

The Literal, Bodily Resurrection of Jesus.

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By C. Benjamin Dill

1Corinthians 15:1-8

- 1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;
- 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.
- 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;
- 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures:
- 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:
- 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.
- 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.
- 8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

We are here this morning to celebrate the greatest, most sensational, most remarkable single event in the history –or- the future of the

world; the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

This event has changed more lives, accomplished more good and achieved more for the betterment of mankind than any other event ever has or ever will.

Of all the things that you consider to be a big deal in life: family, vocation, health, wealth; even life and death; this is the biggest deal of all.

Other events have affected the world; wars, famines, natural disasters, plagues, global politics and more.

Only one event affects every man individually and personally and will ultimately determine his eternal destiny; that event is Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

So I ask you this morning, do you believe in the literal, bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead?

It is certainly not the easiest thing in the world to believe; even those who knew Jesus while He was here; those who walked with Him and talked with Him and ate with Him; even they had trouble believing this.

So if you have a little trouble truly and totally embracing this; don't feel like the Lone Ranger, you are not the first to doubt.

Is it OK to be a doubter? Yes, it is OK to be one, it is just NOT OK to stay one. Should you die and leave this world in unbelief; you will spend eternity separated from God in a place of punishment and torment called Hades or Hell.

If there is anything you need to make sure you do before you die; you need to get the straight story; you need to see the evidence about the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

You will experience the presence of the risen Lord today; He promised to be here and be here He will. But that will be a spiritual experience, not a bodily one. You are going to need to look at the facts and see the evidence to become a true believer.

Several places in the Bible give us the account of Jesus' resurrection from the dead; each one giving us additional details not included in the others. This is as one might expect given what might stand out to one witness versus the other.

Secular history also records Jesus' resurrection; it was, after all, the most sensational historical fact of the first century.

Flavius Josephus, a Jewish-Roman Historian living at the time of Christ, in his work called "Antiquities of the Jews," records many historically significant facts that are co-incident with the Bible.

He tells us many facts surrounding the Roman taxation that compelled Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem when Cyrenius was appointed governor of Syria.

He records the execution of James, the brother of Jesus.

He records the politics surrounding Herod's execution of John the Baptist and describes John's ministry calling him 'the dipper.'

Here is what this non-Christian writer of history book records about Jesus:

Antiquities 18.3.3. "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct to this day."

Today, we will read Luke's account of Jesus' resurrection.

Luke 24:1-49

1 Now upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the

- sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.
- 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher.
 - 3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.
 - 4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:
 - 5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?
 - 6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,
 - 7 Saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.
 - 8 And they remembered his words,
 - 9 And returned from the sepulcher, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.
 - 10 It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles.
 - 11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.
 - 12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulcher; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

- 13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.
- 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.
- 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.
- 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.
- 17 And he said unto them, **What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?**
- 18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?
- 19 And he said unto them, **What things?** And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:
- 20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.
- 21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.
- 22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher;
- 23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a

- vision of angels, which said that he was alive.
- 24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.
- 25 Then he said unto them, **O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:**
- 26 **Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?**
- 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.
- 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.
- 29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.
- 30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and broke, and gave to them.
- 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.
- 32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?
- 33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the

- eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,
- 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.
- 35 And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.
- 36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, **Peace be unto you.**
- 37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.
- 38 And he said unto them, **Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?**
- 39 **Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.**
- 40 And when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his* hands and *his* feet.
- 41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, **Have ye here any meat?**
- 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb.
- 43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.
- 44 And he said unto them, **These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.**
- 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures,

- 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:
- 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
- 48 And ye are witnesses of these things.
- 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He spent a month and ten days with the disciples teaching His Church how to take the gospel all the way to the end of world; we are that very program still continuing on today.

I have three simple questions to ask you today regarding what we have just read in Luke's account of the resurrection.

