

“Did He Really Rise? How Secure Are We?”

Series: What is Happening to Jesus?

Some beginning thoughts about Jesus’ resurrection:

1. Luke recorded in “The Gospel according to Luke” historical information about Jesus so as to produce certainty for our faith and a grounded sense of well-being.

Luke 1:1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, 3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

2. In general, “witness” always precedes faith; this applies particularly to Jesus’ resurrection.

Acts 1:21 So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”

Acts 10:36 As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), 37 you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, 40 but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, 41 not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. 43 To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

3. Jesus promised & lived in light of His “unique” resurrection during His earthly ministry.

John 2:18 So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” 19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”20 The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

4. Jesus’ confidence of His resurrection reached its zenith at one of His most significant miracles.

John 11:23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” 24 Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” 27 She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

Note how Luke 24 adds to our secure witness of Jesus' resurrection:

1. The first visitors did not provide culturally reliable initial witnesses (1, 10).

Luke 24:1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. . . . 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles,

2. They were looking for a body (3, 23).

Luke 24:3 but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. . . . 23 and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.

3. The two "men" at the tomb speak of a physical resurrection to life (5-7).

Luke 24:5 And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."

4. Their report seemed like "crazy talk" & the apostles themselves were not believing that Jesus' rose; even Peter was not convinced (11-12).

Luke 24:11 but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

5. Though promised by Jesus, & though told He was alive by angels, all the followers were slow to believe (22-26).

Luke 24:22 Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." 25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"

6. Even when Jesus appeared to them His followers had to warm up to the idea that this was the risen Jesus (36-37, 41).

Luke 24:36 As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. . . . 41 And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"

Where do you fall?