

**The John Ankerberg Show**

**What Proof Exists That Jesus  
Rose From the Dead?**

**TRANSCRIPT OF**

**A lecture by Dr. Robert A. Morey**

**given at the Ankerberg Theological Research Institute**

**Orlando Apologetics Conference**

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# What Proof Exists That Jesus Rose From the Dead?

**Dr. Robert A. Morey**

Introduction by Dr. John Ankerberg

## Introduction

by

**Dr. John Ankerberg**

The information in this program was taped live at the Ankerberg Theological Research Institute's Apologetics Conference in Orlando, Florida. Each year we invite laymen, students and pastors to attend this conference and hear seven or eight of the best professors and apologists in Christianity teach on topics of vital interest to all of us.

Our instructor for this session is Dr. Robert Morey. Dr. Morey is a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary, where he received both the Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees. He is the author of books on a wide range of subjects, including the masterfully written *Death and the Afterlife*, as well as *When Is It Right to Fight?*, *How to Keep Your Faith While in College* and a

number of other titles for both popular and scholarly audiences.

Dr. Morey is director of the Research and Education Foundation of Austin, Texas, and he's been a behind-the-scenes researcher, colleague, and encourager to The John Ankerberg Show staff for a number of years. He's a tenderhearted and compassionate pastor and a challenging teacher. [Note: Currently Dr. Morey's ministry, "Truth Seekers," is located in Pennsylvania.]

Dr. Morey's topic for this session is: "What Proof Exists That Jesus Rose From the Dead?" As you listen to this information, it will be my prayer that God will increase your faith and draw you closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Dr. Robert A. Morey

Well, we have a lot of material to cover this afternoon. Would you please begin by turning to Romans Chapter 1? Romans is the passage that deals with the subject of God's plan of salvation. The pivotal and crucial issue that makes the Christian scheme of atonement work is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. That He died—and you will die and I will die one day, if the Lord tarries—is no shock in terms of the natural realm of things. People die. But that by His Resurrection God declared publicly to all men that this was indeed "My Son" and the Resurrection means that the atonement was accepted and that salvation is now free; it is a gift, because it is based upon the finished work of Christ.

This is where Paul begins his explanation of the Gospel in Chapter 1: "Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel,..." Notice he does not say "the gospel of Christ," he says, "the gospel of God," in the context "God the Father." He wants to prove to the Jew that the Christian Gospel is not a Johnny-come-lately; it is not something that Paul invented or Y'shua suddenly invented or maybe created out of the Mystery religions and pagan religions, but the Gospel is rooted in the Old Testament and is the Gospel of the Father as well as the Son. So it's the Gospel of God which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures. So the Gospel of



justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone is not limited to the New Testament but is to be found in the Old Testament Scriptures.

And this Gospel, while being pronounced ahead of time, has in focus His Son—who has two natures—who was born as a descendent of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power by the Resurrection, out from among the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord.” This is how he begins this theological treatise. He lays it right on the table.

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, as he states in 1 Corinthians 15, then you are here wasting your time. I am wasting my time. We are to be pitied. We could have been out last night “night-clubbing it.” We could all have huge hangovers today. We could all feel groggy and full of headaches and say, “Oh, I had a wonderful time last night! Those poor Christians, they don’t know how to have a good time.” We would be of all men most miserable, for we would be stupid! Wasting our time on religion; our money on religion. I decided a long time ago, if the Bible is not true, I’m putting it in the trash can and I’m going out, because all there is to this life is what you get, honey, and I’m going to go get all the fun and pleasure I can get and then die. “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die.”

But you see, the Resurrection means in the Christian Gospel that God the Father said, “This man who declared He was the Son of God, I now reveal that He *was* by raising Him from the dead.” “Out from among the dead.” The Greek is very emphatic. This is why the Resurrection of Christ is viewed not as a myth or a legend; it is not to be reduced to, “Oh, Christ arose because as long as you think of Him and you cherish the memory in your heart, He’s still alive.” You’ve seen those television shows and the guy says, “Now, Timmy, your mother died, but she didn’t really die as long as there’s someone who remembers her.” Isn’t that wonderful? I don’t think Timmy was comforted in the least. I wouldn’t be. But you see, the Resurrection of Christ is not viewed as myth or legend; it’s not upper story; it’s not *heilsgeschichte*; it is not something that is reduced to Aesop’s fables or to Alice in Wonderland. But it is

supported by what Dr. Luke calls in Acts Chapter 1, “many convincing proofs.”

Turn with me to Luke Chapter 1. Remember the Gospels give us the manifestation of the Son of God; the Book of Acts—the proclamation of that manifestation; the Church epistles give us the explanation of the proclamation of the manifestation; and then the general epistles give us the application of that explanation. And here Luke tells us about all the things that Jesus—notice the next word—“began.” Did you know that when Jesus died, He did not go out with a whimper but with a shout of victory?! *Tetelestai!*—“paid in full.” And when He left this world, it wasn’t the end but according to Luke, it was the beginning. “The things that Jesus began to do and teach until the day when He was taken up after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen, to these He also presented Himself *alive* after His suffering by many convincing proofs.” In other words, something is not true simply because you believe it. Now, you see, the world at this point has adopted that as their view of religion.

“Oh, you follow Buddha. Does it make you happy, honey? Oh, that’s good.”

“Oh, you’re a Hindu. Does it make you feel all warm? Oh, that’s wonderful.”

“Oh, it’s true.”

“You believe in that? Oh, honey, then that’s fine. Whatever you believe is true. If you believe it, it’s true.”

Well, you see, Christians sometimes fall into that trap and they say, “Well, the Bible is true because I believe it.”

“You ask me how I know He lives? Well, I’ve got these chills that just run up and down when I sing the hymns and I know He lives because I just know He lives.” And they go around and around in circular arguments.

You see, Christianity was never to be viewed as an abstract, philosophical system that is true simply on the basis of [the] fact that you buy into it. This is why Jesus did His miracles; this is why God



gave the Apostles miracles—to verify that what they were saying was indeed true. In other words, Christianity teaches you should believe the Gospel *because* it is true. You should believe in the Resurrection of Christ *because* it was real; it was factual; it actually happened. It is not the reverse—the Resurrection of Christ is true just because you believe it. You are expected to believe it because it is based upon good and necessary arguments and what Luke calls “convincing proofs”—appearing to them over a period of 40 days.

I think it’s important that we begin with the definition concerning the Resurrection and that we get our terms straight. This is what I mean when I speak of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: the same physical body which was born of Mary, grew into manhood, was crucified on the cross, was sealed into the tomb, was revived and glorified as the Spirit of Jesus reentered it. This same body ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right-hand of God the Father, the Almighty, and this body will one day return to this world to resurrect and to judge all men.

I fully accept the Reformed teaching that Jesus Christ cannot be in the Eucharist of the Mass, for the body of Christ, still being human—the two natures—His humanity has not been dissolved so He is nothing but sheer divinity. He is both light. He is both God the very God, man the very man, light the very light and right now at the hand of the Father, He is still the glorified man and divine Son of God at the same time. Where is the body of Christ? Seated at the right-hand of the Father. In order for His human body to be human, it has to have a finite cutting off period. The body of Christ is at the right-hand of the Father and cannot be in a piece of bread sitting on some altar someplace.

So we’re talking about the body of Christ. Now, we have to be careful to define our terms here. Christ’s body before the Resurrection was a humble body. If you pricked it, did He not bleed? If He fell, did He not hurt? Did He not cry? Did He not feel hunger? It was a humble body; it was a natural body. The body of Jesus Christ was not a phantom, it was a real, natural body. It was an earthly body. It was mortal. It was corruptible. It was a real, human body.

He was man of very man. But after the Resurrection, instead of a humble body, He now has a glorified, a glorious body; a body of glory. Instead of simply a natural body, He has a supernatural body. And the attributes and the capabilities have been expanded. Instead of an earthly body, He now has a heavenly body. Instead of a mortal and corruptible—He is both immortal, in that He died, He died once to God and He cannot die again; and incorruptible—He can never decay. If a person says, “Do you mean that the Resurrection of Christ was just the same body that hung upon the cross?” Yes and no. No and yes. Yes, it was the same body; but no, it wasn’t the same body. Because when He was resurrected, it was not as other people had been resurrected, for they had one cradle but two crypts. When Lazarus was resurrected, did he come forth in a glorified, incorruptible, immortal body? No. Two crypts; one cradle. But this One, when He was raised from the dead, had the Resurrection body—glorious, supernatural, heavenly, transformed. But it is still the body of Christ. So we have to watch out for two extremes. One would say, “It has to be exactly the same body; it can’t be altered in any way.” So in many churches they always see Jesus, how? Impaled on the cross or as a weak baby. Either way, He’s weak. But neither are we to think that somehow that body got run away with, dissolved, it’s gone, and Jesus was given some new body or something. No, no, no.

You cannot deny the Resurrection of that body, for somehow—and we do not know metaphysically; the Bible is not a textbook dealing with the intricacies of such things as the metaphysical issue of how do the molecules...how will they be recycled and resuscitated and reconstituted or whatever it was. We’re not told that. We’re told that God knows how to resurrect flesh. He knows how to put together that body so that the body of Christ was transformed. It is glorious, it is supernatural, and that’s why Paul says we no longer know Jesus Christ according to the flesh. He is no longer the humble servant walking the dusty roads of Palestine. He is now the Lord of glory. And when John encountered Him, he fell at His feet as if he were dead. The glory that shown. The eyes. The brass. The brightness of the Son. And



when He returns, He will not return in weakness, He will return in triumph, for He is the King of glory.

