

# Street Magic 1 – Making Death Disappear

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Video: Woman in Yellow – What if it's true?

The resurrection of Jesus is the most important and the most criticized incident in the New testament and maybe in history.

What is at stake is whether Jesus was just a human with some good ideas or God. If the resurrection cannot be proved then listen to what the apostle Paul says,

And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup>Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. <sup>19</sup>If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. 1 Cor. 15:14, 17-18.

If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." 1 Cor. 15:32  
But if the resurrection can be proven then it forces each of us to deal with the consequences of everything Jesus taught about life, death, eternal judgment.

Lets investigate some of the reasons why the resurrection is one of the validated events. When Christians make a claim Jesus rose from the dead, they have wealth of historical evidence on their side.

## 1. Prophecies fulfilled

Psalm 22

<sup>1</sup> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

<sup>7</sup> All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads:

<sup>8</sup> "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

<sup>14</sup> I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me.

<sup>16</sup> Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.

<sup>18</sup> They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

"The Son of Man must suffer... and He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."  
Luke 9:22

Total number fulfilled and the odds of that happening.

## 2. Post resurrection appearances

- a. The disciples – all who died a martyr's death. Who would die for a lie?
- b. 500 people.
- c. One witness wonders: Mormonism – Joseph Smith, Islam – Muhammed, Buddhism – Confucius, Jehovah's Witness – Charles Taze Russell.

### 3. The empty tomb – Why was it empty?

- **There are discrepancies in the four Gospel accounts.**
  - Four different views of same incident. Proves no collaboration.
- **The disciples stole the body.**
  - They were too fearful and disillusioned.
  - Would have had to overcome guards and wrath of Rome or Jews on them.
- **Jesus enemies stole the body.**
  - Parading a dead corpse through the street would have killed this movement.
  - Matt. 28 deals with this.
  - While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. <sup>12</sup>When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, <sup>13</sup>telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' <sup>14</sup>If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." <sup>15</sup>So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day. Matt. 28:11-15
- **The women went to the wrong tomb.**
  - They had went there with Joseph of Arimethiah.
  - There would have been guards and a seal.
  - The disciples all ran to the wrong tomb as well.
- **Some have argued Jesus didn't really die. The swoon theory.**
  - Jesus passed out from what they gave Him on the cross and cool damp grave revived Him.
  - 100 pounds of aromatic spices in a gummy substance
  - Beaten beyond recognition, spikes that would have broken wrists and feet (hard to move 2,000 pounds stone and overcome guards).

**Most logical and substantiated claim? Jesus rose from the dead.**

So, what is our option? Resist the facts because we don't like the consequences?

Accept the fact that Christ did die for us, rise again, and realize that that took the greatest amount of love that has ever been expressed. Receive God's gift of eternal life and become one of his followers.

We don't just imitate Him, we are incorporated into Him, we share in Him, we become one.

- God offers you eternity with Him.
- Relationship with Him as the perfect Father.
- Enter into His covenant of peace and blessing.

### **Conclusion:**

The resurrection is one of the miracles that culminated Jesus' life among us. While He walked the earth many were amazed at His teaching and especially His miracles. People love to see things beyond the ordinary such as magic and illusion. This is the view many had about Jesus.

### **Preview:**

There were other soothsayers and magicians described throughout the Bible. What made Jesus stand out?

Over the next few we'll look at encounters Jesus had on the streets with people just like you and me. We'll also look at how these events 2,000 years ago affect us today.

Don't miss: Street Magic VIDEO

Simon had amazed them with his magic so long that the people became his followers.<sup>12</sup> But when Philip told them the Good News about the kingdom of God and the power of Jesus Christ, men and women believed Philip and were baptized. Acts 8:11-12

***"Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away."***

—Philip K. Dick, science fiction author, writer of *Minority Report*

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In April 2002, the well-respected Oxford University philosophy professor Richard Swineburne used a broadly accepted probability theory to defend the truth of Christ's resurrection. He did this at a high-profile gathering of philosophy professors at Yale University.

In a *New York Times* interview, Swineburne said, "For someone dead for 36 hours to come to life again is, according to the laws of nature, extremely improbable. But if there is a God of the traditional kind, natural laws only operate because he makes them operate." Swineburne used Bayes Theorem to assign values to things like the probability that God is real, Jesus' behavior during his lifetime, and the quality of witness testimony after his death. Then he plugged the numbers into a probability formula and added everything up. The result: a 97 percent probability that the resurrection really happened.