

had not been convinced fully (Acts 1:3), they would have “cooled off” quickly when the fires of martyrdom confronted them.

9. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY wholly in keeping with Old Testament teaching, that shows an **interconnection and quality of thought beyond what mere man could postulate** (legal logic, empirical application, varied but agreeing accounts, fulfilled prophecy, prescient scientific accuracy, etc.).

10. THE PAST 2000 YEARS OF CHURCH HISTORY is characterized by tremendous culturally beneficial movements (both local and abroad) through missions, churches that greatly benefited their community, and inspired self-sacrificing individuals who were driven by the Christian concept of a resurrected Christ. **In other words, where would the world be today if it had been left to Caesar worship, Greek philosophy, Babylonian gods** (later expressed by Romans and Greeks in their mythologies), **pantheistic polytheism** (a system of gods that are in effect nature itself and which is being revived by the New Age movement), **Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, humanism, etc.?**

11. THE MANIFOLD SUPERIORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL CONCEPT (of which the resurrection is vital) **to all other world views.** The world's religions all come down to a works-based system by which man earns favor with God. Christianity, among numerous other aspects (such as its record of how we got here, what God is like, the place of Israel in the world, male and female role in society, value of all human life, etc.), teaches salvation is by grace through faith – **a gift based on the merits of God Himself!**

12. THE SHAPING UP OF THE GENERAL PROPHETIC SCENARIO IN OUR WORLD TODAY that Scriptures describe – such as ancient peoples and nations returning to the forefront (Persia, Babylon, Israel, etc.), technological advances, worldwide spread of pantheistic evolution and mystery religions, distorted immorality, etc., which are prophesied as the context into which Christ would return (I Timothy 4:1-7). In other words, the world is rapidly shaping up to meet the returning **resurrected Christ** just as prophesied in the Scriptures!

One must be able to explain away all the above, and more, to legitimize his claim of finding the bones of Christ!

The Validity of the Resurrection of Christ

(Support Material for Water of Life Gospel Series)

READ: Acts 1:1-9. During a 40 day post-resurrection period Christ went out of His way to verify the truthfulness of His bodily resurrection.

We are increasingly seeing a stepped-up attack on not just the idea of God, Christianity or even churches, but upon Christ Himself – **especially His resurrection.** The nearer we come to the end of the Church Age (30 AD to the Rapture), according to Scripture, the more we will see a focused assault that is antichrist in nature (I John 4:1-3).

From the offensive movie of the 70s that referred to Christ as a superstar, to the blasphemous “Last Temptation” movie to the DaVinci Code of late, to the recent presentation concerning the supposed box for Christ's bones (ossuary) being discovered, we have seen an attempt to **DISFIGURE, DISCREDIT** and **DISMISS** the glorious person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hatred, in response, should not fill our hearts, nor fear, but being better able “to give an answer to every man that asketh [us] a reason of the hope that is in [us] with meekness” (I Pet. 3:15) should be our goal.

NOTE: “The knowledge of these ‘bones’ has been around for more than a quarter of a century—scarcely raising an eyebrow. There are 8 ‘Josephs,’ apart from Christ's foster father, listed in the New Testament, and 7 ‘Marys,’ besides Jesus' mother. Countless ossuaries have been found bearing the names of ‘Joseph’ and ‘Mary,’ and several with the common name ‘Jesus.’ Perceptive folks are able to employ common sense regarding this matter. How is it that modern sensationalists finally have found the ‘bones’ of Jesus in this 2000-year-old tomb, when the Jewish and Roman authorities of 20 centuries ago could not locate the body of Jesus 3 days after his death? What are the mathematical ‘odds’ on that?!” **SEE:** christiancourier.com/articles/print/those_bogus_jesus_bones

READ: Revelation 1:9-18. Because the resurrection of Christ is not presented in a vacuum, nor is it an event that is unrelated or disconnected to other aspects of Christianity, one cannot just focus on a box of bones and do away with the resurrection of Christ. "Well over 300 verses are concerned with the subject of Jesus' resurrection in the New Testament." (Gary R. Habermas & J.P. Moreland, *Immortality - The Other Side of Death*, Thomas Nelson Pub., 1992, p. 245.)