Now, what are these “convincing proofs” that the Bible speaks of and ones that we can add in terms of our own culture and understanding? The first line of evidence will have to be biblical proof. And this is a word that you say to those who have questions of whether or not the Bible even teaches a bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. Well, maybe the Bible is just saying, you know, Jesus arose as a spirit or a ghost, much like the Jehovah’s Witnesses and other cultic groups.

What can you say to someone who says, “Does the Bible teach that Jesus was bodily raised from the dead? I mean, was it really the body? Did that really happen—a cadaver got resuscitated and the corpse got up and got out?” Well, the first line that you should give to someone who questions is the fact that, let’s begin with this question: Was it possible for a resurrection to take place? And possibility is secured by the fact that there were many bodily resurrections which took place in both the Old and New Testaments. Thus, you cannot out of hand say, “Oh, it was not possible that the body of Christ should be resurrected,” because there were other resurrections in which corpses were revived and they became alive. And once you admit, in one case, just using the Socratic method, if you admit in one situation it actually happened, then it’s possible in the second.

For example, turn to 1 Kings 17. We don’t have much time to delve deeply into these passages. I always like to stay in a passage and make it come alive. I remember one time preaching how they broke that roof through and lowered that man down and a man on the front row said he knew he felt dust just coming down on him and was looking for those pieces of wood any moment.

In 1 Kings 17, we’re told that, “Now it came about after these things that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became sick.” Many of you know the story. His sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. She said to Elijah—and remember, she was a mom, and I hate to say it

but if something happened to one of my children, my wife would be the first one to say, “Well, someone wasn’t keeping his end up!” And maybe the Lord somehow wasn’t working things out right here. “What do I have to do with you, O man of God?” You can just sense that little bit of bitterness, that little bit of anger. After all that she had done, why did God do this to her? He’s returned evil for good. “You have come to me to bring my iniquity to remembrance and then you’re going to kill my son because of something I did.” You say, “How can people think like that?” They *do* think like that.

My little baby boy had meningitis as an infant and we had to leave him in the hospital. And my wife said, “Honey, is the Lord going to kill John because I haven’t done my devotions like I should have done?” I said, “Honey, what type of God is that?” But you see, if your child is sick, “Is God getting him?”

See, she had a wrong view—low view of God. And she, “Maybe he’s going to be dead...killed because of my sin!”

He said, “Give me your son.” And he took him from her bosom. She was holding that baby, carrying him up to the upper room where he was living, laid him on the bed, called to the Lord, “O Lord my God, hast thou also brought calamity to the widow with whom I am staying by causing her son to die?” You can hear the groan. “Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and called to the Lord and said, ‘O Lord my God, I pray, let the child’s soul return into him,’ and the Lord heard the voice of Elijah and the soul of the child returned into him and he revived.”

And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house and he called over to that woman. He said, “I’ve got something to show you.” He brought that boy around the corner. She didn’t see Elijah anymore; she only saw the boy. Would you just love to see that? Grabbing him, kissing him, stroking every hair to make sure everything’s there.

He said, “See, your son is alive.” And then she said, “Now I know....” I thought she knew many



times before, but she said, “Now I know that you’re a man of God and the word of the Lord is in your mouth and it’s true.”

Was this a resurrection of a spirit? Elijah came down the stairs: “Don’t worry! Your son is a ghost! Ha-ha! The spirit!” She said, “I don’t want no spirit, I want the body alive! I can’t hug a spirit! I can’t feed a ghost! I can’t caress...I want my boy!” He said, “Remember, resurrection is only spirits and ghosts,” and she said, “I’m not going to be satisfied...” Would you be satisfied with the ghost of your son? She wanted the flesh and that’s what she got—a bodily resurrection.

2 Kings Chapter 4, verse 18. This is with Elisha. Shift gears. “When the child was grown, the day came that he went out to his father to the reapers and he said to his father, ‘My head! My head!’ And he said to his servant, ‘Carry him to his mom.’ When he had taken him and brought him to his mother he sat on her lap until noon and then he up and died.” Talk about weeping; talk about wailing; talk about grief. “And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God.”

She had heard the story about Elijah. If it was possible for one—what was she thinking? Uh-huh, it’s possible for two! She laid him up there and shut the door and went out. She called to her husband and said, “Please send one of the servants, get one of the donkeys and I’m just going to run to the man of God.” She knew exactly where to go because she knew the story. “And he said, ‘Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath.’ And she said, ‘It will be well.’” Look at the faith of this woman! “Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, ‘Drive and go forward. Do not slow down the pace.’” She said, “Break all the speed limits, I don’t care what the cops say! We’re going not 55 but 75!”

“So she went and came to the man of God, to Mount Carmel, and when it came about when the man of God saw her at a distance that he said to Gehazi his servant, ‘Behold, yonder is the Shunammite. Please run now to meet her and say to her, “Is it well with you? Is it well with your hus-

band? Is it well with....”’” He knew something was up when he saw the dust flying and that woman is just tearing out! Something’s wrong!

