

1. The resurrection proves God is real.

I've heard many say we have no evidence of God, claiming, "If God would come down here and show Himself, or give me a sign, then I would believe," but those who say this are fooling themselves. God has come to earth and given us a sign in the resurrection. Jesus said this unbelieving generation "seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah" (Matt. 12:39). The resurrection is the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah was spewed out of the fish on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day! This was the evidence. Acts 1:3 says, "He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs." Still, even after this, people looked for ways to show that the resurrection was not real. That's why Jesus said of these, "neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead" (Luke 16:31). The same could be said today. People look at creation and try to explain it away by science. People excuse the experience of those who say they heard the voice of God talking to them. People refuse to consider miracles and answered prayers, trying to explain them away by luck. Still today, in spite of the fact that God came to earth and in spite of the many written accounts we have, people continue to look for ways to deny the Christ and the resurrection. Why are people so reluctant to believe? The fact is, even if God came and proved Himself by miracles, people would still find excuses not to believe because they don't want to believe. Jesus' resurrection proved that the heart which does not want to believe will find ways not to, in spite of so "many infallible proofs," but those who seek will find.

2. The resurrection reveals the mystery of death.

Since sin entered the world, we have all been subject to death. Today, even many Christians are confused about death, but Paul says we don't have to be "ignorant... concerning those who have fallen asleep," or died, assuring us that "the

dead in Christ will rise" (1 Thes. 4:13, 16). The answer to the mystery of death is revealed in the resurrection. The resurrection of Christ was the assurance of the future resurrection of the saints (1 Cor. 15:20). While many think the soul continues to live in heaven or hell after we die, if this is true, then why does the Bible speak so emphatically about the hope of the resurrection? No, the Bible says when we die we sleep in the grave until the resurrection. It says that "there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going" (Eccl. 9:10). According to the Bible, "the dead know nothing" (Ecc. 9:10). When a man dies, "His sons come to honor, and he does not know it" (Job 14:21). The Bible even says "of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day... For David did not ascend into the heavens" yet (Acts 2:29, 34). David knew this. He said, "in death there is no remembrance of You," adding, "The dead do not praise the Lord, nor any who go down into silence" (Ps. 6:5; 115:17). According to the Bible, we wait in the silence of the grave until the resurrection. The resurrection is the key that unlocks the mystery of death. People do not have immortality now, but at the resurrection, God's people will be given the gift of immortality. Paul says, "the dead will be raised... and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:52, 53). In spite of popular opinion, the Bible teaches that we do not go straight to heaven or hell at death, but rest in the grave until Christ returns, when all "in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28, 29).

3. The resurrection proves we can overcome sin.

In the number one hit, Heart of Gold, Canadian singer Neil Young relates how he has been all across the world searching for a heart of gold, but still has not found it. As I pondered this song, I thought about how tragic it was. Many tell us that we are naturally good at heart, and as a result, we

search Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and other religions trying to make ourselves pure, but all our efforts are futile because the problem is in the heart. While all other religions try to fix the heart, the Bible is the only book honest enough to tell us our true condition. It tells us that "the heart is desperately wicked," ruined beyond repair (Jer. 17:9). According to the Bible, the only way to get a pure heart is to "get yourselves a new heart" (Eze. 18:31). Since Jesus was the only One to live without sin, our only hope is to invite Him into our heart, but if Jesus was never raised, our hope of reaching purity would be in vain. Paul says, "if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:17)! Without the resurrection, we have no power to overcome sin. Fortunately, through Christ, we can change. Although "we were dead in trespasses," we can be "raised" up from our sinful condition through Christ (Eph. 2:5, 6). The resurrection is proof that "just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Jesus offers us a new heart, but that heart is no good if Christ is not risen. If Christ did not raise up, then we are still in our sins, but the resurrection is our assurance that we can defeat sin. Through the resurrection, not only has death been defeated, but sin has been defeated.

4. The resurrection proves the law is still binding.

While some use the resurrection of Christ to claim that the law and the Sabbath are no longer valid, the resurrection proves just the opposite. Consider the following. Jesus was crucified at sunset on Friday as "the Sabbath drew near," then after He died, His followers "rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56). The commandment says Saturday, "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord" (Ex. 20:10), but Jesus didn't rise until Sunday morning. Why? Why did He wait in the grave during the Sabbath? Many say that He was making a new Sabbath, but there is no evidence for this in the Bible. Think about it. If Christ was going to

change one of the Ten Commandments, don't you think He would have told us plainly? And yet, there is command in the Bible about the change. Instead, all through the New Testament, Paul and the apostles continue to keep Sabbath, as they "reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 18:4; See also See Acts 13:42-44; 16:13; 17:2). The claim that Jesus rose on Sunday to make a new Sabbath is simply not found in the Bible. Instead, we find evidence that the change was made by another source. We are told, "We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday... because Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday" (Rev. Geiermann, The Convert Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, p. 50, 2nd edition. 1910). The Catholic Church openly admits that they "substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority" (Stephen Keenan, A Doctrinal Catechism, 3rd ed., p. 174). While many say the resurrection is proof that Jesus changed the Sabbath, the very ones who changed the day say that they did it without any biblical authority. But if this is true, then why did Jesus wait until Sunday morning to rise from the grave? Simple. Jesus did not rest in the tomb to make a new Sabbath, but to honor the true Sabbath. Just as God rested on the Sabbath after completing the work of creation (Gen. 2:3), Jesus rested on the Sabbath after completing the work of redemption (John 19:30, 31). How ironic that the same resurrection that many Christians use to claim the law and the Sabbath are no longer valid is the very evidence Jesus gave to affirm that the law and the Sabbath are still binding.

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