

“Doubters Anonymous”
(Answering the Jesus Questions)
John 20:24-29
March 22 & 23, 2008

Two Unhealthy Extremes in Facing “Faith” Doubts

Unless I see it, I

Since I believe, it

Doubts That John Addresses

Doubt #1: Did Jesus really? John 19:33-35

“But when they came to Jesus and found that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. 35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.”

Evidence #1: Testimony of

“Everything that can possibly be checked has been proven out to be correct. And it is a little bit too much to be a coincidence. You have much, much too much there. And I’m talking about thousands and tens of thousands of facts that have been proven correct. If all that is correct even an atheist will have a hard time saying, ‘Well, why isn’t everything correct?’ We haven’t found mistakes yet. Maybe the rest of it is not a mistake either (like those) things that we cannot go and photograph and prove without any doubt on a scientific basis.” Dr. Amihai Mazar, 3rd generation archeologist, Hebrew University in Jerusalem (1989 radio interview)

“After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that could be brought to bear, the Bible has survived...and perhaps the better for the siege. Even on the critics’ own terms - historical fact - the scriptures seem more acceptable now than they did when the rationalists began their attack.” Time Magazine, December 30, 1974, page 41

Evidence #2: Testimony of historians that didn’t

Cornelius Tacitus– Born A.D. 52, historian & governor of Asia, in A.D. 112 wrote of the reign of Nero (Annals XV 44)

“The persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities, Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius.”

Lucian of Samosata– 2nd century satirist whom spoke scornfully of Christ and followers

“...the man who was crucified in Palestine because He introduced this new cult into the world...furthermore, their first lawgiver persuaded them that they were all brothers one of another after they have transgressed once for all by denying the Greek gods and by worshipping that crucified sophist Himself and living under His laws.” (the Passing Peregrinus)

Doubt #2: Did Jesus really? John 20:1 - 21:25

“By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all He appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.” 1 Cor. 15:2-7

Note the skeptics in that list:

----- Mark 3:31, John 7:1-10, Acts 1:14, 12:17, 21:18, Gal. 1:19,
1 Cor. 9:5

----- Acts 9

Non-Christian Testimony that the Tomb Was Empty

"At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And His conduct was good, and He was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became His disciples. Pilate condemned Him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become His disciples did not abandon His discipleship. They reported that He had appeared to them three days after His crucifixion and that He was alive; accordingly, He was perhaps the Messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders." Josephus, Jewish historian born A.D. 37 (Antiquities Xviii33)

*"There is more evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead than that Napoleon Bonaparte ever lived."
Sir William Gladstone (whose life overlapped Napoleon's by 12 years)*

"There is more evidence for the historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ than for just about any other event in history." Dr. Simon Greenleaf (Professor & one of the founders of Harvard University School of Law)

Doubt #3: Does Jesus really care about _____? John 21:1-19

"But go, tell His disciples and (especially) Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you.'" Mark 16:7 (emphasis mine)