I. Do you believe it?

A. Are you convinced that Jesus really did rise from the dead?

1. As I said, it is not the easiest thing in the world to believe.

2. **Luke 24:10-12**

10 It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

- 11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.
- 12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulcher; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

3. I have been to that tomb and likewise have stooped down and gone inside.

4. The garden tomb (as it is known) in Jerusalem is just a short walk from Golgotha where Jesus was crucified.

5. The sheared off iron rod the Romans drilled into the tomb to seal the rolling stone in place in their attempt to imprison Jesus' body inside the tomb is still in the wall.

6. An extraordinarily large 9'8" diameter x 15" wide stone tomb door sits atop Mt. Nebo which exactly fits the channel and required door size of Jesus' tomb; which is the only one like it that has ever been discovered.

B. What will it take for you to believe?

1. Recorded history corroborates every detail.
2. Golgotha, the tomb, even the rolling stone has been discovered; it is all there and matches in every detail.

3. Then there is the Bible in which, evil, but otherwise intelligent men have been working tirelessly to try and prove a mistake or a contradiction in for centuries. (They are without success of course because there simply are no mistakes in it.)

Question number 2:

II. Do you want Jesus in your life?

A. The Lord will not force Himself upon you.

1. Luke 24:28-29

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he [Jesus] made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us:...

2. If you do nothing, Jesus will simply go right on without you.
3. Do you want Jesus in your life or don't you?
4. It's "yes" or "no!" Answer the question!
5. Oh, you want Him when it's time to die?
6. You really need that: with Jesus it is all or nothing.
7. If Jesus is good enough to save you when you die, He is also good enough to follow while we live! You need to make up your mind.

B. When faced with this much evidence, there can be only one reason someone would still refuse to believe.

1. You simply do not want Jesus in your life!
2. That puts you in some pretty unsavory company.

Luke 19:12-14

12 He [Jesus] said therefore, A certain noble man went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

4. Is that you this morning saying in your heart, "I will not have this *man* to reign over my life?"
5. So, you've been doing such a great job running your life you don't need any help from Jesus?

Question number 3:

III. Will you allow Him to open your understanding?

Luke 24:44-45

44 And he said unto them, These *are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet*

with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.
 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures,

A. We as a Church are commanded to teach you who are willing; you who the Lord is drawing to Himself.

1. **Matthew 28:19-20**

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

2. We actually have become quite skilled at teaching people about Jesus.

3. I have spent most of my 37 years in ministry concentrating on that one aspect of ministry above all others.

4. Here at Lighthouse we use a systematic, highly effective little 5 hour course of private Bible study that God has given us called *Basic Bible Truths*.

5. If you take this course, which we offer without charge, you will come away understanding more about Jesus and the Bible than you could possibly imagine.

6. Taking this simple 5 hour course is truly life changing; can I get a testimony from those who have taken the course; is it everything I am saying it is?

B. What is it that makes Basic Bible Truths so amazing?

1. Is it the expertise of the author or the skill of the teacher? Not hardly!
2. This course is indeed amazing because it is what God commands us to teach you in the order He commands it to be taught.
3. The reason you will come away changed forever is because the Lord Himself will open your understanding!

In Conclusion:

Flavius Josephus believed in Jesus as a historical fact; he probably heard or saw Him personally or certainly spoke with many who did.

Yet, as far as we know, Josephus did not become a Christian.

Nearly a hundred times in the New Testament the Bible tells us to *believe* in order to gain eternal life.

John 3:14-18

- 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
- 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.
- 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
- 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
- 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

This word “believe” is simple but the meaning is deep and not at all how you use it every day.

It’s from a Greek word that means *to trust*.

It is used as a verb; something to be acted upon.

Thus you must understand what or whom to trust and what to trust Him for.

Jesus will open your understanding...if you want Him...if you are willing to be taught?

Again I ask:

Do you believe it?

Do you want Jesus in your life?

Will you allow Him to open your understanding?

I don't want you to make an emotional decision this morning and then change your mind later.

There is no point in my talking you into something that you or someone else will talk you out of later.

If you really do want Jesus in your life, you are still going to after this service ends.

Give one of us a call; talk to one of us after the service. Just say, "I think I would like to take those classes."

We will work it out to meet your schedule so that you can; and Jesus Himself will open your understanding.