

FOUR FACTS ABOUT THE RESURRECTION

² *There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.*

Matthew 28:2

- I. Christianity should have been a footnote in history. How not to start a religion.
 - A. Don't get crucified in a culture of honor.
 - B. Don't be Jewish.
 - C. Don't be from Galilee - geography matters.
 - D. Don't be a carpenter.
 - E. Don't be new when old is sacred.
 - F. Don't abolish all class distinctions: Rich/poor, male/female, master/slave.
 - G. Don't trust women and riff raff.
 - H. Don't demand absolute moral behavior.
 - I. Don't confront ancient intolerance with a new exclusive claim.
 - J. Don't promise shame, disgrace, and social stigma in a culture of honor.
 - K. Don't be historical.
 - L. Don't claim God has entered into human flesh
 - M. You can't keep a secret in a group society.
 - N. Don't encourage people to check out the facts.

O. Don't teach anything out of the norm.

- * Apart from the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead, no one would have believed the Christian gospel.

II. Four after-Easter insights

A. In the light of the resurrection, God was different.

1. The transcendent creator, King, Judge, and Lord of history became the immanent God of the impossible who does wonders here and now for sinners, servants, and supplicants.

B. In light of the resurrection, the cross was different.

1. Before - tragedy / After - triumph
2. Before - darkness / After - glory
3. Before - ending / After - a stupendous new beginning

C. In light of the resurrection, Christ was different.

1. The shallow view of the carpenter, teacher, healer, prophet, the Jesus of sermons and parables doing deeds of kindness is replaced, by the risen God-man, the universal, timeless, divine redeemer.

D. In light of the resurrection, their idea of the world at large was transformed.

1. Their view of what was ultimately real - the visible, concrete, and tangible - was transformed before them into the spiritual world, of the changeless, timeless, and real truths that are permanent and immortal.