Here are 12 of Many Reasons that Could be Cited, for Believing in the Bodily Resurrection of Christ:

1. THE MIRACLE OF GOD'S CALLING ALL OF CREATION into existence from nothing makes the bodily resurrection of Christ totally plausible (i.e. reasonable, believable, credible and probable). In other words, a God who can create everything from nothing, form Adam and then give him life, obviously can raise Christ from the dead.

2. THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF IT IN NATURE, such as, the yearly spring season, the daily sun rise and the germination of a planted seed, convey it - show it is not a concept foreign to us (I Samuel 23:1-4, Psalm 19:1-6 with Malachi 4:2; John 12:24; one of Paul's main arguments - I Corinthians 15:35-38).

3. THE MANY OLD TESTAMENT PICTURES, PROPHECIES AND PROMISES of Messiah's life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, intercession and reign require it (Job 19:25-27, Psalm 16:8-11, Isaiah 26:19, Daniel 12:2, Hosea 13:14). For example, concerning the resurrection, here are some of the Old Testament pictures of it:

1) Ark resting on Ararat after being immersed in the waters of the wrath of God (which was apparently the very same day of the year Christ rose from the dead - Genesis 8:4 - 17th day of the 7th month in the Jewish civil calendar which would parallel the day of the resurrection in the Jewish religious calendar);

2) Isaac replaced by a ram on Mt. Moriah (Genesis 22:13 with Hebrews 11:17-19);

3) The living bird let fly, after it had been dipped in the blood of the slain bird, used in the purification of the leper (Leviticus 14:1-7);

4) High Priest reemerging from the Most Holy Place after applying the blood of the sacrifice dressed again in his garments of glory on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:4, 23-24);

5) Feast of Firstfruits observed annually the very day Christ rose from the dead as a guarantee that others would follow in His resurrection (Leviticus 23:9-14 w/I Corinthians 15:20-23);

6) Aaron's rod that budded (a stick cut off from life yet manifesting such through the blossoms and the fruit - Numbers 17:8);

7) Elisha's bones causing resurrection of man (II Kings 13:21 - Elisha pictured Christ in a New Testament level of grace, doing twice as many miracles as Elijah with whom he is in contrast, evidencing a double-portion of grace - II Kings 2:9-10);

8) Jonah reviving in and emerging from the whale's belly (Matthew 12:40).

4. THE CONCEPT OF THE GOSPEL DEMANDS IT - in that man needs a God-man's substitutionary law-fulfilling life, sacrificial penalty-paying death, committal-of-sins-to-the-grave **ACTIVATED AND MADE AVAILABLE AS A COMBINED BENEFIT BY WAY OF A RESURRECTION** in order to provide justification (Romans 4:23-25), it necessitated Christ to die and resurrect (Luke 24:46; Acts 2:24).

5. THE MIRACLES OF RESURRECTION CHRIST DID, DEMONSTRATED IT. Besides raising from the dead the son of the widow from Nain, He raised Jairus's daughter and even Lazarus, who had been dead for four days (Luke 7:11-15, 8:41-42, 49-55; John 11)!

6. THE LEGITIMACY OF THE FOUR GOSPEL ACCOUNTS, not only in their harmony with each other, but with the quality of actual content - bearing record to the wisdom of Christ in His teaching and conduct. The **WORDS, WORKS** and **WAYS** of Christ presented therein are convincing enough!

7. APPEARANCES OF CHRIST, AFTER HIS DEATH, TO NUMEROUS WITNESSES - not only the women, the Apostles, 500 brethren at once but also Paul, Christianity's greatest antagonist, and again to John on Patmos some 65 years after His death (I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 9:1-6ff; Revelation 1:10-18).

8. THE TRANSFORMED LIVES AND STEADFASTNESS OF THE APOSTLES - even unto martyrdom, who claimed to have seen and conversed with the resurrected Christ for 40 days (Acts 1:1-3ff). If they