

Christology Week 12

The gospel accounts of the actual events

All four gospels include extended accounts of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

Read gospel accounts of death, burial, and resurrection.

Matthew 27:33 – 28:20

Mark 15:22 – 16:20

Luke 23:26 – 24:53

John 19:16 – 20:31

All four Gospels say that, on the evening of the crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus, and that, after Pilate granted his request, he wrapped Jesus' body in a linen cloth and laid it in a tomb. This was in accordance with Mosaic Law, which stated that a person hanged on a tree must not be allowed to remain there at night, but should be buried before sundown.

Deut. 21:22-23 – “If a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.

The importance of the resurrection to the gospel presentation

1 Cor. 15:1-18 – necessity of resurrection to the gospel

The centrality of the gospel in the preaching of the early church is quickly seen by scanning the book of Acts.

Acts 2:22-36 – (Peter speaking at Pentecost) ““Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

²⁵ For David says of Him, ‘I saw the Lord always in my presence; For He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; Moreover my flesh also will live in hope; Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.’

²⁹ “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat *one* of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. ³² This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. ³⁴ For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:

‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”’

³⁶ Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Notice that the preaching of the resurrection began immediately. 50 days after the actual event, the whole theology and preachment was intact and being openly proclaimed. There was no time for development or instigating a lie. At the risk of death, to a hostile audience, the preaching of the resurrection was bold and public.

Acts 3:13-18 – (Peter’s second sermon – at the portico of Solomon, after healing a lame beggar) -- The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, *the one* whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be

granted to you, but put to death the Prince of life, *the one* whom God raised from the dead, *a fact* to which we are witnesses. And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

Acts 4:8-12 - Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people, if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this *name* this man stands here before you in good health. He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, *but* which became the chief corner *stone*. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

Acts 4:33 -- And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

Acts 5:27-32 – When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

Acts 10:37-43 – (Peter at the house of Cornelius) -- Opening his mouth, Peter said:

“I most certainly understand *now* that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all) — you yourselves know the thing which took

place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. ³⁸ *You know of* Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and *how* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. ³⁹ We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, *that is*, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.”

Acts 13:26-41 – (Paul in the synagogue at Antioch) -- “Brethren, sons of Abraham’s family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent. For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled *these* by condemning *Him*. And though they found no ground for *putting Him to* death, they asked Pilate that He be executed. ²⁹ When they had carried out all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead; and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people. ³² And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, ³³ that God has fulfilled this *promise* to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’ ³⁴ *As for the fact* that He raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: ‘I will give you the holy *and* sure *blessings* of David.’ ³⁵ Therefore He also says in another *Psalm*, ‘You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.’ For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay; ³⁷ but He whom God raised did not undergo decay. Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, ³⁹ and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses. ⁴⁰ Therefore take heed, so that the thing spoken of in the Prophets may not come upon *you*:

‘Behold, you scoffers, and marvel, and perish; For I am accomplishing a work in your days, A work which you will never believe, though someone should describe it to you.’” (Hab. 1:5)

Acts 17:22 - 32 – (Paul on Mars Hill) – So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things; and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’ Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”

³² Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some *began* to sneer, but others said, “We shall hear you again concerning this.” So Paul went out of their midst.

Acts 23:6-11 – (Paul before the council of the Jews) -- But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul *began* crying out in the Council, “Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!” As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all. And there occurred a great uproar; and some of the scribes of the Pharisaic party stood up and *began* to argue heatedly, saying, “We find nothing wrong with this man; suppose a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?” And as a great dissension was developing, the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by

them and ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force, and bring him into the barracks.

¹¹ But on the night *immediately* following, the Lord stood at his side and said, “Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.”

Acts 24:10-21 – (Paul before the governor Felix) -- When the governor had nodded for him to speak, Paul responded:

“Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I cheerfully make my defense, since you can take note of the fact that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. Neither in the temple, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city *itself* did they find me carrying on a discussion with anyone or causing a riot. Nor can they prove to you *the charges* of which they now accuse me. But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets; having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience *both* before God and before men. Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings; in which they found me *occupied* in the temple, having been purified, without *any* crowd or uproar. But *there were* some Jews from Asia — who ought to have been present before you and to make accusation, if they should have anything against me. Or else let these men themselves tell what misdeed they found when I stood before the Council, other than for this one statement which I shouted out while standing among them, ‘For the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you today.’”

Read Acts 26 (Paul’s defense before King Agrippa)

The resurrection permeates the epistles

Similarly in the epistles, the resurrection is front and center.

Romans 1:1-7 -- Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called *as* an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and

apostleship to bring about *the* obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, ⁶ among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called *as* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:8-10 -- Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

2 Cor. 4:7-15 -- But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; *we are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us, but life in you.

¹³ But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you. For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

Galatians 2:20 -- I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Ephesians 1: 18-23 -- *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Colossians 2:8-15 -- See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

1 Thess. 1:8-10 – For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is* Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1Thess. 4:13-14 -- But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

1Tim. 3:16 -- By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

All of the earliest Christian creeds followed this basic model and declared uniformly that Jesus was dead, was buried, and was alive again.

2 Timothy 2:8-13 – Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus *and* with *it* eternal glory. It is a trustworthy statement:

For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Hebrews 13:20-21 -- Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 1:17-21 – If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Even where the resurrection is not explicitly stated or emphasized by the NT writers, it is always assumed. The final book, Revelation, opens with Christ's identification of Himself as "the first begotten of the dead," and as the one "that liveth, and was dead and behold, I am alive forevermore" (Revelation 1:5, 18).

One thing is certain: the disciples could not have fabricated the story of the resurrection from their own imaginations. On the contrary, they somehow failed to anticipate it even after such an abundance of prophetic preparation for it, both from the Scriptures and from Christ. It took the strongest of evidences to convince them it had actually taken place.

Read Ryrie on the resurrection.