



Staying Quietly in Your Room

(Until You Resolve Your Doubt about the Resurrection)

Blaise Pascal



“I have often said that the sole cause of man’s unhappiness is that he does not know how to stay quietly in his room.”

Introduction

Today is Palm Sunday and next Sunday is Easter. During this week, over two billion people around the world will celebrate the crucifixion, death, and physical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Tens of thousands of these have had an encounter with Christ and have believed on His name without knowing very much about Him or the Scriptures. In His resurrection, they foresee their own and anticipate living forever in God's presence. By faith, they have received Jesus and trust in Him for their eternal life. It is no secret that there are many others who have placed their faith in Him for their salvation but are plagued with persistent doubts and questions about who He was and what He did – and secretly question whether it all is true.



Introduction

Oxford scholar Os Guinness reminds us that “doubt is a half-way stage. To be in doubt is to be in two minds, to be caught between two worlds, to be suspended between a desire to affirm and a desire to negate....Doubt moves in the direction of unbelief and passes over that blurred transition between the open-ended uncertainty of doubt and the close-minded certainty of unbelief.” In other words, “doubt that is total is no longer doubt, it is unbelief.”

You probably know that there are many scholars who either gave or are giving their lives to investigating the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. But it is the rare person who will take the time to investigate



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whether the resurrection is a fairy tale or historical fact in order to come to terms with reality and resolve their doubts once and for all.

While it is always tempting for me to present the evidence for the death and resurrection of Christ, especially for those who do not believe or for those who struggle with doubt, my direction today will take a different turn. I have selected a small, but very significant group of qualified scholars who have come to their own conclusions about what supposedly took place on that Easter morn in Jerusalem almost 2,000 years ago. My gift to you are their voices. I have only given each of them a brief word or two – enough to satisfy some of your doubts and longings for certainty, and peace about eternity.

N.T. Wright

“The early Christians did not invent the empty tomb and the meetings or sightings of the risen Jesus....Nobody was expecting this kind of thing; no kind of conversion experience would have invented it, no matter how guilty (or how forgiven) they felt, no matter how many hours they pored over the scriptures. To suggest otherwise is to stop doing history and enter into a fantasy world of our own.”



N.T. Wright

Doctor of Divinity, Oxford University
Research Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at St.
Mary's College in the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

William Lane Craig



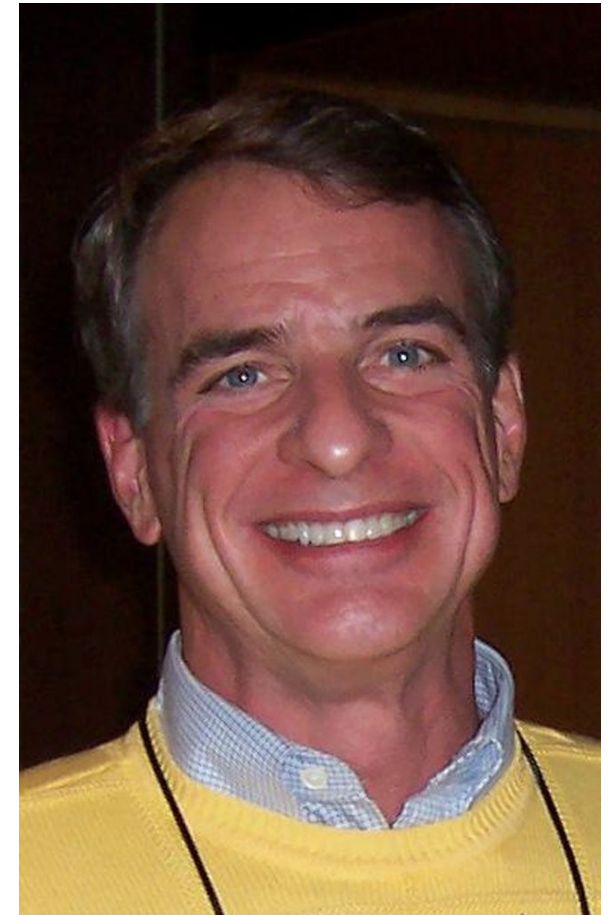
William Lane Craig

Philosopher, Theologian, Historian, Apologist
University of Birmingham, PhD
University of Munich, DPhil

“The stupefaction of contemporary scholarship when confronted with the facts of the empty tomb, the resurrection appearances, and the origin of the Christian faith suggests that no better rival is anywhere on the horizon. Once one gives up the prejudice against miracles, it’s hard to deny that the resurrection of Jesus is the best explanation of the facts.”

William Lane Craig

“Three great, independently established facts – the empty tomb, the resurrection appearances, and the origin of the Christian faith – all point to the same marvelous conclusion: that God raised Jesus from the dead. Given that miracles are possible, this conclusion cannot be debarred to anyone seeking for the meaning to existence who sees therein the hope of eternal life.”



