- Old Testament:
- Number of allusions to a resurrection of the body in Psalms, prophets (Is, Dn, Ez, and Hos), and Maccabees
- With these allusions in the Old Testament there is along with the hope of the resurrection is a confidence as seen, especially in the Psalms. There is also the recurrence of the three days of death before resurrection (new life) as seen especially in Genesis ch 22 (sacrifice of Isaac) and Jonah ch 2 (Jonah and the whale).

Isaiah

- 2:2 In days to come, the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills. All nations shall stream toward it.

- 26: 19 But your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise!
- Awake and sing, you who lie in the dust!
- For your dew is a dew of light,
- and you cause the land of shades to give birth.

- 53:10 But it was the LORD’s will to crush him with pain. By making his life as a reparation offering, he shall see his offspring, shall lengthen his days, and the LORD’s will shall be accomplished through him.

2 Maccabees

- 7:9-11 With his last breath he said: “You accursed fiend, you are depriving us of this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to live again forever, because we are dying for his laws.”

After him, the third suffered their cruel sport. He put forth his tongue at once when told to do so, and bravely stretched out his hands, as he spoke these noble words: “It was from Heaven that I received these; for the sake of his laws, I disregard them; from him I hope to receive them again.”

Daniel

- 12:2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; Some to everlasting life, others to reproach and everlasting disgrace.

Hosea

- 6:1-2 “Come, let us return to the LORD, for it is he who has torn, but he will heal us; he has struck down, but he will bind our wounds. He will revive us after two days; on the third day he will raise us up, to live in his presence.

Ezekiel dry bones ch 37

Ps 16 and 22

- Ps 16:10-11 For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor let your devout one see the pit. You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence, the delights at your right and forever.

Ps 22:22-31

Gen 22 The binding of Isaac

Jonah

- 2:1 But the LORD sent a great fish to swallow Jonah, and he remained in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

- New Testament
- Jesus refers to Himself as the life and resurrection.
- All four gospels speak to the resurrection of Jesus as a historical and transcendent event. While there are some differences due to themes or points of emphasis of the different authors there are several similarities concerning main points of the Resurrection.

The Resurrection as an Historical Event

Occurred at a definite place and a specific time

Jesus dies on the cross

Friends and disciples are sad and heartbroken

Joseph or Arimathea seeks permission to remove Jesus and bury him in a new grave

Guards were placed before the tomb

Guards cannot account for empty tomb

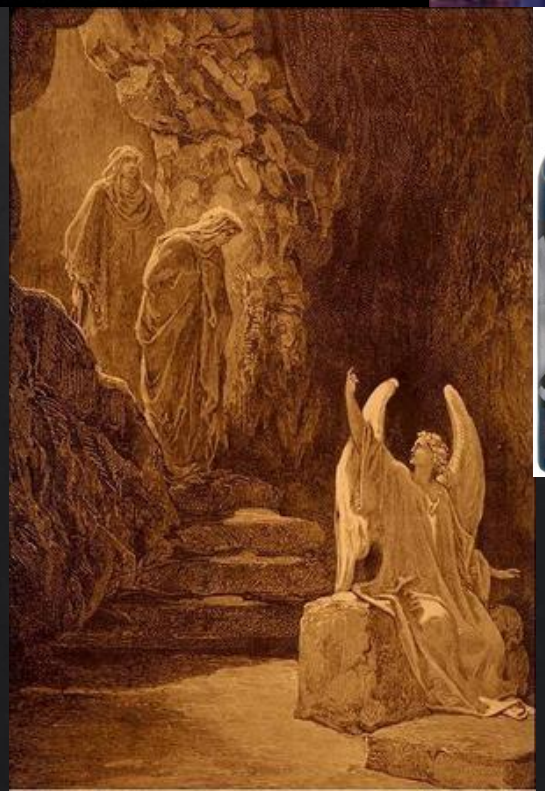
Mary Magdalen and other women see risen Jesus

