

Fact or Fiction?: The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth

Dr. Nicholas G. Piotrowski
Castleton Community Church; April 12th, 2023

I. The Facts on the Ground

A. Facts about Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples

1. Jesus lived in first-century Palestine.
2. Jesus and his followers were Jewish.
3. Jesus was tried and killed by crucifixion.
4. Jesus' followers did not die with him.
5. Jesus' followers carried on without a replacement messiah.

B. Facts about the origins of the resurrection story

6. The story of Jesus' resurrection began immediately in Jerusalem by those who claimed to have seen him alive after his crucifixion.
7. The story is allegedly begun by women.
8. The story was then proclaimed by those who followed Jesus during his life.
9. The story became popular, and a new religious movement grew.
10. Christianity overtook the Roman Empire and outlasted it.

C. Facts about early Christian beliefs

11. Jesus' resurrection was important to the early church.
12. Christians came to worship Jesus.
13. The day of worship moved from Saturday to Sunday.

II. What did the disciples think they were proclaiming?

- They knew they were lying.
- They thought they were speaking metaphorically/telling a myth.
- They really thought Jesus had come back to life.

III. What caused the disciples to think Jesus had been raised?

- They had an unscientific view of the world.
- They hallucinated.
- Jesus never died.
- Jesus was resurrected and they saw him.

IV. How do people evaluate evidence and come to conclusions?

V. What does it all mean?

- Why Jesus' resurrection was important to the early church.
- Why Jesus' resurrection is important today.