And look at the faith: her first answer is, “It is well.” Why? Because I’ve got hold of you. She came to the man of God, to the hill. She got hold of his feet. Gehazi came to push her away. The man of God said, “Let her alone, for her soul is troubled. The Lord has hidden from me what the problem... He hasn’t told me!” She said, “I’ll tell you what the problem is. Did I ask for a son? And then I told you, ‘Don’t you deceive me. Don’t lie. Don’t play with me. If you’re going to give me a child, give me a child, but don’t deceive me!’ And then he said to Gehazi, “You’d better gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand, go your way. If you meet anyone, do not salute him. If they salute you, don’t answer. Lay my staff on the child’s face.” And the mother of the child said, “As the Lord lives and you yourself live, I will not leave you.” She said, “I’m going to make sure you make it to my house. And if you think you’re going to stop by the Burger King, you aren’t stopping! And if you’ve got to go to the bathroom, you’d better hold it, because I’m not going to leave you for five seconds because you’re going to do what the man of God said!”

So he passed on before, laid the staff on the lad’s face. There was neither sound nor response, so he returned to meet her and told them the lad has not awakened. When Elisha came into the house, behold, the lad was dead, laying on his bed. He entered, shut the door behind them, prayed to the Lord. He went up...he remembered the story of Elijah! He said, “And I was supposed to get a double portion. Remember? Not just one jet engine, I get two.” He laid on the child, put his mouth to mouth, eye to eye, hand to hand, stretched himself. The flesh of the child became warm. He returned, walked in the house—you know he was praying—went up, stretched himself again, and then all of a sudden the boy sneezed seven times. And the lad opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi and he said, “Call the Shunammite woman.” He called her, and when she came in, he said, “Take up your son.” I’m a daddy. Ooh. Um! “Then she went in and fell at his feet and



bowed herself to the ground and she took up her son.” Was this a bodily resurrection? Was this a spirit? Was this a ghost? Was this a phantom? Ghosties and ghoulies and things that go bump in the night? It’s a bodily resurrection.

Look at verses 31-37, as we did. Turn to Chapter 13, verses 20-21. This is one of the “weird” passages. “And Elisha died and they buried him. Now the bands of the Moabites would invade the land in the spring of the year. And as they were bearing a man, they saw a marauding band and they threw the man into the grave of Elisha and when the dead man touched the bones of Elisha, he got resurrected, stood up and got out of there!”

Now you understand why I call it a weird passage. An unbeliever says, “Isn’t that weird?” You say, “Yeah, the weirdest things do happen, you know.” This is one. They were trying to bury this guy and they were chickens and they were cowards and they said, “Oh, look who’s coming! They’re going to rout us! Throw that body down! We don’t have time to bury it!” They threw it...bones sticking up out of the ground. It hits them and the guy comes right back to life! A bodily resurrection. Not a spirit, not a ghost, not a phantom.

Turn to the New Testament, Matthew 9. Some of these stories are so near and dear to all of you. I’ll just mention that passage, maybe read a little bit of it, and then we must go our way. “While He was saying these things, behold, there came a synagogue official. He bowed down before Him and said, ‘My daughter has just died. But you come on, lay your hand on her and she’ll live.’”

And you can turn on down to verse 25, “When the crowd had been put out, He entered. He took her by the hand.” See that sweetness, that gentleness. He didn’t want this child startled. He took her by the hand and she was resurrected, she arose, she became alive. And He held that hand. And the other Gospel writers, you put them all together. He said, “Give her something to eat.” Called in the parents. “Here she is, Momma. Don’t worry, dear.” He just got it all fixed up. That was a bodily resurrection. That wasn’t a ghost or a phantom.

Chapter 27 of Matthew, verses 52-53. This is another in the category of the strange. “After the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom, the earth shook...the rocks split, the tombs were opened and many *bodies*...”—not souls, not spirits, not minds—“many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many people.” We’re not told what happened to them. I can speculate they went to heaven as the first wave offering, the proof of the coming Resurrection. But that’s a speculation. All we know is it says “*bodies* came out of the tombs.” These *bodies* went back to Jerusalem and they appeared to their relatives and friends. You can imagine the excitement. Someone’s at the door; they went to the door. “Oh! It’s Sara! It’s Sara!” And they see the grandmother. “God bless you; I’m going to Heaven.” Or whatever it was. We’re not told. But they saw that woman alive and they *know* they had buried her! That’s a bodily resurrection.

