

Easter 2026
Did Jesus Really Rise From The Dead?
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
April 5, 2026

Sermon Teaching

Big Idea: Faith is a **reasonable** step in the same direction that the **evidence** is pointing.
- Lee Strobel

“And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.” **1 Corinthians 15:17 (NLT2)**

Did Jesus really rise from the dead?

1. Was Jesus Really Dead After the Ordeal on The Cross? (pp. 9-29)

- Flogged / Crucifixion/ Spear in the side
- Jesus was buried by **Joseph Arimathea** a member of the Sanhedrin
- His body prepared for burial embalmed by 75lbs of gummy spices
- Placed in a tomb, Stone rolled in place (1,500lb)
- Roman seal, and Roman watch (possibly 4 guards) Matthew 27:62

Thomas, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘**UNLESS** I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not BELIEVE it.’” **John 20:24-25 (NIV)**

Notes: _____

2. Was His Tomb Actually Empty on the First Easter Morning? (pp. 31-58)

- The tomb was **discovered** empty **by women** – 1st century – unreliable witnesses
- If a **thief had stolen the body**, he would not have left the grave clothes -
- The **Jews & Romans** did not deny the empty tomb - Matthew 28:11-15
- **Caiaphas** – High Priest.18-37AD - **Pontius Pilate** – Roman Procreator of Judea

The angel said to the women, "**Do not be afraid**, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ **He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.** Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: '**He has risen from the dead** and is going ahead of you into Galilee. **Matthew 28:5-7a (NIV)**

“For what I received I passed on to you as of **first importance**: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures**, ⁴ that he was **buried**, that he was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to **Peter**, and then to the **Twelve**. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than **five hundred** of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to **James**, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to **me** also, as to one abnormally born. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **1 Corinthians 15:3-9 (NIV)**

3. Did Credible People See Jesus Alive After His Death? (pp. 59-85)

“After His suffering, He showed himself to these men and gave many **convincing proofs** that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of **forty days** and spoke about the kingdom of God.” **Acts 1:3 (NIV)**

- **John** died of extreme old age; **Andrew** was crucified;
- **James**, the elder son of Zebedee, was beheaded;
- **James** was beaten to death; **Bartholomew** was skinned alive;
- **Thomas** was run through with a lance; **Philip** was hung;
- **Thaddeus** was shot to death with arrows; **Simon** was crucified;
- **Peter** was crucified upside down during the persecution of Nero.

Jesus Claims To:

✓ **Be The Savior of the World**

Jesus said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: **Everything** must be fulfilled that is written about me in the **Law of Moses**, the **Prophets** and the **Psalms**."

⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and **repentance and forgiveness** of sins will be preached in **His name to all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. **Luke 24:44-48 (NIV)**

✓ **Forgive Sin**

Which is easier: to say, '**Your sins are forgiven**,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

⁶ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth **to forgive sins...."** Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." ⁷ And the man got up and went home. **Matthew 9:5-7 (NIV)**

✓ **Raise The Dead**

“For just as the Father **raises the dead** and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.” **John 5:21 (NIV)**

✓ **Be The ONLY Way To Heaven.**

Jesus said to him, "I am the **way**, and the **truth**, and the **life**; **no one** comes to the Father but through **Me**.” **John 14:6 (NASB)**

- **We Have A Trilemma:** Jesus is either Lord, a Liar, or a Lunatic?
- Jesus claimed to be the Savior of the world and validated it by rising from the dead. What will you do about it?

“That if you **confess** with your mouth, '**Jesus is Lord**', and **believe** in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be **saved**.” **Romans 10:9 (NIV)**

➤ **Who do you say Jesus is?**

My next right step, I will:

- [] Accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior
- [] Sign up for Spiritual Upgrade – April 12 -12:30 to 2:30 Lunch Provided
- [] Sign up for believer's baptism May 3, 2026



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Talk It Over

Big Idea: Faith is a reasonable step in the same direction that the evidence is pointing.

Opening Prayer

Ask God to open hearts and minds to understand the truth of the resurrection and respond personally.

Icebreaker (5 minutes)

When you hear the word “faith,” what comes to mind?

Do you think faith and evidence go together—or are they separate?

Read Matthew 28:5–7 together.

Key Truth: The resurrection of Jesus is not just a belief—it is a historical claim with real evidence that demands a response.

Discussion Questions

Family / Youth Questions

Q1. What stood out to you most from the message about the resurrection?

Q2. Why do you think Easter is such an important day for Christians?

1. Was Jesus Really Dead?

Q3. Why is it important to establish that Jesus actually died?

Q4. What details from the message (crucifixion, burial, Roman guard) strengthen your confidence in this?

Q5. Why do you think some people struggle to believe this part of the story?

2. Was the Tomb Really Empty?

Q6. What evidence points to the tomb being empty?

- ✓ women discovering it
- ✓ no body produced
- ✓ grave clothes left behind

Q7. Why didn't Jesus' enemies simply produce the body?

Q8. What alternative explanations have you heard—and how do they compare?

3. Did People Really See Jesus Alive?

Q9. Why is eyewitness testimony important in determining truth?

Q10. What stands out about the fact that over 500 people saw Jesus?

Q11. How does the willingness of the disciples to suffer and die affect your view of their testimony?

Jesus claimed to:

- ✓ forgive sins
- ✓ give life
- ✓ be the only way to God

Q12. Why does the resurrection validate these claims?

Personal Reflection

Q13. Where do you personally stand with Jesus today?

- Curious?
- Unsure?
- Believing?
- Following?

The Big Question: Who do you say Jesus is?

- Lord
- Liar
- Lunatic

This week, I will:

- Place my faith in Jesus for the first time
- Invite someone to church or share what I learned
- Begin reading The Case for Easter
- Take a next step (baptism, class, group)

Close In Prayer: