Easter 2023 **– The Final 40**

**Jesus walked the earth 2000 yrs ago – was crucified, buried & rose again. (Last wk) Is it the end of a sad story? What really happened?**

**4 letters – 4 version. They appear to be contradictory accounts, but they are actually complementary accounts.**

**The Harmony of the Gospels: Together the 4 give a full view.**

**The differences prove that there is no collusion.**

**Antiquity is more concerned with character than chronology.**

**Friday - Jesus is crucified and buried (Ma 27, Mk 15, Lu 23, Jo 19)**

**Saturday - Tomb is sealed / solders are guarding it (Matt 27:62-66)**

**Sunday – early morning earthquake / Angel rolls stone away / guards panic & run off telling people Jesus body was stolen (Matt 28:2-4, 11-15)**

**Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. (He appeared 12X over 40 days)**

**From Resurrection to Ascension – The Final 40 Days**

**This was not mass hallucinations or hypnosis.**

Resurrection day – Jerusalem

* **Mary (Mag.), Mary (Jesus’ mom), Mary (wife of Clopas, mother of 2 disciples) Salome, and Joanna - go to the tomb and find it empty (Matt 28:1; Mk 16:1, Luke 24:10) Five women total.**
* **Mary Magdalene runs to tell the disciples Jesus is gone**

**(John 20:1-2)**

* **The other women stay, see angels - Jesus is risen just as he said!**

**(Matt 28:5-7; Mk 16:2-8; Lk 24:1-8)**

* **The women on their way to the disciples, see Jesus (1)**

**(Matt 28:8-10)**

* **The women tell what they have seen and heard**

**(Luke 24:9-11)**

* **Peter & John run to the empty tomb and only find grave clothes**

**(Lk 24:12; Jo 20:2-10)**

* **Mary Magdalene returns to the tomb / sees 2 angels, then Jesus (2)**

**(John 20:11-18)**

* **Jesus appears to Peter - mentioned but not elaborated on (3)**

**(Luke 24:34; 1 Cor 15:5)**

* **Jesus appears to Cleopas and another disciple near Emmaus (4)**

**(Lk 24:13-35)**

* **Jesus appears to group with 10 disciples, Thomas is absent (5)**

**(Lk 24:32-43; Jo 20:19-25)**

1 Week after the resurrection – Jerusalem

* **Jesus appears to all 11 disciples in Jerusalem with Thomas (6)**

**(John 20:26-31)**

2 weeks after the resurrection – Galilee

* **Jesus appears to 7 disciples in Galilee by the Sea of Galilee (7)**

**(John 21:1-25 – did you catch anything?) fish & bread breakfast**

3 to 4 weeks plus after resurrection – Galilee

* **Jesus appears to all the disciples on a mountain in Galilee (8)**

**(Matt 28:16-20, Mk 16:15-16, Lk 24:44-49)**

* **Jesus appears to the disciples and a crowd of at least 500 (9)**

**(1 Cor 15:6)**

* **Jesus appears to half-brother James - not elaborated on (10)**

**(1 Cor 15:7)**

* **Jesus appears to all the apostles – not in gospels (11)**

**(1 Cor 15:7)**

40 Days after the Resurrection – Jerusalem (Mount of Olives)

* **The Ascension in Jerusalem (12)**

**(Acts 1:1-11)**

* **Jesus appears to Saul (Paul) on the road to Damascus (13 - bonus)**

**(1 Cor 15:6) Roughly 4 years later.**

**Christianity isn't based on the miracles of Jesus or even the teachings of Jesus. As crucial as those things are - our faith is based on the resurrection of Jesus! Jesus is alive!!!**

**\*\*\* The Resurrection is a historical truth – not a religious truth!**

**The resurrection of Jesus is the proof… that it was all true!**

**1 Cor 15 and entire chapter talking about it - 1 Corinthians 15:1** **Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. (I preached, you received, we stand on this - gospel)**

**Gospel is not a music genre - Gospel is the GOOD NEWS**

**2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. (By this gospel alone you are saved.) 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: (This is that gospel…) that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (refers to Gospels as scripture) 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,**

**Paul just Laid out the Gospel – the only gospel that saves**

**What you must believe / trust in - to be saved. The basics.**

1. **Deity - Christ (Fully God) promised forever king of eternity – LORD!**

**Essential – not a just prophet, a creation, a mini-god, or an example – he is the royal forever God KING – the Christ!**

1. **Death - Died for sins (cross finished work) took our place on cross**

**Buried (Fully human) – actually died in his humanity**

1. **Resurrection (Fully alive) – sealed the deal – proved it all!**
2. **For Forgiveness of sin – (Fully Forgiven) by faith**

**According to Scripture (the word of God) – the bible is trustworthy**

**(And to prove that Jesus accomplished this – he summarizes the appearances) 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, (Peter) and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. (Go ask them yourself – some are still around) 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, (not just the twelve) 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. (4 yrs after resurrection)**

**Jesus is alive and He appeared physically to others. No doubt!**

**9 For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (God turned a terrorist into an evangelist) 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. 11 Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed. (Deity – Death – resurrection – forgiveness of sin - and is alive and ruling today!)**

