

Not a Fairy Tale

Luke 24:1-11 (text v. 11)



Easter Sunday means different things to different people.

- A junior S.S. teacher asked her class, “What Does Easter Sunday Mean To You?” One young boy raised his hand and answered, “Egg salad sandwiches for the next two weeks.”

Easter is really about the greatest event in the history of the world—Jesus Christ’s resurrection from the dead! It is the foundation of everything we believe in. Without a risen Savior, Christianity is no better than any other religion.

➡RELATE THE CONTEXT OF Luke 24:11

Christ’s disciples were slow to believe Jesus was alive. For three days they were hiding for fear. They were disheartened and confused.

On that first “Easter” morning, when the women told the disciples the tomb was empty it seemed like a fairy tale to them (Luke 24:11). So Peter and John went to the sepulcher to see for themselves! After seeing the evidence, they were convinced!

Peter later wrote Christ’s resurrection was not a “*cunningly devised fable*” but he was an eyewitness of His majesty! (2 Pet. 1:16).

Paul asked King Agrippa, “*Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?*” (Acts 26:8). For the God who created the universe, it is no big deal for Him to raise the dead!

[Dr. Simon Greenleaf](#) was an authority the laws of evidence. He was the Royal Professor of Law at Harvard University. His three-volume work, *A Treatise on the Law of Evidence*, is still considered one of the greatest authorities on discerning evidence in legal procedures.

Greenleaf examined the historical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He concluded that, according to the laws of legal evidence, there is more evidence for the historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ than for just about any other event in history. He wrote concerning the testimony of Christ’s disciples: “*It was therefore impossible that they could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated,*

had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly as they knew any other fact.”

Sir Lionel Luckhoo (of *The Guinness Book of World Records* fame for his unprecedented 245 consecutive defense murder trial acquittals) wrote:

“I have spent more than 42 years as a defense trial lawyer appearing in many parts of the world and am still in active practice. I have been fortunate to secure a number of successes in jury trials and I say unequivocally the evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is so overwhelming that it compels acceptance by proof which leaves absolutely no room for doubt.”¹

Christ really arose from the dead! It is no fairy tale! Acts 1:3 says Christ showed, “*himself alive after his passion by MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS.*” Notice three of those infallible (irrefutable) proofs:

I. The TOMB’s emptiness (Luke 24:3, 6).

The agnostic Frank Morrison, who was a lawyer and journalist, attempted to write a book disproving the resurrection of Christ. After investigation, his opinion changed and he became a believer in Jesus Christ. Instead of a book disproving the resurrection he wrote a book titled *Who Moved The Stone*.

Morrison based his thesis the empty tomb. If Jesus was publicly laid in a tomb and three days later the tomb was empty, He either rose from the dead supernaturally, OR someone took the body.

➡ Only three possibilities for who could have taken the body:

- A. **The Romans.** They had no reason to steal the body, since they wanted to keep the peace in Palestine. Taking the body of Christ from the tomb would only excite matters.
- B. **The Jews.** That was the last thing they would want. They are the ones who asked for the guard (Mt. 27). If they wanted to silence His disciples, all they had to do was produce His body.
- C. **The disciples.** [“*The Passover Plot*” by Hugh Schonfield— Jesus planned his own arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection; he simulat-

¹ Sir Lionel Luckhoo, *The Question Answered: Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?* Luckhoo Booklets, back page. http://www.hawaiichristiansonline.com/sir_lionel.html.

ed dying on the cross by being drugged so that he could later be safely removed from the grave. Totally ignores the evidence.]

1. They **didn't understand** the resurrection (Luke 18:31-34).
2. How did they get past **the guard**? If the guard was asleep, they could not testify what happened to the body. The penalty for a guard sleeping on duty was death.
3. How did they move **the stone** that weighed more than 2 tons.
4. Why did they leave the **grave-clothes**? Luke 23:53 says Christ's body was "*wrapped*" in linen clothes. Why bother to unwrap the body? How did they get the body out of the grave clothes and leave them undisturbed lying like an empty cocoon (John 20:1-8)?

➡ The only reasonable explanation is Christ has risen.

II. **The TESTIMONY of eye witnesses** (1 Cor. 15:6-8).

A. At least **TEN eyewitness** accounts of Christ's resurrection.

➡ Over 500 eyewitnesses at one time! Not a hallucination!

