

“God in Three Persons @ the Empty Tomb”
Resurrection Sunday 2023
Sermon Notes

➤ **When you think gospel, think Trinity - when you think Trinity, think gospel**

**The gift of the empty tomb is impossible apart from the inseparable operations of our eternal triune God, for...*

1. The resurrection of Christ is from the Father (v.11a; Romans 6:4; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:17, 20)

2. The resurrection of Christ is by the Son (v.11b; John 2:19; 10:17-18)

3. The resurrection of Christ is through the Spirit (v.11c; Romans 1:4; 1 Timothy 3:16)

Next Week: Judges 17:1-18:31 - “Self-Made Religion”

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of April 10th - 16th

The following is from an article written by Dr. Greg Strand who serves as the Director for Biblical Theology and Credentialing in the Evangelical Free Church of America. Written two years back, “The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Evidences and Implications”¹ is designed as a theological refresher for us as believers as we enter into Easter season. Enjoy this study on your own, with your family, or in your community group. He is RISEN!

I. Introduction

Jesus' resurrection vindicated His life and ministry (Rom. 1:4; 1 Tim. 3:16), and his resurrection is considered the firstfruits (1 Cor. 15:20) which means that, at the trumpet sound (Matt. 24:30-31; 1 Cor. 15:52), those who are raised in Christ will experience a similar resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23). Christ's resurrection was bodily (Lk. 24:41-43; Jn. 20:27), yet his resurrected body underwent a transformation. It was raised immortal, incorruptible and imperishable (1 Cor. 15). After Jesus' resurrection, he ascended to heaven and now sits at the right hand of God the Father (Eph. 1:20-23; Heb. 10:12), known as the 'session', interceding for those who believe (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25) and he will one day return to judge both the living and the dead (Matt. 25:31-46; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).

II. Evidence for Jesus' Resurrection

A. The Empty Tomb

1. The historical credibility of the burial story supports the empty tomb.
2. The tradition of the empty tomb is recorded in all four gospels.
3. Paul's testimony implies the fact of the empty tomb.
4. The presence of the empty tomb narrative in the pre-Markan Passion story supports its historical credibility.
5. The use of “the first day of the week” (Mark 16:2) instead of “on the third day” points to the primitiveness of the tradition.
6. The nature of the narrative itself is theologically unadorned and nonapologetic.
7. The empty tomb was discovered by women.
8. The investigation of the empty tomb by Peter and John is historically probable.
9. It would have been virtually impossible for the disciples to proclaim the resurrection in Jerusalem had the tomb not been empty.
10. The early Christians, as Jews, would have assumed that resurrection shortly after death implied an empty tomb.
11. The earliest Jewish apologetic presupposes the empty tomb.
12. The fact that Jesus' tomb was not venerated as a shrine indicates that the tomb was empty.

¹ <https://blogs.efca.org/strands-of-thought/posts/the-resurrection-of-jesus-christ>
Accessed 3/14/22 @ 8:30pm.

B. Post-Mortem/Post-Resurrection Appearances

The appearances of Jesus after His resurrection were to several individuals, they took place during a very specific period of forty days, they did not happen just to believers, they were extraordinarily varied.

1. The testimony of Paul shows that the disciples saw appearances of Jesus.
2. The Gospel accounts of the resurrection appearances are fundamentally reliable historically. - There was not enough time for legends to accrue significantly. - The controlling presence of living eyewitnesses would retard significant accrual of legend. - The authoritative control of the apostles would have helped to keep legendary tendencies in check.
3. Particular resurrection appearances have historical credibility. - The appearance to the women. - The appearance to Peter. - The appearance to the Twelve. - The Lake of Tiberias appearance. - The appearance in Galilee. - The appearance to the five hundred believers. - The appearance to James. - The appearance to Paul.
4. The resurrection appearances were physical, bodily appearances. - Paul implies that the appearances were physical events.- The Gospels confirm that the appearances were physical and bodily.

The concept of bodily resurrection from the dead was part of Jewish belief and is attested in the Old Testament (see above, II.B.1.). During the time of Jesus belief in the bodily resurrection had become a great hope for the Jews, especially the Pharisees (Matt. 22-23-33). But it must be noted that the Jewish understanding of the resurrection differed from the Christian conclusion of the resurrection (because Jesus rose from the dead) in two important ways: 1) Jewish belief always concerned a resurrection at the end of the world, not a resurrection in the middle of history; and 2) Jewish belief always concerned a general resurrection of the people, not the resurrection of an isolated individual.

C. Other Evidences

1. The Origin/Survival and Existence of the Church
2. The Transformation (Faith) of the Disciples
3. The Early Christian Change from the Sabbath to Sunday as the day of Worship (There were other changes also: 1) sacrifices, 2) keeping the law, 3) non-Trinitarian monotheism, 4) the Messiah was considered to be a human figure.)
4. The Testimony of Christian Believers
5. The Sacraments of the Early Church

III. The Nature of Jesus' Resurrection Body

Jesus was a human, which meant He had a body. Because of the resurrection, Jesus was raised in a 'spiritual body' (to borrow Paul's terminology). Though certainly is veiled, there are some conclusions that can be made about Jesus' resurrection body: 1) He appeared bodily; 2) Jesus was no longer bound by material or spatial limitations; 3) it also appears

that He could materialize and be localized at will; 4) Jesus could be touched and heard as well as seen; 5) there was a continuity between Christ's body before the resurrection and after the resurrection, but there was also some discontinuity.

1. Passages which stress the material nature of the body - Matt. 28:9; Lk. 24:15, 39, 43, 50-51; Jn. 20:20, 27; Acts 1:4; 10:41.
2. Passages which stress the non-material nature of the body - Lk. 24:31, 36, 44; Jn. 20:19, 26; Acts 1:3; 10:40-41a.
3. Three main solutions of the Evidence - Jesus' resurrection body was basically "material" or "fleshly" but either was capable of temporary dematerialization or had nonmaterial properties. - In His resurrected state Jesus possessed a "spiritual body" which could be expressed in an immaterial or a material mode.- His body was in the process of transition from the material to the spiritual during the forty days of appearances.

IV. Theological Implications of Christ's Resurrection

1. The resurrection was God's vindication of Christ. - The resurrection vindicated the messiahship of Jesus. - The resurrection vindicated and confirmed the sonship of Jesus. - The resurrection vindicated the work of Jesus. - The resurrection of Jesus vindicated His followers and His Father.
2. The resurrection was God's exaltation of Christ.
3. The resurrection marked the inauguration of the new covenant, the beginning of the new age, the Holy Spirit was given, and new spiritual power was released in the world

He is risen!