Jesus appears to the disciples

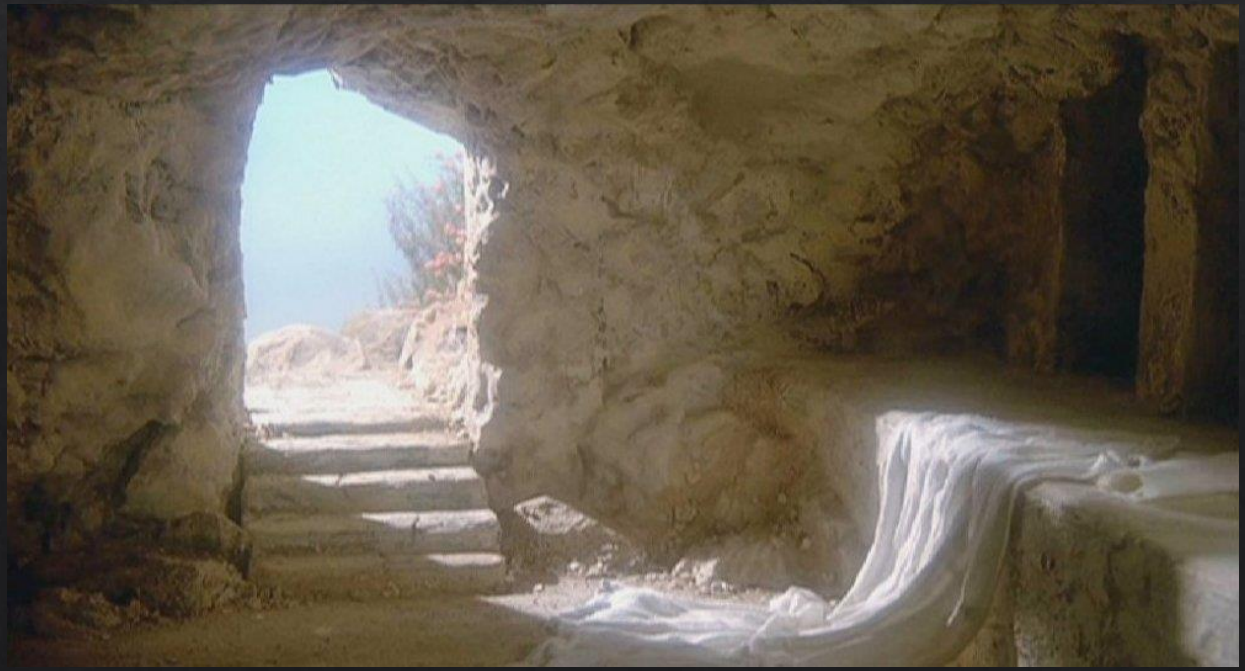
Disciples must grow in faith as they wrap their head around the mystery of the Resurrection

Disciples become zealous preachers of the Good News

- No one saw the resurrection as we know it
- Possibly the temple guard at the tomb
- The stone was sealed by the Sanhedrin
- The women came to the tomb to properly anoint the body
- The stone was rolled by and the body not there
- They were greeted by an angel who told them Jesus was alive



- The Resurrection was a historical event.
- Its historicity can be verified by facts reported by both Jesus' disciples and his enemies:
  - The empty tomb—no one ever claimed to find a body
  - Reports of seeing Jesus after his death (Mary Magdalene, Thomas, the Apostles, two disciples on road to Emmaus, 500 people in one place, St. Paul)



The Resurrection Was a Transcendent Event

- It extends beyond history and common understanding of space and time.
- No one witnessed the actual Resurrection.
- It has meaning for every human person.
- Jesus took the sin of the world upon himself.
- Jesus offers newness of life to the whole world.
- The offer of loving mercy witnessed in Christ's Resurrection extends to every single human being.

Characteristics of Christ's Glorified Body

The Appearance of Christ to Mary Magdalene
Alexander Ivanov, 1834

- He could be seen and touched.
- He shared a meal with the disciples.
- His glorified body would never die again.
- His glorified body is immortal and eternal and possesses supernatural qualities.
- He materialized wherever and whenever he wished.
- His glorified body is fully transfigured by his self-sacrifice into an offering of love, which you receive in the form of bread and wine.

