

InCredible Testimony

1 John 1:1-3

August 14, 2022

*“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and **testify** to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard.”* 1 John 1:1-3

*“For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were **eyewitnesses** of his majesty.* 2 Peter 1:16

Introduction. Depending on the trustworthiness of the eyewitnesses, our faith is based on either myth, legend, or solid historic fact.

A. Our faith cannot stand upon Jesus being merely a prophet.

B. Our faith cannot stand upon Jesus merely being a wise teacher.

C. Our faith stand or falls completely upon the resurrection.

“If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile...(and) we are of all people most to be pitied.” 1 Corinthians 15:17-19.

I. The disciples had to be convinced.

A. The disciples did not believe the testimony of the women.

“When they came back from the tomb, (the women) told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others...But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.”
Luke 24:9-11

B. The crucifixion would have convinced the disciples that their hope in Jesus was misplaced.

C. The disciples would claim that what convinced them was seeing the resurrected Christ.

II. The disciples all maintained their witness of the resurrection despite enduring torture and death for their faith.

1. Peter, originally called Simon, was crucified. 2. Andrew was crucified. 3. James, son of Zebedee, was killed by the sword. 4. John, son of Zebedee, died a natural death in exile. 5. Philip was crucified. 6. Bartholomew was crucified. 7. Thomas was killed by a spear. 8. Matthew was killed by the sword. 9. James, son of Alphaeus, was crucified. 10. Thaddaeus was killed by arrows. 11. Simon, the zealot, was crucified. Finally, 12. Paul was beheaded.

“With the most powerful office in the world at stake, a small band of hand-picked loyalists, no more than ten of us, could not hold a conspiracy together for more than two weeks.” *Loving God*, p.71
Charles Colson on the failed Watergate cover up.

“Take it from one who was inside the Watergate web looking out, who saw firsthand how vulnerable a cover-up is. Nothing less than a witness as awesome as the resurrected Christ could have caused those men to maintain to their dying whispers that Jesus is alive and Lord.” *Loving God*, pp. 75-76 Charles Colson.

III. Jesus’ family was converted.

A. Prior to the resurrection, Jesus’ brothers did not believe in Him.

“Even His own brothers did not believe in Him.” John 7:5

B. Prior to the resurrection, Jesus’ brothers thought he was crazy.

“Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.” Mark 3:20-21.

C. Jesus’ brother James became the leader of the Jerusalem church.

“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to the Twelve... Then he appeared to James.” 1 Corinthians 15:3-7

IV. If the witnesses are credible, it means Jesus is alive. Thus, the living Christ can reveal Himself at any moment.

*“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that he exists and that **He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.**”* Hebrews 11:6

Recommended Readings:

More Than a Carpenter, Josh and Sean McDowell

The Case for Christ, Lee Stroebel

The Reason for God, Timothy Keller

Did Jesus Rise from the Dead? William Craig