The Battle for the Resurrection

Part 1: The Battle for the Bible

The Bible (Word of God) has always been tested (challenged) for its reliability from the beginning of time. This has been happening ever since the serpent in the Garden of Eden began to put doubt into the heart of Eve by asking her “Did God really say?” In other words, he asked her “Are you really sure He meant what He said?” When he did this Satan was causing Eve to question what she heard God say to her. In the same way we are seeing many people today continue to question the Bible.

Not only has Satan been working to cause people to doubt that the Bible is the word of God, but he now is also causing many to question what it really means. In other words, Satan has been able to put enough doubts into people’s minds so that now they wonder if the words in the Bible mean what we have always thought them to mean.

The attack on the Bible today is an attack on the inspiration and interpretation of the Bible. As the culture has changed over time and has become more liberal in its interpretation of the Bible there are many who are beginning to question the truth found in Scripture. If the Bible cannot be trusted to be the source of truth then how can the way it reports the resurrection of Christ be trusted as well?

In the first part of our study, we will be looking at what the Bible has to say about itself. As we study these Scriptures we will begin to understand why we can trust Scripture to give us accurate information about reality, about God and about the resurrection of Christ. Here are just a few of the reasons why we can trust Scripture:

1. The Bible is the Word of God. Jesus said in **John 10:35** that all the words contained in Scripture must be fulfilled. In **Matthew 5:18** He also says, “For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished!” The Word of God will be fulfilled before the end of time. The Apostle Paul tells us in **2 Timothy 3:16** that all Scripture has value and should be used as a foundation for life.
2. God Cannot Err. God does not lie (Hebrews 6:18, Titus 1:2), God is the source of all truth (John 14:6), His Word is truth (John 17:17).
3. Therefore, the Bible Cannot Err. Satan has worked since the beginning of time to cause people to doubt the Word of God. In Genesis 3:1 he asked Eve “Did God really say that?” He was trying to undermine God’s Word and cause Eve to question it. One objection that is raised against the Bible today is this argument: “The Bible may be God’s Word in some sense, but it is also human words. It had human authors, and ‘to err is human.’ Hence, we are to expect some errors in the Bible” (p. 24).

Since the Bible cannot err, we can trust in what it says. Therefore, what it tells us regarding the resurrection of Christ can be trusted as well.

**The Battle for the Resurrection**

Just like the Bible has been challenged, so is the resurrection of Christ.

What does the Bible say regarding the resurrection?

“The Bible teaches that Christ arose from the grave bodily. His body was a physical, material organism, just like any other human body. Therefore, it follows that Christ arose in a physical, material body” (p. 25).

Many theologians today, however, are teaching that the resurrection was not physical or material.

Geisler provides the following chart to show the difference between the orthodox view (Biblical) and the Unorthodox View (secular) of the resurrection.

Orthodox View Unorthodox View

The Same Body A Different Body

(Numerically Identical) (Numerically Distinct)

A Material Body Not a Material Body

In the Flesh Not in the Flesh

In History Not in History

(In Space and Time) (Not in Space and Time)

DQ: Why, in your opinion, do so many people outside of the Christian faith reject the teaching of Scripture regarding the resurrection of Christ?

DQ: After reading the following Scriptures (Luke 24:39; 24:42, 43; John 20:27; Matt. 28:9; John 1:14; Acts 2:31; 1 John 4:2 and 1 Cor. 15:4) what does Scripture teach regarding the resurrection and why is this so important for us today?

The Importance of the Bodily Resurrection

The resurrection of Christ is not only a historical event that was witnessed by over 500 people who saw Him after His resurrection, but it is vital to the survival of the Christian faith.

**1 Cor. 15:1-5** “**Now I make known to you, brothers *and sisters*, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, by which you also are saved, if you hold firmly to the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”**

**Romans 10:9 “that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;”**

**1 Cor. 15:12-19 “Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised;and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith also is in vain. Moreover, we are even found *to be* false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ only in this life, we are of all people most to be pitied.”**

**Hebrews 2:14 “Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, so that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,”**

Conclusion

In conclusion, if Jesus Christ has not been raised from the dead then our faith is useless. We are to be pitied more than anyone else because we have been lied to and manipulated. Believing in the resurrection is essential to being able to call oneself a Christian. To not believe in the resurrection, but to also call yourself a believer, is to bear false witness against yourself.

Not only is this doctrine essential for salvation, but it also is supported with a lot of evidence. One of the strongest arguments to support the resurrection is the dramatic change that took place in the disciples after they saw Him. James became a believer even though he doubted Christ during His earthly ministry. All the others, who ran away and left Him alone in the garden, were willing to face persecution and martyrdom not just because they believed in Jesus, but because they boldly proclaimed they were witnesses to the resurrection.

Final discussion and prayer.