Summary of the Four Gospel Accounts

- That the Gospel writers made no attempt to mask the differences between the accounts argues that there were true, valid experiences behind each of them.
- There are also several similarities in the four Gospel accounts:
  - The Resurrection took place on Sunday morning
  - There were women present
  - The tomb was empty
  - There were “messengers” at the tomb
  - There were several appearances to the disciples

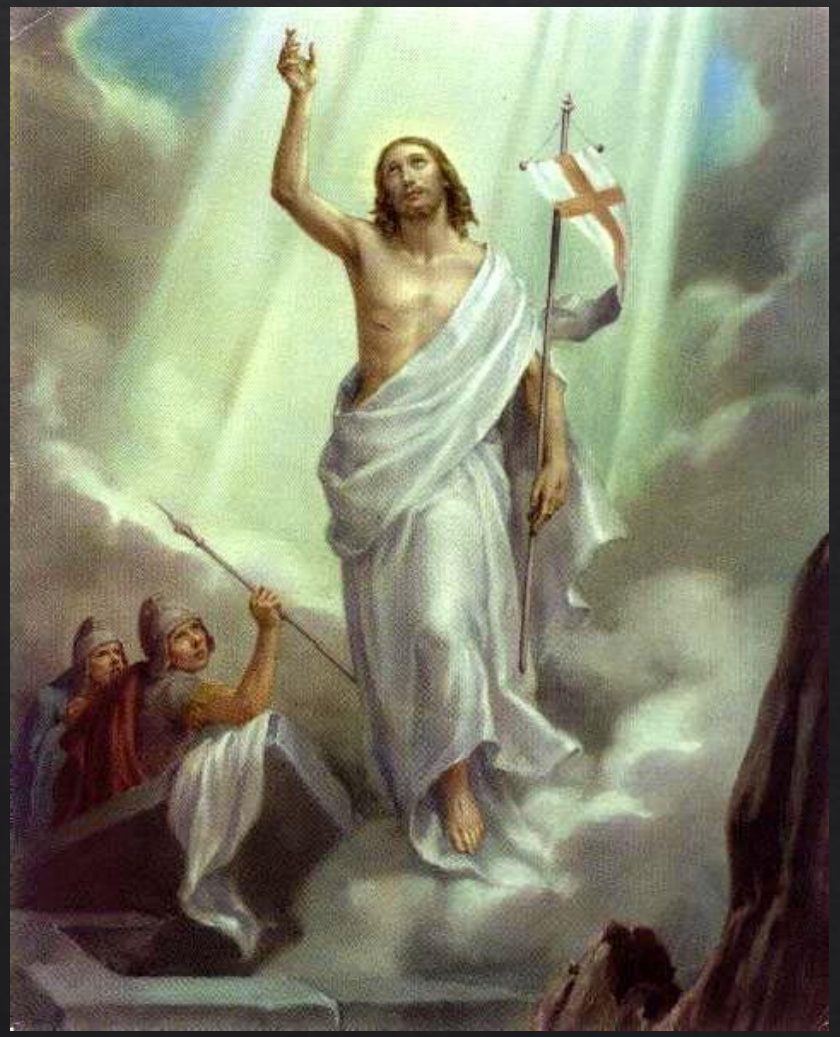
Several verifiable facts help us to respond to those who are skeptical about the validity of the Resurrection:

- Jesus did die by being crucified on a cross by Pontius Pilate.
- Jesus' tomb was empty.
- The Apostles and other disciples of Jesus were convinced that he rose from the dead.
- St. Paul saw the Risen Lord.

Our Participation in Christ's Resurrection

The meaning and saving significance of Christ's Resurrection:

- The Resurrection confirms all Christ's works and teaching.
- The Resurrection, following Christ's sacrifice on the cross, accomplishes our Salvation.
- The Resurrection gives us new life, justifies us in God's grace, and adopts us into the divine family.
- Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christians participate in the Life, suffering, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus.



Both Jewish and Roman leaders wanted to kill Jesus

Roman leaders:
Feared Jesus would become
a new ruler
challenge Roman rule in Judaea

Jewish leaders:
Angry Jesus claimed
to be the "Son of God"
and claimed to share in
God's power

The Jewish and Roman leaders agreed to crucify Jesus: Jesus was put to death

Something extraordinary happened

Followers began claiming they had seen Jesus resurrected from the dead

Nothing like this had ever been claimed before

If Jesus' resurrection were true:

- Greatest event in human history
- Jesus is who he said he was - the Son of God
- We ourselves can be resurrected to gain eternal life in heaven

"You must make your choice.

Either this man was, and is, the Son of God,
or else a madman or something worse.

You can shut Him up for a fool,
you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon;
or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God.

