

Rejoice

I. Slide1 THEY WERE SKEPTICAL, I WOULD BE TOO

A. *Why do you seek the living among the dead?* Why are you looking for an **alive person** in a **dead place**?

1. All of the **women** (Mary, Mary n Mary, & Salome), & all the **disciples**, they expected Jesus to **stay dead**.
2. There was no one outside the tomb counting down **10,9,8,...**
They expected Him to **stay dead**. **We** would think that too, because that's what dead people do, they **stay dead**.

B. Slide2 John 20:1,2 *Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."*

1. When Mary looks in the tomb, when Pete & Jn later look in the tomb, **not one of them assumed the res.**
2. They assumed, what you & I would assume, **someone stole the body**.

II. Slide3a SEEMS LIKE NONSENSE

A. Today, pretty much everyone acknowledges *Jesus is a historical figure*.

1. **But** if you think the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is **nonsense**...you're in good company. *Jesus' best friends, on the morning of, felt the same way.*
2. P&J run to the tomb because they think what Mary told them was **nonsense**.
3. Slide3b Lk.24:10-12 *Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, 11 but these words seemed to them **an idle tale** (nonsense), and **they did not believe them**. 12 But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home **marveling** (wondering) *at what had happened*.*

- a) Here's what's amazing about the narrative & the witness of the NT doc's.
They record the *skepticism and unbelief* from the very people who would be the spokesman for this new movement. [Jesus, who is running your *public relations*?]
- b) They documented their own *disbelief*. They were not *superstitious* people. They gave up *all hope*. Right now...they were just trying to *stay alive*. (open season on His followers)
- (1) That Sunday evening they were *behind locked doors...for fear* of the Jews. (Jn.20:19)
- (2) They weren't running through the streets saying, *there's a miracle, he's alive!* No they're *hiding*. [Then Jesus pays them a visit...]
4. Slide4a Lk.24:36-38 *As they were talking about these things* (hiding in the room), *Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!"*
37 *But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.*
38 *And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?"*
5. Slide4b Then later in Lk.24:46-47 *Jesus said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Then something that changed everything... Slide4c 48 You are witnesses of these things.* (the res)
- a) They were eye witnesses to *the Event* that *Changed The World*.
- b) By the *resurrection*...christianity *rises or falls*.
- (1) Slide5 1 Cor.15:13,14;17 *But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain... 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile & you are still in your sins.*

III. Slide6a WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE THE RESURRECTION TODAY?

A. Because of *Their Testimony*

1. Listen to Jesus in Mrk.16:13,14 *And they* (2 Emmaus disciples) *went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them. 14 Afterward he* (Jesus)

appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because Slide6b (they didn't believe He rose from the dead, Nope!) they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen!!!!!!

B. We believe because of their witness/testimony

1. Slide6c *Whose? Matthews* eye witness account in his gospel. **Mark** via Peter's testimony. **Luke** set in order eyewitness accounts. **John's** account. **Peter's**. **Paul's**. *And even* Jesus' brother **James** (He shows up late in the story. *Now, imagine this, if you have a brother.* He declares his brother is **His Lord**. *Now, what would it take for you to believe your brother is God?*)
2. **Wait**, are the Gospels a *reliable-historical-witness*?
 - a) What about all 4 Res stories, in the gospels, being *different???*
 - (1) Well, every good **detective** knows if 4 witnesses to a crime told *the exact same story*, you know they **colluded/conspired** their story.
 - b) What about the 1st century *women* witness, wasn't even credible in court. *Right so if you were concocting a story*, you **wouldn't** have your 1st eyewitness a woman (let alone around 5).¹
 - c) Slide6d Oh yah & He was also seen alive by a *hand-selected 500+ eyewitnesses* named in 1 Cor.15. *Hand selected?* yes. Acts 10:40,41 *but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, 41 not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate & drank with him after he rose from the dead.*

C. Their witness was/is enough. [Ps: an eyewitness is *not hearsay/rumor*]

1. *In other words*, it was God's intentional design **not** for the risen Christ to be seen **by everyone** - *not even* in the day when it happened. **And not today**, as much as we might wish we could.
 - a) *So* He appeared to *a limited group* of people who **saw** it & **wrote** about it. *So everyone who hears or reads* this witness will be able know the assurance that God provides for the world about the resurrection of his Son. *That's the way God designed for us to know.*

¹ John Polkinghorne

IV. Slide7a **IT'S AN EVENT THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING**

- A. So, the foundation of our faith is **an Event**, an **extraordinary Event**. To grant us *forgiveness of sin*. To heal our hurts *like the signs/T-shirts in the skit Slide7b* (Alone/Child of God. Sadness/Happy. Let Down/Lifted Up. Broken/Whole. Shame/Honor. Anxiety/Peace. Addiction/Free. Hopeless/Hope. Anger/Joy. Hate/Love)
- B. Slide8a Peter - who **believed**. **Then unbelieved** (ran away). **Then denied ever believing to a lil school girl**. **Then re-believed** (res). **Then** died for his **beliefs** (Eusibius/historian said, Peter was crucified at age 70, over in Rome, by Nero, in AD69, upside down, after preaching the risen Lord for 37 years)
1. Slide8b Peter, as an old man said in 1 Pe 1:3,4, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**, 4 to an **inheritance** (is for kids?) *that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you* (not something he **believed** as a child (most Jews didn't bel in heaven) **but** something he **saw** as an adult).*
- C. Slide9 When the 2 Mary's were told by the 2 angels go tell the disciples He is risen, in route Jesus met them and He greeted them w/only 1 word **Rejoice!**
1. Mt.28:9 *And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshipped Him.*
 2. Rejoice - That **inward** emotion of **JOY** that finds expression in **outward** shouting, singing, leaping, and dancing...or in **worship** like here.
 3. Rejoice - *our Happy Source is in the Resurrection of our Jesus.*
 4. Rejoice - *in a transformation only Jesus can bring you.*
 - a) A **lizard** w/snorkel gear is *not equal to* a **frog**. **And** neither is...
A **caterpillar**, that *clips a set of wings* on its back, then call itself a **butterfly**.
And we can't *put on a new set of clothes* & call ourselves **clean from sin**.
(1) **An inward** transformation must take place. **We must be born from above**
(2) Christ must invade our life & perform a creative act, a *metamorphosis transformation*.
 - b) Slide10-12 What a **caterpillar** calls the end, the rest of the world calls a **butterfly**.

c) Are there any **caterpillars** this morning that would like to become a **butterfly**?

D. **Invitation:**

E. **Announce:**

1. New Believers (bibles) at bottom of both side stairs.
2. Photo Booths outside.
3. Wongs Donuts.