

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY



LAST TIME

- The Work of Christ
 - Cross

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

- The person of Christ.
- The work of Christ.

THE WORK OF CHRIST

- The Death of Christ
 - The cross
- The Atonement
 - The resurrection

THE RESURRECTION

- If Christ died, then he was laid in a tomb.
- The tomb was empty.
- What happened to the body?

SCRIPTURAL DATA

- Two primary passages
 - 1 Corinthians 15:3-5
 - Mark 16:1-8

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:3-5

ESV

1 CORINTHIANS 15

- The earliest “creed”
- The statement feels and sounds like something that Paul is quoting.
- Doesn't match his style.
- This statement has been dated to within 5 years of the crucifixion!

1 CORINTHIANS 15

- Paul lists the four essential items for the Gospel.
 1. The death of Christ for our sins.
 2. His burial.
 3. His resurrection on the third day.
 4. Postmortem appearances to people.

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

MARK 16:1-8

ESV

MARK 16

- Earliest of the Gospels.
- Account of eyewitnesses that saw the empty tomb.

JEWISH IDEAS

- The Jewish concept of resurrection was one of a physical event and a physical nature.
- BUT... the Jews usually saw this as an end times resurrection.
- There was no reason for them to assume, even if they thought Jesus would rise, that it would be immediately.

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THEORIES

- Resurrection Theories.
 - Literal Interpretation
 - Conspiracy Theory
 - Apparent Death Theory
 - Mythology Theory
 - Subjective Vision Theory
 - Objective Vision Theory
 - Interpretation Theory

LITERAL INTERPRETATION

- Earliest position.
- Early church fathers held (we do too!).
- Jesus dead body was laid in a tomb and then it was actually, physically raised to life and then taken into heaven.

CONSPIRACY THEORY

- Much later theory.
- Actually version mentioned in Matthew 28.
- Resurrection was made up by the disciples.
- They stole the body and hid it.

While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

MATTHEW 28:11-15

ESV

PROBLEMS WITH CONSPIRACY

- Outrageously implausible psychologically.
- Obviously the disciple believed what they were saying, even unto death.
- Requires looking at it backwards, from a Christian theology, not a Jewish one.

APPARENT DEATH THEORY

- End of the 18th century.
- Proponents always wanted a natural explanation of things.
- Feeding 5000- a cave full of bread and fish.
- Walking on water- a wooden platform.

APPARENT DEATH THEORY

- Swoon Theory
- Luke, the doctor, might have been in on it by drugging him.
- Cool tomb, even electricity from the storm revived.

PROBLEM WITH APPARENT DEATH

- Romans knew how to kill people.
- Romans knew when people were dead.
- Got out of a sealed tomb, overpowered guards, etc. No plausible.

MYTHOLOGY THEORY

- Early 1800's
- Essentially argued for a later date for the Gospels to allow time for myth to appear.
- Nothing more than legend and story.

PROBLEM WITH MYTHOLOGY

- No correlation to other mythologies.
- No causal connection between the myth and the actions of the disciples.
- Not enough time passed between the events and the records for myth to arise.

SUBJECTIVE VISION THEORY

- Hallucination Theory.
- People thought they saw a risen Jesus.
- It was nothing more than their own subconscious grappling with their guilt and doubt.

PROBLEM WITH SUBJECTIVE VISION

- Hallucinations cannot be shared among people. They are based only on what is already in your mind.
- They all would have assumed that Jesus was in Abraham's Bosom, where all righteous people went. They would have had visions of him there.
- Does not explain the empty tomb.

OBJECTIVE VISION THEORY

- Instead of hallucinations, these were visions given to the disciples by God.
- They were not real but rather a simple vision.
- Some believe that Jesus was raised from the dead but did not appear physically.

PROBLEM WITH OBJECTIVE VISION

- Paul held, quite strongly, to a physical resurrection.
- We have both physical and vision appearances of Christ. They are distinct.
- All of the gospels held to this as well.

LOTS OF OTHER VARIATIONS

- UFO Theory
- Substitutionary Theory
- Etc

QUESTIONS

The background is a deep blue with a wavy, undulating texture that resembles water or a nebula. It is sparsely populated with small, bright white and light blue dots, giving it the appearance of a starry night sky or a distant galaxy. The overall effect is serene and cosmic.

NEXT TIME

- Next Week
- Read:
 - Defenders 2-6- The Doctrine of Christ- Pages 125-154