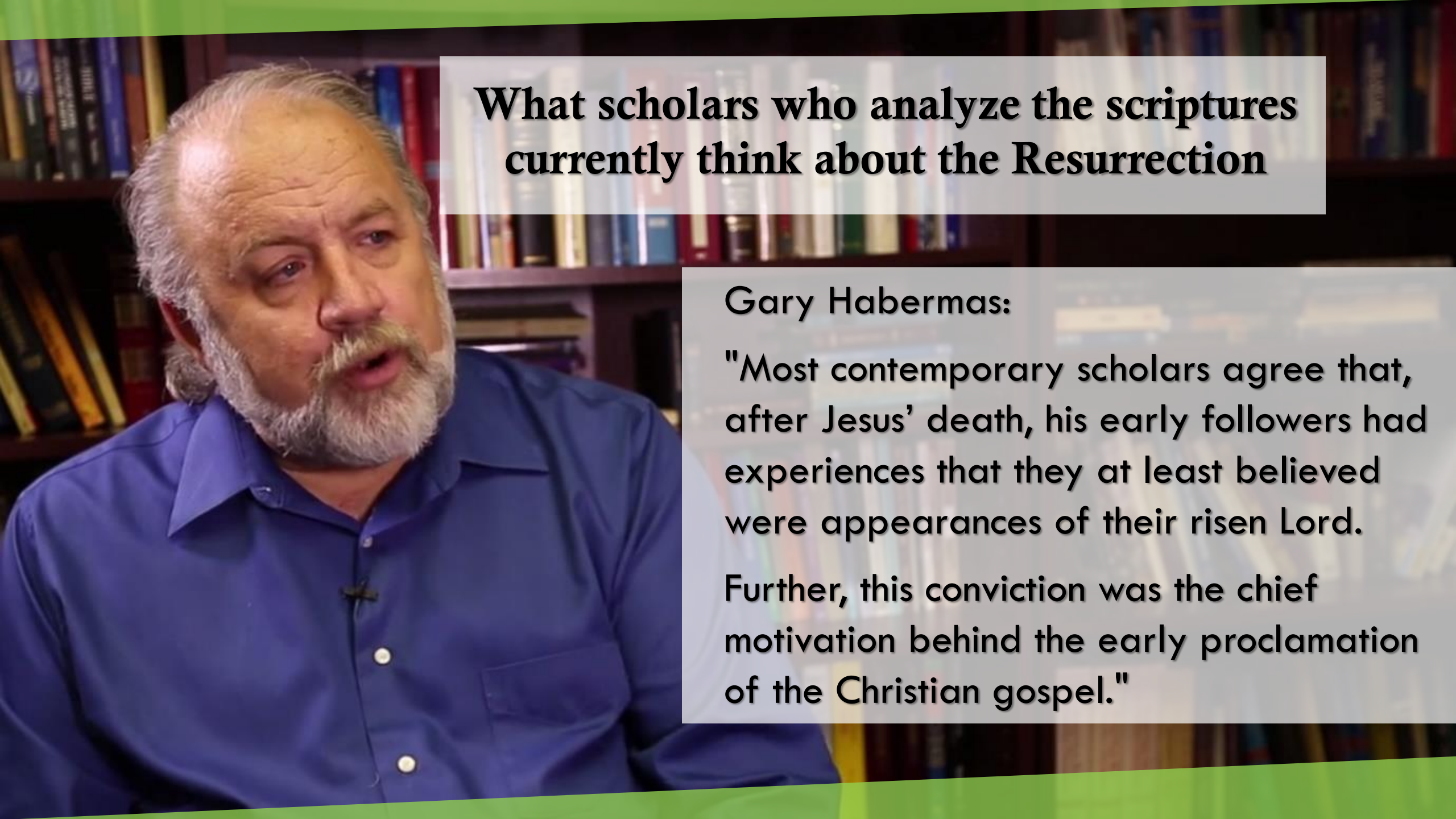
But let's not come with any patronizing nonsense about
His being a great human teacher.
He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Lewis makes the point that
Jesus claimed that he is
the Son of God.
This teaching of Jesus' is central
to his life and mission.

Either **he is telling the truth,**
and therefore, he is in fact
the Son of God,
or else **he is not telling the truth,**
in which case he is an
egotistical liar and madman.

Lewis' argument is that
there is no rational middle position
which would say that
Jesus **is not** the Son of God
but **is** a great human teacher.