➡ If 500 eyewitnesses testified in a court of law for just 10 minutes each, the jury would hear over 80 hours of eyewitness testimony—Over 3 full days of non-stop eyewitness testimony, 24 hours a day!

B. The law of jurisprudence: If eyewitnesses have given an **unvarying congruent testimony with no incontrovertible evidence is produced to disprove it, and thereafter reduced to written form, it cannot be disannulled or abrogated unless conclusive evidence is produced to overthrow it's testimony.** In plainer words, the only way to overthrow the written testimony of eyewitnesses would be to produce the body of Jesus Christ!

➡ Billy Graham: "There is more evidence that Jesus rose from the dead than there is that Julius Caesar ever lived or that Alexander the Great died at age 33."² There are only a few written

² Edith Draper, *Draper's Book of Quotations for the Christian World* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1992). Entry 9700.

eyewitness accounts of the assassination of Julius Caesar, yet it is accepted as historic fact. Why all the skepticism about the resurrection of Christ when there is much more written eyewitness testimony that He had risen?

III. The TRANSFORMED lives of believers.

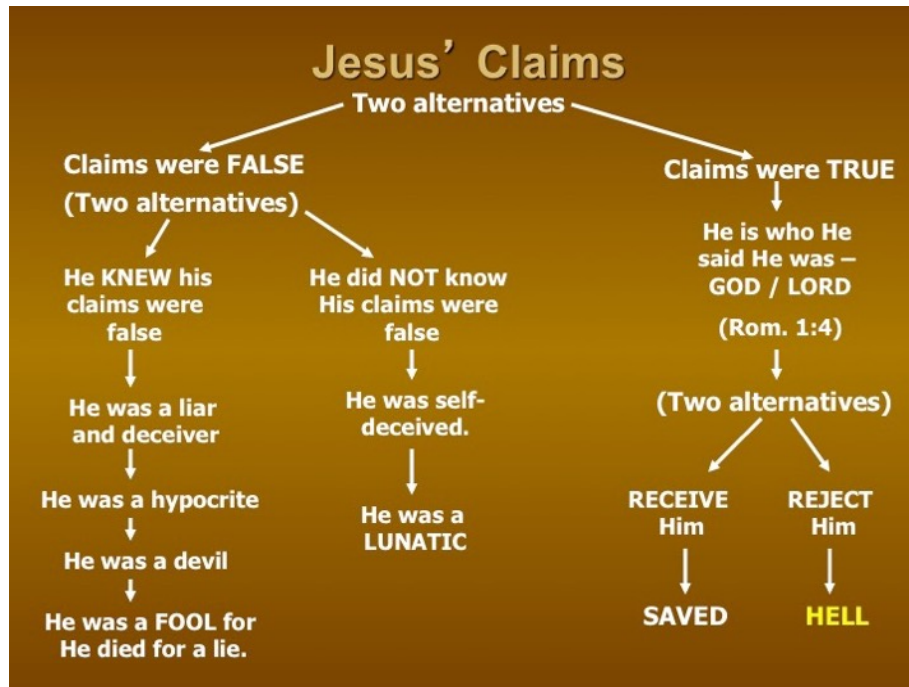
A. Explain the transformation *from fear to fearlessness*?

➡ The disciples fled in hiding for fear of their lives. Yet, after the resurrection they boldly confront the very one's who plotted Christ's death with the truth that He was risen.

➡ Peter denied he even knew the Lord three days earlier. Why the change of heart?

B. If the disciples stole the body and knew the resurrection of Christ was untrue, why would they be willing to be tortured and *die a martyrs death for something they knew was a lie*?

SUMMATION: Fact or Fairy Tale? **JESUS' CLAIMS** (below): (Claimed to be God... would rise from the dead... was the only way of salvation.)



Was He LIAR? LUNATIC? or LORD?

- Someone who lived as Jesus lived, and died as Jesus died could not have been a liar or hypocrite.

2. For a man to think He is God when He is not, and tell others that their eternal destiny depends on accepting Him as God, is not just a matter of being self-deceived—It is LUNACY. Does what we know about Jesus fit this image? Jesus' teachings were not the ravings of some cultic leader. There is not one shred of evidence that would indicate that Jesus was anything less than fully sane!
3. That only leaves the alternative that Jesus was / is who He said He was—God.