

“By Many Infallible Proofs”

Acts 1:1-3

I. Why It Matters

A. Faith (1 Cor. 15:14-17)

B. History

“I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead.” – Professor Thomas Arnold (Chair of modern history Oxford, author of three volume *History of Rome*)

“Taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no historic incident better or more variously supported than the resurrection of Christ.” – Brooke Foss Wescott, English scholar

“Dr Frank Morrison, a lawyer who had been brought up in a rationalistic environment, had come to the opinion that the resurrection was nothing but a fairy-tale happy ending...He felt that he owed it to himself, and to others, to write a book that would present the truth about Jesus and dispel the myth of the resurrection. Upon studying the facts, however, he, too, came to a different conclusion. The sheer weight of the evidence compelled him to conclude that Jesus actually did rise from the dead. Morrison wrote his book – but not the one he had planned. It is titled, *Who Moved the Stone?*”
McDowell

II. Defining Terms

A. Acts 1:1-3

1. Shewed

- “to place beside or near; to set at hand; to present; to proffer, to provide” Thayer
- Luke affirms the fact Christ proves Himself to be alive

2. Alive

- “to be no longer dead, to recover life, be restored to life” Thayer
- Present tense participle - continuous action; Christ presented Himself as the One who kept on being alive

3. Passion

- “to suffer, to undergo evils, to be afflicted” Thayer

4. Infallible proofs

- “to show or prove by sure signs; that from which something is surely and plainly known; an indubitable evidence, a proof” Thayer
- “convincing, decisive proof; by many convincing proofs” Arndt & Gingrich

III. Infallible Proofs

A. Jesus Died by Crucifixion

1. Biblical Record (Mt. 27:33-35; Mk. 15:37; Jn. 19:30)
2. Roman Military Confirmation (Jn. 19:33; Mk. 15:44-45)
3. Medical Evidence (Jn. 19:33-34)
4. History
 - “That he was crucified is as sure as anything historical can ever be.” - John Dominic Crossan (highly critical scholar of the Jesus Seminar) –
 - “Nor did the wise king die for good; he lived on in the teachings which he had given” (Mara Bar-Serapion, Syrian Writer).
 - “Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die...His disciples...reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive” (Flavius Josephus, 38-97 A.D.).
 - 17 Extra Biblical non-Christian sources, 12 mention the cross or details of Jesus death within 100-150 years of the event.

B. The Tomb Was Empty

1. Biblical Record (Mt 28:5-6, Mk 16:5-6, Lk 24:2-3, Jn 20:27-28, Jn 20:2)
2. History
 - “If all the evidence is weighed carefully and fairly, it is indeed justifiable, according to the canons of historical research, to conclude that the tomb in which Jesus was buried was actually empty on the morning of the first Easter. And no shred of evidence has yet been discovered in literary sources, epigraphy or archaeology that would disprove this statement.” – Dr Paul L Maier, professor of ancient history at West Michigan University
 - “Christ’s resurrection is attested by the empty tomb: the women found it empty; Peter and John found it empty; the angels said it was empty; the Roman guards terrifyingly declared it to be empty; the chief priests believed it was empty; the grave clothes were evidence that it was empty; and even modern skeptics reluctantly agree—it was found empty.” – Wayne Jackson

C. The Disciples Believed & Proclaimed the Resurrection

1. The Disciple’s Unbelief (Lk. 24:10-11; Jn. 20:24-25)
2. The Disciple’s Belief (Jn. 20:19-20, 27-28)
3. The Disciples Actions (Acts 2:22-24, 30-32, 3:12-15, 4:1-2, 10)
4. History
 - “Because of envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars have been persecuted and contended unto death. Let us set the good apostles before our eyes. Peter, who because of unrighteous envy endured, not one or two, but many afflictions, and having borne witness went to the due glorious place.” – Clement of Rome
 - “And when [Jesus] came to those with Peter, he said to them: ‘Take, handle me and see that I am not a bodiless demon.’ And immediately they handled him and believed, having known his flesh and blood. Because of this they also despised death; but beyond death they were found.” - Ignatius, letter to Polycarp, 110 AD

- All the apostles died a martyr's death, save John, for the sake of the gospel
- A man will die for a lie if he believes the lie is true, a man will not die for a lie knowing it is a lie

D. The Conversion of the Skeptic James

1. The Unbelief of James (Mk. 6:3; Jn. 7:5)
2. The Belief of James (Gal. 1:19, 2:9; Jam. 1:1)
3. History
 - "Stoned as a lawbreaker" – Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*
 - "was thrown from the pinnacle of the temple and was beaten to death with the club by a fuller." Eusebius, citing Clement
 - "James was thrown off the temple pinnacle but survived the fall, so the Jews began to stone him until a fuller struck him on the head with a club." Eusebius, *Ibid*

E. The Conversion of the Church Persecutor Saul

1. Saul the Persecutor (Acts 7:58, 8:1, 3; Gal. 1:13)
2. Saul the Christian (Acts 9:3-4, 22:16; 1 Cor. 15:8; Acts 23:6; 1 Tim. 1:12-13)
3. Saul the Persecuted (2 Cor. 11:23-27)

F. Post Resurrection Appearances

1. Mary Magdalene (Jn. 20:11-18)
2. The women (Mt. 28:1; Mk. 16:1; Lk. 24:10)
3. Peter (Lk. 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5)
4. Cleopas and the other on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-35)
5. The eleven minus Thomas (Jn. 20:19-25)
6. The eleven (Jn. 20:26-29)
7. Seven Disciples at the Sea of Tiberias (Jn. 21:1-23)
8. Disciples at a mountain in Galilee (Mt. 28:16-17)
9. James (1 Cor. 15:7)
10. Over 500 (1 Cor. 15:6)