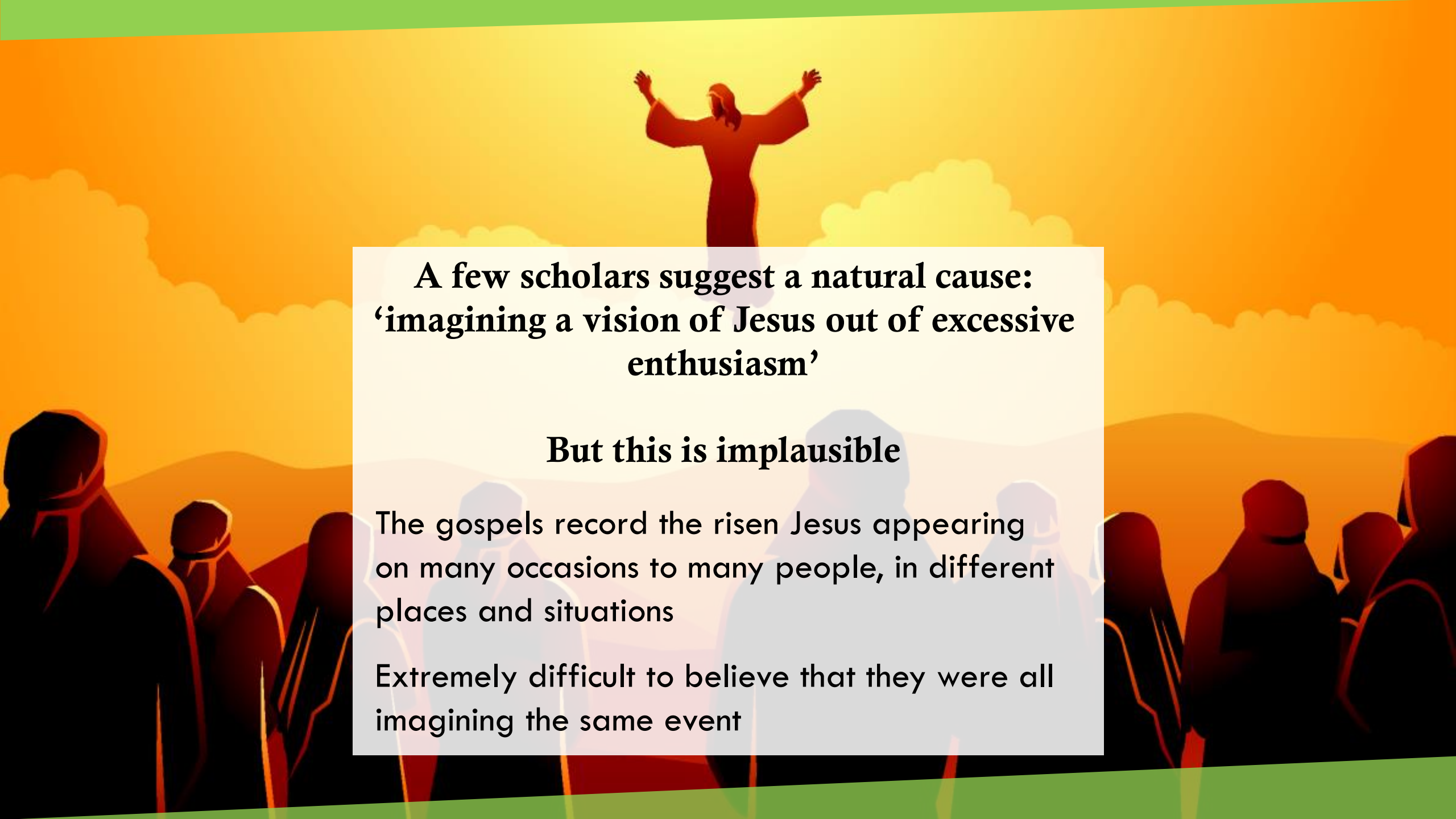


What scholars who analyze the scriptures currently think about the Resurrection

Gary Habermas:

"Most contemporary scholars agree that, after Jesus' death, his early followers had experiences that they at least believed were appearances of their risen Lord.

Further, this conviction was the chief motivation behind the early proclamation of the Christian gospel."