Luke 7:11-17. “It came about that he went to a city called Nain; his disciples were going along with Him accompanied by a large multitude.” You remember, as He approached the city He saw the funeral procession. That poor mom. His heart was touched. Mohammed was never touched. I’ve never read anything about him crying for people. There was no love, no compassion. He would say, “Get some swords and get these people out of the way; I’m coming to town.” But Jesus looked with a heart of compassion. Stopped the funeral procession, resurrected that boy and gave him back to his mom. Um! That’s why in verse 13 He said, “Don’t go on weeping.” Verse 14, “Young man, I say, Arise!” And he arose. That’s a bodily resurrection.

John 11:38-45. You know about Lazarus. That wasn’t a spirit resurrection. That actually happened.

Acts 9:40-42; Acts 20:9-12. Those are both bodily resurrections. As a matter of fact, every account of resurrection, outside of the resurrection of Christ, was bodily. There is no such thing in Scripture as the resurrection of a soul or spirit. They were body/bodily resurrections.



Well, once you prove it's *possible*, and sometimes it takes all of these passages just to get a Jehovah's Witness to admit, "Well, I guess it is possible." Whereas Socrates would have been content with one illustration, I have to give you a dozen!

Then, secondly, you say it was "probable." In John 10:17-18 Jesus said, "I have power to give life and I have power to take it back." He used the word for "authority." And remember, authority without power is meaningless. Power without authority is tyranny. He was not a tyrant. He said, "This I have received from my Father. I have the authority and I have the power to lay down my life. No one takes it from me." That's why He knocked them down on their fannies when they came up to Him and they said, "We want this person," and He said, "I am he." Knocked them right down on their fannies so they know no one *takes* the Son of God! He *went* to the cross for our sins. He can lay down His life as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep, and then He can take that life right back! That's what it says. It's getting probable here.

Secondly, He showed on His own body the very wounds that had been inflicted by the cross and by the spear. If this was not the same body which hung on a Roman gibbet, then He was being deliberately deceptive because He was leading them to the conclusion that it was the same Jesus with the same body that hung on the tree that now stood before them after the Resurrection.

That's why in Luke 24:39 He says, "Would you please examine my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Go ahead, touch me, examine me. A spirit, a ghost, a phantom does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." He was saying, "I have a body. If you want to know about it, reach over and touch it. I'm not a ghost; I'm not a spirit; it is the body." That's why He denied in this passage He was simply a spirit creature or ghost. The proof of it is they could touch Him; they could feel Him, the very wounds. And, of course, He then demonstrated, in the same Chapter, He ate and drank before them. "While they still could not believe it for joy"—and remember, the Apostles were the greatest skeptics when it came to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

They could not believe it, first, because they wouldn't; and later, because they couldn't. And "because they couldn't believe it for joy and were marveling, He said, 'Do you have anything here to eat?'" You would say, "Why did He ask that?" Ghosts don't eat. You put a piece of fish in a ghost's mouth and it'll hit the floor! Nothing between it and the floor! They gave Him a piece of fish. He deliberately picked it up. Well, He got that far. Put it between His teeth, took a bite, and they saw a hole in the fish. Chewed it and swallowed it. Why did He do that? Because ghosts don't eat and chew and swallow. He ate.

In Acts 10:40-41, He drank. He deliberately said, "I have a body, people! This is Me! This isn't a vision. You haven't been eating magic cream of mushroom soup here. This is the real thing." He showed them His body. He ate and drank before them. He denied that He was a spirit creature or a ghost. He even told doubting Thomas to touch and feel His body. I don't call him "doubting" Thomas, I just call him, "Thomas, the Missourian." I've got to see it to believe it.

Well, in John 20:24-29 He said, "Go ahead. Touch it. Feel it. Probe it. It's me. It's real and it's a real resurrection." And, of course, he gave that famous confession of faith: "My Lord and my God."

Fifthly, in Scripture we are told there are over 500 people who saw Him with their own eyes. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. Now, you would have to have an awfully large pot of magic mushrooms to get that many people hallucinating, and I worked with a drug program in Greenwich Village. My first book was *The Bible and Drug Abuse*, done my last year in seminary as I worked with drug addicts and prostitutes and pimps and go-go girls and boys. When they had acid parties, no one had "group" experiences. If everybody dropped—let's say, 20 people were in a room and they all dropped a tab of LSD, they didn't all share the same hallucination. That is not how hallucinogenic drugs work. Five hundred people saw the risen Christ.

We're also told in Romans 8:11 and in Philippians 3:21—please turn to Romans 8—that



our resurrection is to be patterned after His Resurrection. And guess what our resurrection is to be? "If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your..." hm, hm. Does it say "your spirit"? Does it say "your soul"? Or does it say, "your *bodies*." Well, if your body is going to be resurrected, and it's patterned after the Resurrection of Christ, the grammar is very clear: Just as God raised the body of Christ, He is going to raise *your* body.

