

The Resurrection Factor – Part 5

Josh McDowell

I. Introduction.

A. 1 Corinthians 15 - if Christ is not raised, our faith is in vain.

B. Review.

C. Book: *The Resurrection Factor*.

D. The evidence must be considered as a whole.

1. Christ could not have fainted on the cross, because the Christ that was the basis of the apostolic faith was the Prince of Life - Dr. David Strauss.

2. None of the counter - theories explain all the theories - Dr. Paul Meyer.

II. Christ did not only appear to those friendly to Him.

A. The conversion of an enemy of Jesus demonstrated that it was not just a band of Jesus' friends that gathered to see Him resurrected.

B. James also, Jesus' brother, was not originally a believer - he was embarrassed by Jesus - but he did become a believer.

III. Circumstantial evidence.

A. Will Durant - what happened concerning the birth of the Church was a miracle in itself.

B. The Church's survival - the whole foundation of the church was that based upon the resurrection of Christ.

C. The change in worship from the Jewish Sabbath on Saturday to the Lord's Day - Sunday. No Jew would have been willing to break this Old Testament Law, but reverent Jews went so far to meet on Sunday as a testimony beyond any doubt that Christ was raised from the dead. Jews believed that God would have destroyed them if they were wrong about Jesus for breaking the Sabbath.

D. Baptism - only an empty tomb gives any meaning to this practice because we image His death and resurrection through it.

E. Communion - in this practice the death, burial and resurrection of Christ is celebrated. This is an early practice that was based upon the joy of the resurrection.

F. Changed lives - people of every background undergo change when they accept Jesus Christ into their lives. This is more than positive thinking. The speaker himself underwent this change.

G. The resurrection of Christ proved Jesus' Messiahship and His Sonship to God. It also confirmed that every sin had been dealt with before God. (Romans 4)

IV. Invitation to express to God one's need, thankfulness for sacrifice, and desire for Jesus to come into one's life.

A. If you prayed that prayer:

1. Tell two people.
2. Read John 3 three times.
3. Look for change in your life.

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STUDY GUIDE

Part 1: What do you see?

1. How did the speaker respond to the argument that since Jesus only appeared to friends, the likelihood of His resurrection is in question?

2. What about the change in worship from Saturday (the Sabbath) to Sunday in the early church makes it circumstantial evidence for the resurrection?

3. Read John 3. What about this passage is significant to the speaker's message?

Part 2: What do you think?

1. Why as Will Durant claims is what happened concerning the birth of the Church a miracle by itself? Explain.

2. List each piece of circumstantial evidence raised by the speaker. Which one stands as the strongest to you? Why?

3. In light of the message, why do you think churches still baptize and share in communion today?

Part 3: What will you do?

1. What two things did the resurrection do? Have you accepted the testimony of the resurrection and trusted that these are true? Why or why not?

2. If you have accepted the fact of the resurrection, have you seen change in your life? Have you trusted Jesus for change? What can you do to continue growing or to make a fresh start?

3. Have you encountered anyone who's life has been changed by Jesus? If so, what did it look like? How might this compel you to live your own life both personally and publicly?