A few scholars suggest a natural cause: 'imagining a vision of Jesus out of excessive enthusiasm'

But this is implausible

The gospels record the risen Jesus appearing on many occasions to many people, in different places and situations

Extremely difficult to believe that they were all imagining the same event

Habermas: “Imagination” theory largely rejected now

Most scholars conclude:

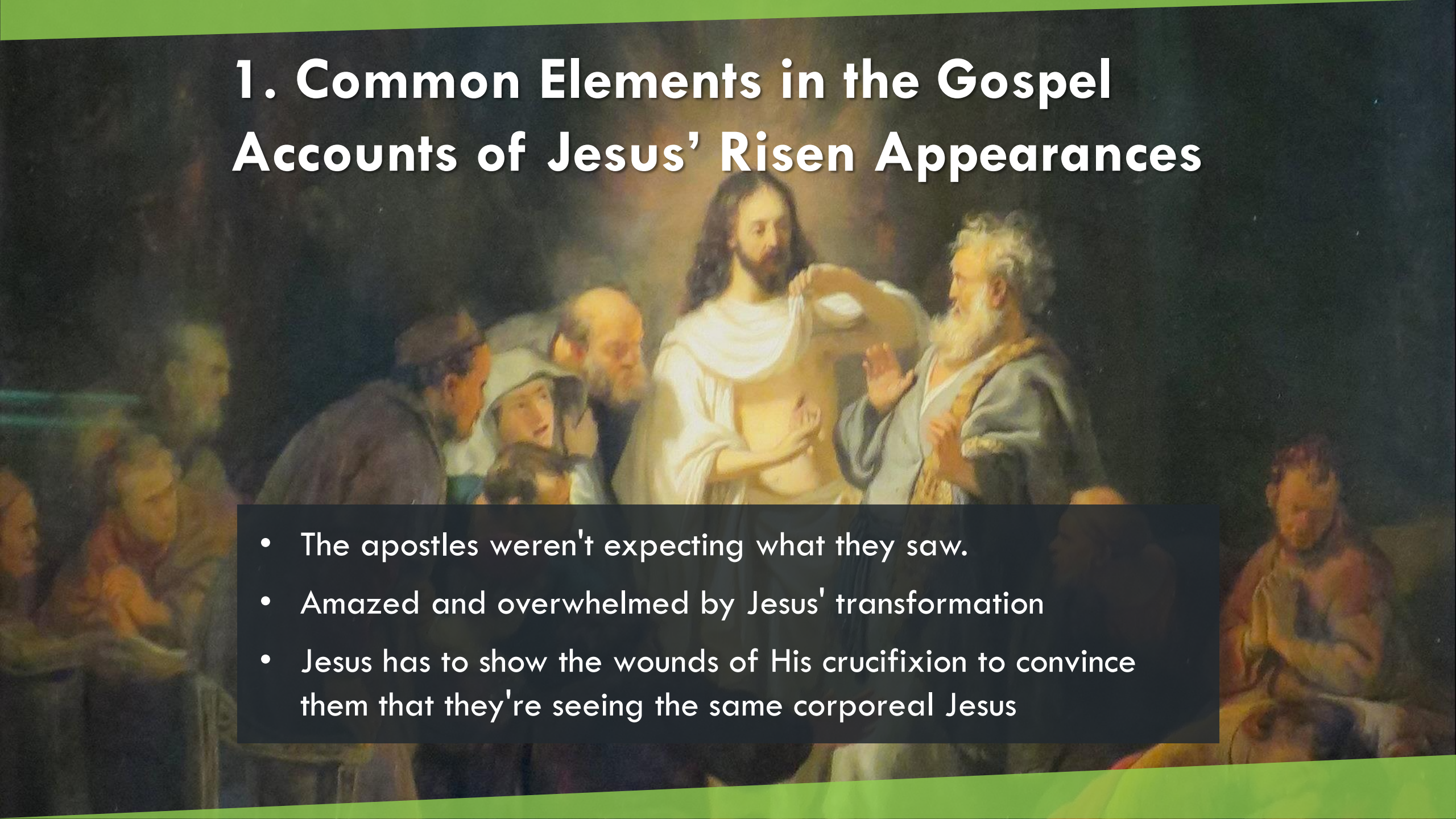
Jesus' body was **supernaturally transformed**

He appeared **not** as vision/ghost/resuscitated corpse

“**Transformed corporeality**"—a powerful, glorious, light-filled, divine-like appearance of the embodied Jesus.

What evidence has led to this consensus?