Same thing in Philippians 3:21. "Where is our citizenship? It is in heaven, my friend, not on earth." Don't give me civil religion and wave the flag and think this is the kingdom of Christ. "Our citizenship is in heaven from which we eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform...." What? "The *body*." And the word body, *soma*, never means soul or spirit. "He will transform the body of our humility..." or humble state "...into conformity with..." whose body? "...His glorious body"—the body of His glory. Not some ethereal, Shekinah glory, like Tinkerbell with bright lights whizzing around. It is a body that's glorious! How will God do that? By the exertion of the power. Yeah, but does He have enough power? Well, this is the same power He uses to subject all things to Himself. So you can't move across the room unless the sovereignty of God holds the molecules together, not only of the floor, but of your feet.

2 John 7 tells us that He will return one day, how? And what were the cults denying? Those who were particularly trying to reduce Jesus to a phantom on the scale of being? I call Gnosticism "the religion of the divine escalator." Because you could move up the scale of being, like standing on a step and moving up the escalator. You could move up, up, up, toward ultimate divinity. And they said, "Well, Jesus was just on a higher step on His way up and He didn't really have a body." Well, you see what it says here in verse 7? "Many deceivers have gone out into the world; those who do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ...." Now, it doesn't say "came." It's saying you do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ is coming back "*in the flesh*." Poor Mary

Baker Eddy. She said there is no such thing as flesh. Well, that makes her an antichrist, according to this passage.

Well, what other kind of evidence is there? Well, secondly, there's physical proof. I mean, we've got the reality here. Christ's body was not in the tomb—Luke 24. They went and looked and it wasn't there. Other people came to verify what they were told, went there, and it wasn't there. And I went to a tomb they said was the tomb. I don't know if it was the tomb, but it could be the tomb. And I looked in and it was empty anyway. And I know if the body of Christ was around somewhere, somebody would have drug it up by now and put it on display and sold souvenirs. You say, "Well, what does that prove?" It just proves the body isn't there. That the body wasn't there doesn't prove the Resurrection, but the Resurrection could not be possible if the body was there. So it's necessary that the body not be there even though not being there doesn't necessarily prove He got alive and walked out. But, you see, it wasn't there.

Scripture tells us in Acts 2:25-27 the body could not be destroyed; it could not perish; God would preserve it by His power. And there an Old Testament passage is quoted in Acts 2:25-27 to verify it. So when Charles Taze Russell claimed that the body of Christ dissolved into gases, this is in violation of Scripture.

Thirdly, most important, Jesus said that He would raise His body on the third day. If you asked me, "What one passage would you go to if you were debating the head of all the Jehovah's Witnesses?" I would say, "John 2." I wouldn't bother with the Resurrection account. I would just go to John 2. Why? Well, in one great debate in New Jersey between Walter Martin and one of the leading Jehovah's Witnesses, as I watched with rapt attention, he finally got her to admit that if Jesus Christ arose bodily from the dead, He is God. But she said, "Of course, He didn't raise from the dead." He said, "I've been saving the best for the last." And he made her read John 2. "The Jews therefore answered," in verse 18, "and said, 'What sign do you show us, seeing that you do these things?' Jesus answered



and said, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.'"

The Jews looked and said, "Huh! He must be talking about this temple here! It took 46 years to construct this temple! Do you think you're going to raise it up in three days?! This guy is totally nuts!!" They didn't understand what Jesus was saying. John goes ahead and says, "You ninnyes. You don't understand what He was saying. He was not talking about Herod's temple, He was talking about the temple of His..." And he [Dr. Martin] got there and the woman went silent.

He said, "Say it." "Say it." "Say it!" "Say it!"

"BODY! All right, I'm ready to talk, Walter." She converted to Christ on the platform.

Jehovah's Witnesses grabbed this arm, Walter grabbed the other. And it looked as if the woman was going to be torn asunder. Got a couple of the brethren to help. This woman went back out and won a lot of Jehovah's Witnesses to Christ. This passage says, "the body." How do the Jehovah's Witnesses deal with it? They said, "Well, that just means...the body of Christ means the church. He wasn't speaking of His resurrection."

Would you look at the next verse? "When therefore..." the church, or "...He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this and they believed in the Scripture..." here calling what Jesus said Scripture—"...and the word which Jesus had spoken." Well, it looks like to me it's physical proof. The body wasn't there. He said He would remove it; make it alive; He would raise it. It seems to me.

Well, what if we say, "All right, the Bible teaches it. Okay, the cults are wrong, but who cares? I mean, what other evidence is there?" Well, there's legal proof.

Simon Greenleaf and many other Christians in the field of law and jurisprudence have told me or I've read their books where they say, "Now, listen. There is more than enough evidence for the Resurrection of Christ to convict Jesus of being alive than there is to convict a bank robber." Could you imagine an atheist objecting in court when 500 witnesses

fingered the man who robbed the local CC&B? "I saw him. He was the one. He did it." He would say, "Oh, but all these witnesses mean nothing. You could all have been taking LSD!" You mean there's not one honest person in those 500? "Oh, they're all liars, every one of them."