**We stand on this – we are saved by this – we declare this!**

**2 Things Everyone Needs, But Most Only Want 1**

**1) A Savior – The substitutionary Jesus (what we want)**

**Galatians 2:21, 3:13, John 3:14-18, 1 Peter 2:24, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Heb 7:27, 9:22**

**Jesus took our place, our punishment on the cross, our substitute.**

**This must be received - John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,**

**Take my place – where do I sign up? Where do I get my ticket? If there is a hell, I don’t to want to go. Yes, to a Savior.**

**2) A Lord – The supremacy of Jesus (what we don’t want)**

**1 Tim 6:15, Rom 1:1-4, Colo 3:17, 1 John 2:2-6, Matt 16:24, 19:16-23, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23, Rev 1:5, 17:14, 19:16, Deut 10:17**

**Romans 10:9 If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**

**We are to surrender to the royal reign of the king – in our life. He is the master – one who now calls the shots. He owns our life.**

**No, thank you. I’m my own king. No one tells me how to live..**

**Mark 8:34** **Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.**

**Many preach a false gospel. Easy believe, lazy gospel. There is no savior w/out Lordship. There is no following without a turning.**

**If the resurrection is true… than Jesus is who he says he is - did what he said he did – and requires a response… surrender to the king!**

**What If The Tomb Isn’t Empty And Jesus Is Still Dead?**

**Do you ever doubt that maybe it’s made up? A hoax / legend / scam / like Easter bunny, something fun to believe, but not real.**

**WHY IT MATTERS – If it never happened!**

**If all of this is a myth – a made up story – a creation of people…**

**1 Cor 15:14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.**

1. **If it’s not true - Christianity is a deceptive delusion**

**Church is a waste of time – all my preaching and all your believing. Faith in Jesus is absolutely worthless and a waste of time.**

**1 Cor 15:15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised.**

1. **If it’s not true - The NT is filled with lies – and written by liars**

**Then every disciple, apostle, NT writer, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, Jude – all liars!!!**

**15:16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.**

1. **If it’s not true - we are still dead in sin and destined for judgement**

**If there is a God and He is holy – then we are still sinners and will face an eternal judgment. If there is hell – we will all go there.**

**15:18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.**

1. **If this is not true - Heaven is a silly wishful thinking (heaven closed)**

**Heaven is just a made-up fantasy – when this life is over we turn to dust and cry over never seeing loved ones ever again. The end.**

**19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.**

1. **If this is not true - Christians are pathetic fools**

**We are foolish simpleminded dummies – to be pitied. Missing out on life’s pleasures for an imaginary friend.**

**1 Cor 15:30 And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? 31 I face death every day—yes, just as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord. 32 If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”**

1. **If this is not true- personal sacrifice for God and others is pointless**

**Every outreach, mission trip, bible study, Youth camp, kid’s event, hours serving and in prayer for others… the millions who have given their life to spread the message of Jesus… all pointless.**

**Let’s just go party – live life – it’s all futile – Just live – YOLO!**

**WHY IT MATTERS – Because it happened!**

**The empty tomb and all those verified sightings.**

**\* It proves - Everything Jesus said about himself is absolutely true!**

**That He is God – the kingdom is real - his teachings are to be followed**

**\*The cross of Jesus truly paid the debt we could not pay**

**Jesus paid a debt he did not owe – and it really does forgive us!**

**Because it happened – we truly are forgiven in Christ! Every sin!**

**It is not wishful thinking – and Hell will not be my home!**

**1 Cor 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. (a preview of what is to come for us and those who have died) 21 For since death came through a man, (Adam) the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. (Jesus) 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ (those in Christ) all will be made alive. 23 But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; (Jesus was first) then, when he comes, those who belong to him.**

**\* This life is not the end**

**As Jesus was resurrected – those in Christ will be resurrected into a new body – not an improved version but a perfect and powerful version. We will live again! The kingdom of heaven - the next life - is just the beginning!**

**24 Then the end will come, (this is all temporary) when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. (Final judgment) 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. (even now he reigns less we self-destruct)**

**\* We don’t need to be afraid of the end**

**If you are in Christ – he coming to take you home. You do not need to be afraid of death or his return. It is a wonderful day!**

**1st advent – Saves spiritually / 2nd advent – Saves physically**

**26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. (2 Cor 5:1-10 – our new body)**

**\* We have hope in this life**

**Something to look forward to – the sting of that loss is defeated!**

**Nothing more painful than the loss of someone you love. Every loved one in Christ – my mom, your dad, brother, sister, spouse, A beautiful assurance we have in Christ - because of the resurrection = HOPE!**

**That resurrection proclaims Christs’ greatness. He is greater than:**

**Our Debt of sin / Our Depression and sadness / Our Disease and sickness / Our Disappointment and distress / Our Death & loss.**

**King greater than all things! Who’s name alone holds salvation. Acts 4:2 - Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.**

**The resurrection is not an event - it is a person**

**John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” 27 “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”**

**IF IT’S TRUE, WHAT SHOULD WE DO?**

**The cross and empty tomb declare the power and authority of Jesus. Jesus calls those who are his to follow him – even today.**

**Jesus is asking you the same today – “Who do you say I am?”**

**Do you believe I am the resurrection and the life?**