____ of Greek copies of the gospels dating from 100 A.D. to 1500 A.D.
 - b. All copies are in _____% agreement (differences in spelling, accidental omissions, clarifications).

Three Alternative Theories to the Resurrection

●The Swoon Theory

1. The theory stated
 - a. The Roman guards mistakenly pronounced Jesus as d_____
 - b. He was buried in a tomb, but later became c_____
 - c. He then proclaimed that He had risen from the dead.
2. The theory refuted
 - a. Roman guards witnessed countless executions and were e_____ at determining when a person was dead.
 - b. Jesus was wrapped like a m_____ and would have no strength to break those wrappings.
 - c. Jesus could not have survived without m_____ treatment.
 - d. A healthy person could not roll the large s_____ away from the tomb by himself.
 - e. He would have to overpower guards, stage appearances and His ascension, and then live out the rest of His days unnoticed.

●Hallucination Theory

1. The theory stated
 - f. The disciples mistakenly thought they s_____ Jesus.

- g. Their reports created e_____ in others, which caused them to hallucinate as well.
- 2. The theory refuted
 - a. Hallucinations cannot be t_____ or felt (Matt 28:9; Lk 24:39; Jn 20:17,27)
 - b. Hallucinations cannot be made to groups who hear and see the s_____ thing (Lk 24:13-31; Matt 28:18-20; Jn 20:19-23; Acts 1:9-11)
 - c. Hallucinations are due to expectations, but the disciples did not ex_____ Jesus to rise from the dead (Lk 24:11; Jn 20:25-28; Matt 28:19)

●Conspiracy Theory

- 1. The theory stated – sometime after Jesus died, the apostles cooperated in perpetuating the resurrection as a l_____
- 2. The theory refuted
 - a. When Jesus was arrested, the apostles became c_____ - Matt 26:56,75; Jn 20:19)
 - 1) Cowards would not r_____ their lives to preach a lie.
 - 2) Ten of these apostles died for preaching the resurrection.
 - b. The apostles promoted a lifestyle of goodness, self-restraint, and s_____
 - 1) They did not g_____ money, popularity or power
 - 2) They did gain p_____
 - c. The b_____ of Jesus was never produced to discredit the claims of the resurrection. The body could not have been stolen, because of the evidence below.

Four Evidences of the Resurrection

●The burial of Jesus

- 1. An extremely large s_____ covered the tomb's entrance (Matt 27:60; Mk 16:4)
- 2. R_____ guards guarded the tomb (Matt 27:65)
- 3. A Roman s_____ was placed on the stone (Matt 27:66), which threatened the death penalty on anyone breaking it.
- 4. On the third day, the b_____ was missing.

●The empty tomb

- 1. The stone was rolled away in a fashion that s_____ the guards, who reported what they experienced (Matt 28:2-4,11)
- 2. The grave clothes were left n_____ behind (Jn 20:5-7)
- 3. The crucified body made a _____

●Doubters become believers

- 1. The apostles did not believe the w_____’s reports of Jesus’ resurrection (Luke 24:9-11).
- 2. All the apostles had to see Jesus and even analyze his body before believing that He rose from the dead (Jn 20:24-28; I Jn 1:1).
- 3. Jesus had to provide many convincing p_____ (Acts 1:3)

●Cowards become bold witnesses

- 1. After Jesus was arrested & crucified, they h_____ (Jn 20:19)
- 2. After Jesus rose from the dead, they preached the gospel in the face of p_____, beatings, and death.

Conclusion:

●The resurrection of Jesus requires a verdict from your mouth

- 1. He is who He claimed to be (G_____ in the flesh)
- 2. He accomplished what He came to do (pay for the sin of believers)

●The resurrection of Jesus requires a verdict from your life

- 1. L_____ in relationship to Him as your Savior and God
- 2. L_____ Him with your whole heart.