Well, you see, when an atheist argues against the Resurrection and throws all the evidence out, he would be letting every criminal out of court! It's like when they say, "Oh, you can't believe the Gospel writers because they were friends of Jesus and they were part of Christianity, so we have to discount anything they said." Well, that means every character reference and every character witness who was a friend of the defendant is thereby excused? The friends of Abraham Lincoln couldn't write a biography of Abraham Lincoln because they're prejudiced because they were friends? Lord, have mercy! It goes from bad to worse.

Lastly, there's the psychological proof. What do I mean by that? Well, you see, as you go through the Gospel accounts—and I see our time is winding up here, so we don't have the opportunity to go through them. You know them as well as I do. When Jesus died, the disciples were not prepared for that. The Gospel writers, as they looked back, said they didn't understand. They didn't understand. They were confused. They didn't understand. Jesus kept saying, "You ninnyes, you don't understand. Don't you know what I mean by leaven? Don't you understand what I mean?" They said, "Lord, what is this?"

He had to explain everything to them, and even then they didn't get it! When He came right out and said, "In three days I'm going to be dead." Peter said, "Not so, Lord! Not so!"

They even objected when they did understand. But when they nailed Him to that tree, they said, "Well, there goes our bandwagon to Glory." They were still thinking of sitting on one side and sitting on the other; Elijah on a white horse. The kingdom coming. The Romans kicked out. The Jews, the top dogs, and them at the trough getting it all! "Well, He's dead now." What did they do? They were



crushed. They were scattered. They came to the conclusion that Jesus wasn't really the spectacular Messiah they thought He was going to be. Bill Gothard would say they had failed expectations.

They gave up their faith, some of them, and they went back home to their previous occupation. The two on the road to Emmaus. "Well, we had hoped, you know, He was it, but, well,..." Other people went on fishing. Other people went back to tax collecting or went back to real estate or the stock market or whatever they were doing. When they gave up, they gave up! Didn't they understand? No, they didn't understand. Their eyes were still blinded.

They had this silliness, even as you see in Acts 1, they were still asking stupid questions: "Is this the time the kingdom will be...?" They still had "kingdoms" on the brain! I like what Spurgeon said. "We rebuke those Plymouth Brethren—all those prophecy nuts." He said, "Ye men of Plymouth, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? Get busy evangelizing."

They were asking about kingdoms and Jesus said, "It is not for you to know the chronology. Stop with the chart business. You're not going to figure it all out. Don't try to...you're not going to best Jeane Dixon. You're not going to put out a shingle: 'The Christian Fortune Teller League.' Get busy; occupy! You've got enough to do without worrying about the left hangnail of the fourth toe of the fifth foot of the sixth beast in the seventeenth chart." They still didn't understand. And they did not believe that Jesus would rise on the third day because they weren't hanging around, were they?

If I were there and I believed it, where would I be on the third day? I'd be at the tomb, bright and early. I want to see that stone rolled back. I want to see the Son of God come out. Lazarus came out. Jesus can come out. I want to see it. They didn't even bother to go look. As a matter of fact, the women, on the third day, were so much in disbelief, what did they go to the tomb for? To throw some Jean Nate on it! Put a little perfume on Him. They didn't go looking for an empty tomb. So they said, "Well, psychologically the disciples were expect-

ing a resurrection." They weren't! They went to sprinkle some perfume on the thing. They discussed how to get that stone out of the way and that old stinky body, what are we going to do?

They weren't expecting a miracle and so their expectations...it's the stupidist argument you ever want to hear. Feuerbach is the father of that nonsense. You believe in what you expect to happen, therefore it didn't really happen. I always say that if I'm up all night and I expect the sunrise, you mean the sun will not rise because I expect it to? But they didn't. They thought there would be a dead body in there. And when the women went in there, God had to send down a couple of angels to tell them, "Women! Get your attention! Any intelligent life down here? Get your attention now. Look at me. Look at me. Look, look. He's not here. Do you get it, honey?" "Well,..." "He's not here! He's alive. You got it, honey? He's alive!" "Don't seek the living among the dead." "What you hangin' around here for?" One of the women was still crying and carrying on. Later she didn't even see Jesus. She said, "Them gardeners just took Him away and threw His body out in some ditch someplace! Where'd you take that body?!" She wasn't expecting any resurrection.

And when the women came back, "He's alive! He's alive!" All those chauvinists said, "Oh, that's just them silly women! Hallucinating, running up and down, getting hysterical about nothing! They probably went...you know what? They went to the wrong tomb! Don't you think, Peter, that's what it was?" My wife doesn't have any sense of direction. "They went to the wrong tomb, looked in the place.... We better go check out the tomb. These crazy women, they'll never shut up unless we go and look at that dead body!" They didn't believe them. Ran to it and said, "Well, it looks like the right tomb. The stone is away. I don't know about that." Looked in there. When they became convinced of the Resurrection, they tried to tell everybody else and what did everybody else say? "You're nuts, man. You went to the wrong tomb." They would not believe on hearsay evidence.