G.K. Chesterton



G.K. Chesterton
1874-1936

“I did try to found a heresy of my own; and when I had put the last touches to it, I discovered that it was orthodoxy.”

Timothy Keller

“It is not enough for the skeptic to simply dismiss the Christian teaching about the resurrection of Jesus by saying, ‘It just couldn’t have happened.’ He or she must face and answer all these historical questions: Why did Christianity emerge so rapidly, with such power? No other band of messianic followers in that era concluded their leader was raised



Timothy Keller

Founding Pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian Church
New York City

Timothy Keller

from the dead – why did this group do so? No group of Jews ever worshipped a human being as God. What led them to do it? Jews did not believe in divine men or individual resurrections. What changed their worldview virtually overnight? How do you account for the hundreds of eyewitnesses to the resurrection who lived on for decades and publicly maintained their testimony, eventually giving their lives for their belief?”



Gary Habermas

“I recently finished a study of about 1,400 sources on the Resurrection, all written in German, French, and English from 1975 to the present, to see where critical scholars are today. By far most scholars think that something really happened – that the disciples had real experiences. They believed they saw the risen Jesus.”



Gary Habermas

Michigan State University, PhD

Distinguished Professor of Apologetics & Philosophy, Liberty University

1950 -

C.S. Lewis



C.S. Lewis
1898-1963

“We are faced, then, with a frightening alternative. This man we are talking about either was (and is) just what He said or else a lunatic, or something worse. Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God. God has landed on this enemy-occupied world in human form.”

C.S. Lewis

“And now, what was the purpose of it all? What did He come to do? Well, to teach, of course; but as soon as you look into the New Testament or any other Christian writing you will find they are constantly talking about something different – about His death and His coming to life again. It is obvious that Christians think the chief point of the story lies here.”



C.S. Lewis with his wife, Joy

Magical Worlds



C.S. Lewis Centennial Stamp
Oxford Royal Mail Launch
21 July 1998

“When I started *The Lion, Witch and Wardrobe* I don’t think I foresaw what Aslan was going to do and suffer. I think He just insisted on behaving in His own way. This of course I did understand and the whole series became Christian.”

Magical Worlds

“But it is not, as some people think, an *allegory*. That is, I don’t say ‘Let us represent Christ as Aslan.’ I say, ‘Supposing there was a world like Narnia, and supposing, like ours, it needed redemption, let us imagine what sort of Incarnation and Passion and Resurrection Christ would have there.’ See?”

- Letter to Sophia Storr, 24 Dec. 1959



Malcolm Muggeridge

“That the Resurrection happened, and that in consequence of it Jesus’s followers who had scattered drew together again, resolved to go about their Master’s business, seems to me to be indubitably true....Either Jesus never was or he still is. As a typical product of these confused times, with a skeptical mind and a sensual disposition, diffidently and unworthily, but with the utmost certainty, I assert that he still is.”



Malcolm Muggeridge

British journalist, author, media personality, and satirist
1903-1990

Lee Strobel

“On November 8, 1981, I realized that my biggest objection to Jesus also had been quieted by the evidence of history. I found myself chuckling at how the tables had been turned. In light of the convincing facts I had learned during my investigation, in the face of this overwhelming avalanche of evidence in the case for Christ, the great irony was this: it would require much more faith for me to maintain my atheism than to trust in Jesus of Nazareth!”



Lee Strobel

Investigative Journalist & Apologist



Os Guinness

“The resurrection was not a mystical symbol like a Salvador Dali painting, but a historic event in the space-time continuum, presenting to the original eye-witnesses a type of evidence which would have satisfied A.J. Ayer in his most empirically skeptical mood. This was the Jesus of history, whose life and claims forced the conviction that he was God become man. In fact, it is the ‘other Christs’ invented by the media and the artists that are highly selective and eventually only an imaginary reconstruction or half-truth.”

- from *The Dust of Death: A Critique of the Counter Culture*

Os Guinness



Os Guinness

Prominent Social Critic & Author of 30+ Books
1941 -

“Many thinkers are truth twisters. For every thinker who desires to conform his thinking to reality, there are others whose desire is to conform reality to their thinking. The cleverer the mind, the slipperier the heart, and the more sophisticated the education, the subtler the rationalization. Erudition lends conviction to self-deception.”



Blaise Pascal

“One must know when it is right to doubt, to affirm, to submit. Anyone who does otherwise does not understand the force of reason. Some men run counter to these three principles, either affirming that everything can be proved, because they know nothing about proof, or doubting everything, because they do not know when to submit, or always submitting, because they do not know when judgment is called for.”