



Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 52:1-12
New Testament Reading: Matthew 28:1-10

In Search of the Old Paths
“I Believe in Jesus Christ, Who,
On the third day rose from the dead”
1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remains to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After

that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.”

There are between 4,000 and 10,000 distinct religions in the world. However, 85% of the global population has aligned with one of the four largest religions:

- Christianity – 31%
- Islam – 24%
- Hinduism – 15%
- Buddhism – 7%

Christianity is unique in that it is based on the historical, visible, and verifiable resurrection of its leader – Jesus of Nazareth, who was God’s only begotten Son, who was sent into the world to give His life to pay the debt of sin for those who would believe in Him.

All other religions are based upon what man must do to appease a vengeful god and to earn his favor.

- **Buddhism** was founded by Siddhartha Gautama in the 4th century and is based on his teachings regarding the pathway to enlightenment. Siddhartha died in 483 B.C., and his ashes were divided and enshrined in eight “Buddha” statues across India.
- **Islam** was founded by Abu-Qasim Mohammad, a descendant of Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar. His followers believe Mohammad was the final prophet sent by God, to whom they refer as Allah, to restore the monotheistic faith of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Mohammad died in 632, and his body was buried in a Mosque in Medina, Saudi Arabia.
- **Confucianism, Taoism, Sikhism, Jainism, and Shinto** base their belief systems on the idea that believers can live a level of morality that reduces or escape the suffering of life. They also believe in reincarnation, in which the souls of the dead are “reborn” in another person or animal, so no one ever really dies.
- **Christianity** is based upon what God has done for the sinner through the sacrifice of His only begotten Son. Therefore, our eternal salvation is achieved by God’s grace alone, through our faith alone in Christ alone; it is a gift of God and not of our own works.
- Religion is man reaching up to God! Christianity is God reaching down to us. Therefore, the Christian faith stands or falls on the physical resurrection of Jesus from the grave.

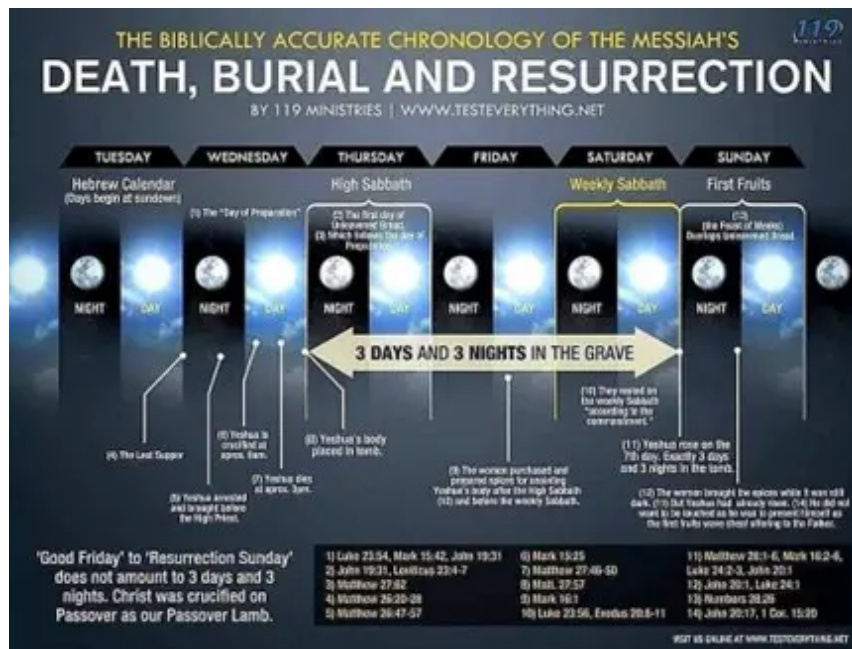
There are two avenues to the assured knowledge of the Lord’s physical resurrection:

- **The avenue of historical inquiry** – searching for the evidence of His resurrection. While the evidence is overwhelming, faith in the evidence alone is not sufficient to achieve salvation.
- **The conviction of the Holy Spirit** – more than just “believing with all of our heart,” it is accepting the Bible as God’s Holy Word, truth with no mixture of error, and that would include the historical narrative of the Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection.
- Jesus’ resurrection proved His deity; that He truly was the Son of God and that, not only does He have divine authority over every facet of the lives of those who believe in Him, God has given Him all authority in heaven and in earth, and when He returns, He will prove Himself to be the King of kings and Lord of Lords.

1. The Third Day –Matthew 12:38-40 – “*Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You. But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”*”

- Jonah was in a whale’s belly three days and three nights, and then spewed out on dry land to be the first missionary to the Gentiles of Ninevah.
- Jonah’s experience was a “type,” an illustration of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for as Jonah was in the whale’s belly three days and three nights, so was Jesus in the heart of the earth, and that is impossible to be achieved from Friday evening to Sunday morning.
- While some of the early church fathers knew this theory wasn’t true, when the Catholics established the religious events of the “Holy Week,” no one was willing to correct the record.

However, in the 1700’s, serious Bible students exposed the impossibility of the Friday-Sunday theory and tracked the events of the Lord’s last week according to the Jewish Feasts.



2. He rose from the dead – Mathew 28:1-8 – Vss. 5-6, “The angel answered and said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said.’”

- The resurrection of Jesus was verified by:
 - **The Empty Tomb** – The women who went to the tomb first to finish anointing the body, and then the disciples who went to see if what the women had said was true.
 - **The many physical appearances** – to Mary Magdalene, to the other women, to the two men on the Road to Emmaus, Peter, James, and John at the Sea of Galilee, and to 500 people at one time.
- The resurrection of Jesus is necessary because:
 - **It validated His claim to be the Savior sent from God.**
 - **Without the physical resurrection of Jesus, there would be no Christian Faith**, we would still be lost in our sins, there would be no hope of life beyond the grave, and no hope of ever seeing our deceased loved ones again.
 - **It proves His deity** – therefore, to receive Him as our Savior, we must also submit unto Him as our Lord.