

## He Is Risen

~ David Steinhauer

In 1980, a construction crew accidentally uncovered an ancient tomb as they excavated a site in a neighborhood south of old Jerusalem. Entombed were 10 ossuaries containing bones. On one of the ossuaries, an inscription read, “Jesus the son of Joseph.” Inscriptions on the other ossuaries revealed two Marys, a Joseph, a Matthew, and a Jude the son of Jesus. The one Mary’s name was rendered in Greek as Marianene which some believe could be Mary Magdalene. In 2007, a documentary entitled, *The Lost Tomb of Jesus*, was produced which cast doubt on the Biblical account of Jesus’ death and resurrection by purporting that this ancient tomb containing bones was the family burial plot of Jesus’ family. The documentary also erroneously suggested that these findings (along with DNA testing that was done on the bones) implied that Jesus was married and had a son.<sup>1</sup>

This is one of the many times that unbelieving men have tried to discredit the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Jews of Jesus’ time concocted the rumor that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus to explain the empty tomb. Down through the centuries since that time men have disputed and doubted whether or not the resurrection of Christ is a historical fact. Some have concluded that Jesus’ resurrection was a spiritual resurrection only; others have believed that He never died as they have endeavored to explain away the miracle of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This ancient tomb well may have contained the bones of a man named Jesus. In fact, several researchers contend that the names found among the ossuaries were common at that time. We may, however, firmly declare that these are not the bones of Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God! “He is risen as he said.”

We must believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ because the Bible clearly teaches it. The Apostle Paul states that “he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1Co 15:4). He then lists many witnesses that physically saw Christ after He was raised.

We must believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ because “if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . ye are yet in your sins” (1Co 15:14, 17). The resurrection is a most paramount tenet of the Christian’s salvation that was wrought through Christ. “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom 10:9). It is the power of the resurrection that empowers a believer to be raised in newness of life and to live in victory over sin.

We must believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ because “if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1Co 15:19). The resurrection points to the eternal realities that supersede this temporal earth. It assures us that our hope in Christ is eternal as we experience everlasting life in Christ.

We must believe resurrection of Christ because our risen Lord has the power to conquer death. “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1Co 15:25-26). A songwriter has very appropriately penned the words, “Hail Him who robbed the grave of its pow’r!”

We must believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ because “if Christ be not raised...then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished” (1Co 15:18). The resurrection of Christ from the dead ensures the glorious resurrection of the saints from the dead. “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1Co 15:20).

We must believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ because the truth of this event must thrill and fill His followers with great joy just as it did the women who visited the tomb that Easter morning. They “departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy” (Matt 28:8). Disciples who rejoice in the resurrection of the living Christ boldly herald the glorious living Gospel to a sinful, dying world. “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (Rev 1:18).

~ Peach Bottom PA  
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1 U.S. News Weekly “Digging for proof” December 23, 2011