

Jesus Fully God- Part 3

1) The Evidence of Jesus death and resurrection

A) New Testament accounts

Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:1-21:25.

Apostles proclamation of the resurrection (the book of Acts)

The Epistles depend entirely on the assumption that Jesus is Living, reigning Saviour who is now the exalted head of the church, who is to be trusted, worshiped, and adored, and who will some day return in power and great glory to reign as King over the earth.

Revelation repeatedly shows the risen Christ reigning in heaven and earth.

Conclusion- The New Testament bears witness to the fact of the resurrection of Christ.

B) Case for the Resurrection- Minimal Facts Argument

"My Minimal Facts Argument in favor of Jesus' resurrection was developed many years ago while writing my PhD dissertation. It has two requirements for the historical facts that are used: each must be confirmed by several strong and independent arguments, plus the vast majority of even critical scholars must recognize the occurrence's historical nature. The critical scholars can be liberal, skeptical, agnostic, or even atheist, as long as they are specialists in a relevant field of study, such as New Testament. Of these two requirements, it is important to recognize that the initial standard concerning strong evidential back-up is by far the most crucial." Gary Habermas

1. Jesus died by crucifixion.
2. He was buried.
3. His death caused the disciples to despair and lose hope.
4. The tomb was empty (the most contested).
5. The disciples had experiences which they believed were literal appearances of the risen Jesus (the most important proof).
6. The disciples were transformed from doubters to bold proclaimers.
7. The resurrection was the central message. (taught very early soon after the crucifixion)
8. They preached the message of Jesus' resurrection in Jerusalem.
9. The Church was born and grew.
10. Orthodox Jews who believed in Christ made Sunday their primary day of worship.
11. James was converted to the faith when he saw the resurrected Jesus (James was a family skeptic).
12. Paul was converted to the faith (Paul was an outsider skeptic).¹

¹ Lee Strobel, *The Case for the Real Jesus*, 114-130

2) The Nature of Christ's Resurrection

- i) **Jesus resurrection was more than what took place when Lazarus came back to life** (John 11:1-44), as Lazarus still struggled with weakness, aging, and eventually would have died again a human death. Whereas, with Jesus, when he rose from the dead, Jesus was the "first fruits" (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23) a new kind of human life. A new life where the body was made perfect, as it was no longer subject to weakness, aging, or death, but able to live eternally.
- ii) **Jesus physical appearance had continuity between before he died and when arose to new life**, as there were occasions the disciples seemed to have recognized him fairly quickly. (Matthew 28:9-17; John 20:19-20, 26-28; 21:7, 12)
- iii) **Jesus body was still a physical body.**
 - a) The disciples took hold of his feet (Matthew 28:9)
 - b) He appeared to the disciples on the road to Emmaus as just another traveler on the road (Luke 24:15-18, 28-29)
 - c) He took bread and broke it (Luke 24:30), ate a piece of broiled fish (John 20:15)
 - d) He showed the disciples his hands and his side and Thomas put his fingers out to touch his hands and side (John 20:20-27)
 - e) He prepared breakfast for his disciples (John 21:12-13)
 - f) Jesus said, "See my hands and my feet, that it is myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have". (Luke 24:39)
 - g) Peter said that the disciples "ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:41)
- iv) **The physical resurrection of Jesus and his eternal possession of a physical resurrection body** give clear affirmation of the goodness of the material creation that God originally made.

"And God saw everything that he made, and behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31)

We as resurrected men and women will live forever in "new heavens and a new earth" will be like a new Garden of Eden; a place where righteousness dwells and no more bondage or decay takes place. (2 Peter 3:13; Romans 8:21).

Summary: Jesus body was still a physical body when he resurrected, but it was also raised as a transformed body, never again able to suffer, be weak or ill, or die; the body had become immortal (1 Corinthians 15:53). A body that was now suited to and responsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit; a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

3) The Significance of the Resurrection

a) Christ's Resurrection insures our regeneration.

- Our regeneration is connected our regeneration or new birth

"We have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" - 1 Peter 1:3

- Jesus earned for us a new life just like his

However, we do not receive all the new 'resurrection life' when we become Christians, for our bodies remain as they were, still subject to weakness, aging, and death. But in our spirits we are made alive with the new resurrection power. As a result, it is through the resurrection that Christ earned for us the new kind of life we receive when we are 'born again'.

God "... made us alive together with Christ" (Ephesians 2:5-6; Colossians 3:1)

Paul knew that even in this life, the resurrection of Christ gave us new power for Christian ministry and obedience to God. (Philippians 3:10, Ephesians 1:19-20)

⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life... ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:4, 11

Paul is saying that the power by which God raised Christ from the dead is the same power at work within us.

- The new resurrection power in us includes power to gain more and more victory over remaining sin in our lives. (Romans 6:14; 1 Corinthians 15:7)

b) Christ's resurrection insures our Justification

He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Romans 4:25

If God "raised us up with him" (Ephesians 2:6), then by virtue of our union with Christ, God's declaration of approval of Christ is also a declaration of approval of us.

c) Christ's Resurrection insures that we will receive perfect resurrection bodies as well

The New Testament connects Jesus' resurrection with our final bodily resurrection. (1 Corinthians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58)

"The first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). Just as the first fruits or the first taste of the ripening crop show what the rest of the harvest will be like for that crop, so Christ as the "first fruits" shows what our resurrection bodies will be like when in God's final harvest, he raises us from the dead and brings us into his presence.²

4) Jesus Ascension to Heaven

a) Christ ascended to a place

- He was parted from his disciples on earth and "was carried up into heaven". (Luke 24:50-51)
- ... "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

Jesus did not suddenly disappear from the disciples and never be seen by them again. Instead, Jesus gradually ascended while the disciples were watching, and then a cloud (apparently the cloud of God's glory) took him out of their sight. Since "Jesus had a resurrection body that was subject to spatial limitations (it could only be at only one place at one time) means that Jesus went somewhere when he ascended to heaven."³

b) Christ received glory and honour that had not been his before as the God-man

Jesus prayed, "Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made." (John 17:5)

Peter said, Jesus was "exalted at the right hand of God" (Acts 2:33)

² Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 265.

³ *Ibid.*, 266

Paul said, "God has highly exalted him." (Philippians 2:9)... That Jesus was "taken up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:4)

Jesus Christ is now in heaven with the angelic choirs singing praise to him with the words... "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" (Revelation 5:12)

c) Christ was seated at God's right hand

The Old Testament predicted that the Messiah would sit at the right hand of God. (Psalm 110:1)

When Jesus ascended back to heaven, he received the fulfillment of that promise: "When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high". (Hebrews 1:3)

- "This welcoming into the presence of God and sitting at God's right hand is a dramatic indication of the completion of Christ's work of redemption. Just as a human being will sit down at the completion of a large task to enjoy the satisfaction of having accomplished it, so Jesus sat at the right hand of God, visibly demonstrating that his work of redemption was completed."⁴
- The act of Jesus sitting at God's right hand is an indication that he received the authority over the universe. (Ephesians 1:20-21; 1 Peter 3:22; 1 Cor. 15:25)
- The authority that Christ received from the Father when he sat at his right hand was the authority to pour out the Holy Spirit on the church. (Acts 2:33)

"The fact that Jesus now sits at the right hand of God in heaven does not mean that he is perpetually 'fixed' there or that he is inactive. He is also seen standing at God's right hand (Acts 7:56) and as walking among the seven gold lampstands in heaven (Revelation 2:1). Just as a human king sits on his royal throne at his ascension to the kingship but then engages in many other activities throughout each day, so Christ sat at the right hand of God as a dramatic evidence of the completion of his redemptive work and his reception of authority over the universe, but he is certainly engaged in other activities in heaven as well."⁵

⁴ Ibid., 267.

⁵ Ibid.

4. Significance of Jesus Christ's Ascension

a) We are united with Christ in every aspect of his work of redemption. Christ's going up into heaven foreshadows our future ascension into heaven with him. (1 Thessalonians 4:17; Hebrews 12:1-2; John 14:3)

b) Gives us assurance that our final home will be in heaven with him. (John 14:2-3)

c) Because of our union with Christ in his ascension, we are able to share now (in part) in Christ's authority over the universe, and we will later share in it more fully.

Paul said, God "raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:6) We are not physically present as we are here on earth, but because of Christ's ascension, we now share in some measures in the authority that Christ has; authority to contend against "the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12), and to do battle with weapons that "have divine power to destroy strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4)

Sharing more fully later:

- "Do you not know that we are to judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:3)
- Sharing with Christ in his authority over the creation that God has made (Hebrews 2:5-8)
- Jesus promises, "He who conquers and who keeps my work until the end, I will give him power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received power from my Father". (Revelation 2:26-27) "He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne." (Revelation 3:21).

These promises of our future sharing with Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, promises that we will not fully understand until the age to come.⁶

⁶ Ibid., 267-268.