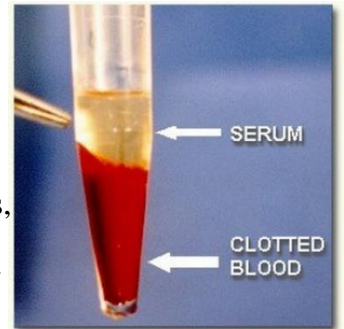


“**Proof of the Resurrection of Our Lord**” by Rev. Dr. Charles ← M. Humber, at the time, “Minister, Bethany Baptist Church, Boston, Massachusetts.” Dad’s doctoral degree came later from those listed:

Jesus was dead, and long enough for the **blood serum** to separate (John 19: 34). He was buried in a guarded tomb. To the one who is willing to listen, here is the **proof** that He arose. The event is unique, but not more so than He is. In His case, we could well *expect* such a triumph. Now to the evidence.



In Galatians 1:18, written perhaps within 25 years, Paul says he spent a fortnight with eyewitness Peter, within four years of the event. In 1 Corinthians 15:5ff, also written very early, he goes on to list many witnesses who saw Jesus risen, some still living.

In the historical Acts (compare 1:1f with Luke 1:1ff). Peter, only fifty days after the event, told how it fulfilled Psalm 16:8f. New Testament writers actually use the resurrection as a symbol, which means they were convinced long before writing. Myth-writers use symbols, too, but myths take centuries to develop, while these writings were early.

Undoubtedly, witnesses and writers believed that He rose in body. They write so simply and sincerely, their accounts differing enough to show independence, yet all agreeing about the fact. Each one includes little separate incidentals that complete the picture: That it was Jesus’ voice that convinced Mary Magdalene; different occasions when the risen Lord was unrecognized (a factor which no fiction fabricator would be so ready to include). Note how typically Peter and John act in John 20:3-8. But why would witnesses and writers, obviously good men, perpetrate of fraud anyway—and die for it!

Still, some have died for wrong beliefs. Were the disciples then mistaken? Certainly they were in no mood for hallucinations. Far from “expecting” Him to rise, the women brought spices, and were afraid when told by the angel. Nor did the disciples believe this word—not even when confronted by the empty tomb. But they saw Him! That triumphant sight convinced even doubting Thomas and hard-headed publican Matthew.

Even had they been prepared for the vision, visions do not include long talks (Luke 24), provide meals (John 21), nor appear to many at once and at different times, days apart. But suppose He had not died at all (contrary to the evidence) and had “revived” in the cool tomb, how could such an emaciated form, soon to really die, convince these despairing apostles, change them from thrice-denying cowards to bold martyrs, and all so suddenly? His triumph is constantly on their lips. Besides, how unthinkable is such a story in view of His experience in Gethsemane, the trials, the scourgings, the falling under the cross-bearing, the awful crucifixion, piercing and then till “the third day” in the tomb! (Indeed that “third day” is so often repeated as to be important literary evidence in itself.)

The tomb was sealed and guarded by Rome! Yet there it was on that great day empty, with a description of even the form of the grave-clothes. Even had the disciples been able to steal the body, would they have had heart to do so, and then die for a false story? The soldiers certainly would not, being in quite enough trouble when the body was gone (Matt. 28:11ff). How the Sadducees would have enjoyed “squelching the rumor” if they could have produced His body. They never had a good reply when the resurrection was preached, except to bribe the soldiers to say the disciples stole Him “while they slept.” What court would accept that evidence? The empty tomb is final! Followers point to the graves of their leaders—Mahomet, Lenin; but we need only point to His glorious epitaph—“He is not here, He is risen.”

Only the resurrection on the first day could have changed the ancient Sabbath to the “Lord’s Day” as the day of worship even for Jewish Christians. Only such a triumph could explain Christianity, the New Testament, the new Life in believers and the worldwide Church. When all this is weighed, the evidence is conclusive that He arose.

Such is our Redeemer—risen and prepared in “that day” to be Savior or Judge, depending on you. For those who believe on Him, He has conquered the “last enemy” Death, and all its powers, and meanwhile is the living Redeemer, with us unto the end of the world.

C. M. H.