The disciples were very clearly rational men. They weren't nutsos with purple mohawks and orange robes eating sunflower seeds as they danced nude in the moonlight. We have no indication that they were of the nut variety. And as any rational person, they had great difficulty believing that a cadaver got resuscitated. As a matter of fact, slowly by slowly they had to come to accept the Resurrection because of personal verification by sight and feel and texture before they would believe.

I'll never forget Francis Schaeffer one time at L'Abri, and it was so beautiful. He was preaching on the reality of the bodily resurrection. And if you haven't read Francis Schaeffer, shame on you. And he put it this way—it was so beautiful. He said, "The disciples had given up. They were out on the ship and they were busy doing their fishing, and someone called from the shore, 'Did you catch anything?' Well, that happens all the time. Somebody wants to buy. And they said, 'No, haven't got anything!' 'Try the other side of the boat!' That should have warned them something was going on. Somebody else had said that before. So they put it over and the nets just got full of fish and old Peter, he knew. Jumped in the water. And when they got there, there was a fire going. Jesus had already caught some fish and He was making it California style, right on the embers. He was a good cook." And Schaeffer said, "You know what? There were footprints in the sand. There were footprints in the sand. He was not a phantom Jesus, He was a real, physical, glorified body that left footprints in the sand." And with tears, he said, "Christ arose bodily. There were footprints in the sand."

Then those disciples, who were demoralized, discouraged, defeated, thought they were bamboozled and everything else, they became strong as lions. That old cowardly Peter, that wimp among wimps, who betrayed the Lord when he didn't have to, because John sent that little girl to invite him to come into the house to watch closer, so she wasn't an enemy, she was just following... "Why don't you come on in?" And Peter didn't know. He felt threatened and denied the Lord. What happened? He became the one who preached the Gospel right to their

faces, "And you with wicked hands crucified the Lord of glory."

And this little band of discouraged people turned the world upside down, established the Christian church, unfurled the Gospel flag in every nation, and we've now had it spread all over the world. Humanly, psychologically speaking, if I believed that I had been bamboozled by some nut and I wasted years following Him and He wasn't the one that I thought He was, I would not die for Him. Not me. Maybe I'm just too cowardly. I wouldn't die for some fraud. I wouldn't die for my pastor. I doubt I'd die for you. I doubt you'd die for me. I'd die for my wife and kids—I'll get my gun first. Somebody else is going to die. If I'm going, I'm taking some with me. Read my book, *When Is It Right to Fight?* But let me tell you, I'm not going to die for someone I feel is a fraud, who disappointed me, who failed my expectations that so thoroughly hurt me because He was removed and I felt helpless. And all I could do was run and hide and lock the doors and be in fear of people. What could have changed the psychology of these men? Well, maybe it was magic mushrooms? Neah. I've seen the result of drugs for years. Drugs don't turn you into valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ. Well, could it be they all got together and said, "Well, let's get together and make some money out of this." Well, if they did they didn't keep it and didn't have it...didn't last. As a matter of fact, they didn't make anything. They ended up poor and in exile. Dead, murdered, thrown in pots of oil. I mean, they had a rough time.

"Well, maybe they decided to do it for the applause of men." The only applause they heard was the applause as they got nailed. What would psychologically keep them believing in the face of the Jews who opposed them, the Romans who opposed them, their relatives, their friends, physical punishment unto death, intimidation, financial poverty, distress? Only one thing can adequately explain it: Jesus Christ really arose. They really met Him. And at first they could not believe because they wouldn't; then they couldn't believe because they couldn't for joy; and then they finally believed and the belief went to conviction and then they *knew*. And noth-



ing on earth or in the skies or beneath the earth could shake them of the conviction: Jesus Christ is alive! Nothing.

So, be gone with the “magic mushroom theory,” the “swoon theories,” the “cultic theories.” No, no, no, my friends. Jesus Christ arose from the dead. This is the Father’s verification of the completion of the perfection of the atonement. “He sat down at the right hand of God the Father, the Almighty,” which is the session of Christ. If you’ve never studied it, without the session of Christ, His actual sitting—remember, there was no furniture in the temple. The priests always had to do the work. But He sat down, because His work was *done*. And then He began his mediatorial reign, “for God hath made Him both Lord and Christ by raising Him from the dead.”

What then became the focus of the preaching of the Apostolic Church? As I said, the Gospels are

manifestation; the Acts is the proclamation—it tells us what they were preaching, what they were involved in. Here it is, Acts 2: “This man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death, and God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.”

Verse 32, “This Jesus God raised up again to which we are all eyewitnesses, having therefore been exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.”

Verse 36, “Therefore, let all the house of Israel know for certain that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Thank you very much.