

Let's Be Clear
The Resurrection of Jesus Changes Everything
Dr. Larry Lamb
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1 Corinthians 15:13-17 ¹³ *For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. ¹⁵ And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. ¹⁶ And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless, and you are still guilty of your sins.*

THREE CLAIMS OF EVIDENCE:

1. THE EMPTY TOMB In spite of all these precautions – the **stone**, the **soldiers**, and the **seal** – the tomb was empty that first Easter morning!

2. MULTIPLE WITNESSES Many early Christians did not believe Jesus had risen just because of the empty tomb, they believed because they saw Him with their own eyes.

Acts 1:3 *During the forty days after his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.*

1 Corinthians 15:3-9 ³ *I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. ⁴ He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. ⁵ He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷ Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him. ⁹ For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I'm not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church.*

3. CHANGED LIVES Those who met the Resurrected Jesus have had their lives transformed.

John 20:19-20 ¹⁹ *That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! "Peace be with you," he said.* ²⁰ *As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!* Each had come from doubt to determination, confusion to conviction, fear to faith.

1. **Andrew:** Crucifixion (bound, not nailed, to an "X-shaped" cross).
2. **Bartholomew (Nathaniel):** Skinned alive and crucified, head downward.
3. **James the Greater:** Beheaded or stabbed with a sword by Herod Agrippa around 44 A.D.
4. **James:** In his early 90's was thrown from a pinnacle of the Temple at Jerusalem.
5. **John:** Natural Death. The only apostle who did not meet a martyr's death. Banished by Roman Emperor Domitian to the Isle of Patmos, where he penned Revelation.
6. **Judas Iscariot:** Suicide / hanged himself (Matthew 27:5) after betraying Jesus (John 13:2). Scriptural.
7. **Matthew:** Staked and speared to the ground.
8. **Simon Peter:** Crucified around 68 A.D. upside-down by Nero.
9. **Philip:** Said to have been tortured, impaled by iron hooks in his ankles, and hung upside down to die.
10. **Simon "The Zealot"** ministered mostly in Jordan.
11. **Thomas:** Thrust through by spear in India.
12. **Mark (John Mark):** Dragged to death.
13. **Luke:** Hanged on an olive tree.
14. **Matthias who filled the place of Judas:** Stoned and beheaded.
15. **Apostle Paul (Saul):** Beheaded by Emperor Nero at Rome.
16. **James (The half-brother of Jesus):** Thrown some 100 feet off a wall and refused to deny his faith in Jesus. He survived the fall and was beaten to death with clubs.

The only thing that could have changed their lives so dramatically was the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. ***Every one of these guys could have lived if they had said just one statement: "Jesus is dead."*** But they refused because they knew He was alive! Their lives had been forever changed.

PRAYER OF SALVATION

Jesus, I thank You that You came and died on the cross for my sins so that I can be forgiven. I am a sinner and need Your grace, mercy, and forgiveness. I turn from my sins and say "No" to a life of living for myself. I turn to You and say "Yes" to Your will for my life. I ask You now to save me from my sins. I open my heart to You and receive You as my Lord and Savior. Thank You for saving me and forgiving me. Amen.