1. Common Elements in the Gospel Accounts of Jesus' Risen Appearances



- The apostles weren't expecting what they saw.
- Amazed and overwhelmed by Jesus' transformation
- Jesus has to show the wounds of His crucifixion to convince them that they're seeing the same corporeal Jesus

Risen Christ was so transformed
St. Paul would have to coin a new word
to describe it:

"Soma pneumatikon"

"Spiritual Body"

“Soma pneumatikon”

“Spiritual Body”

Though his body was resurrected, and the apostles can touch him,
Jesus possessed transphysical capacities (such as the ability to pass through closed doors—John 20:19-20).

“Soma pneumatikon”

“Spiritual Body”

He possessed spirit-like qualities
(that caused the disciples to think he was a spirit—
Luke 24:37)

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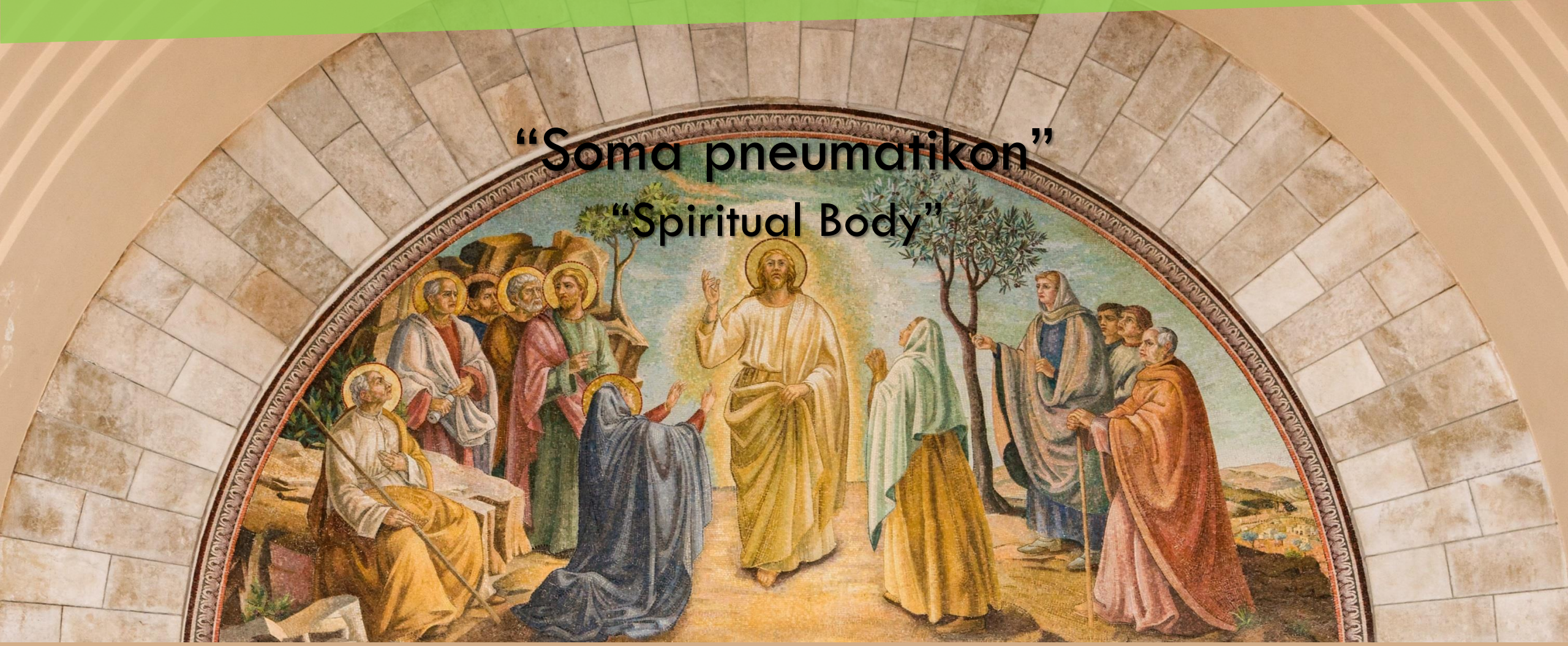
“Soma pneumatikon”

“Spiritual Body”

When the apostles saw Him
they bowed down and worshiped
(thinking they were seeing
God Himself--Mt 28:17)

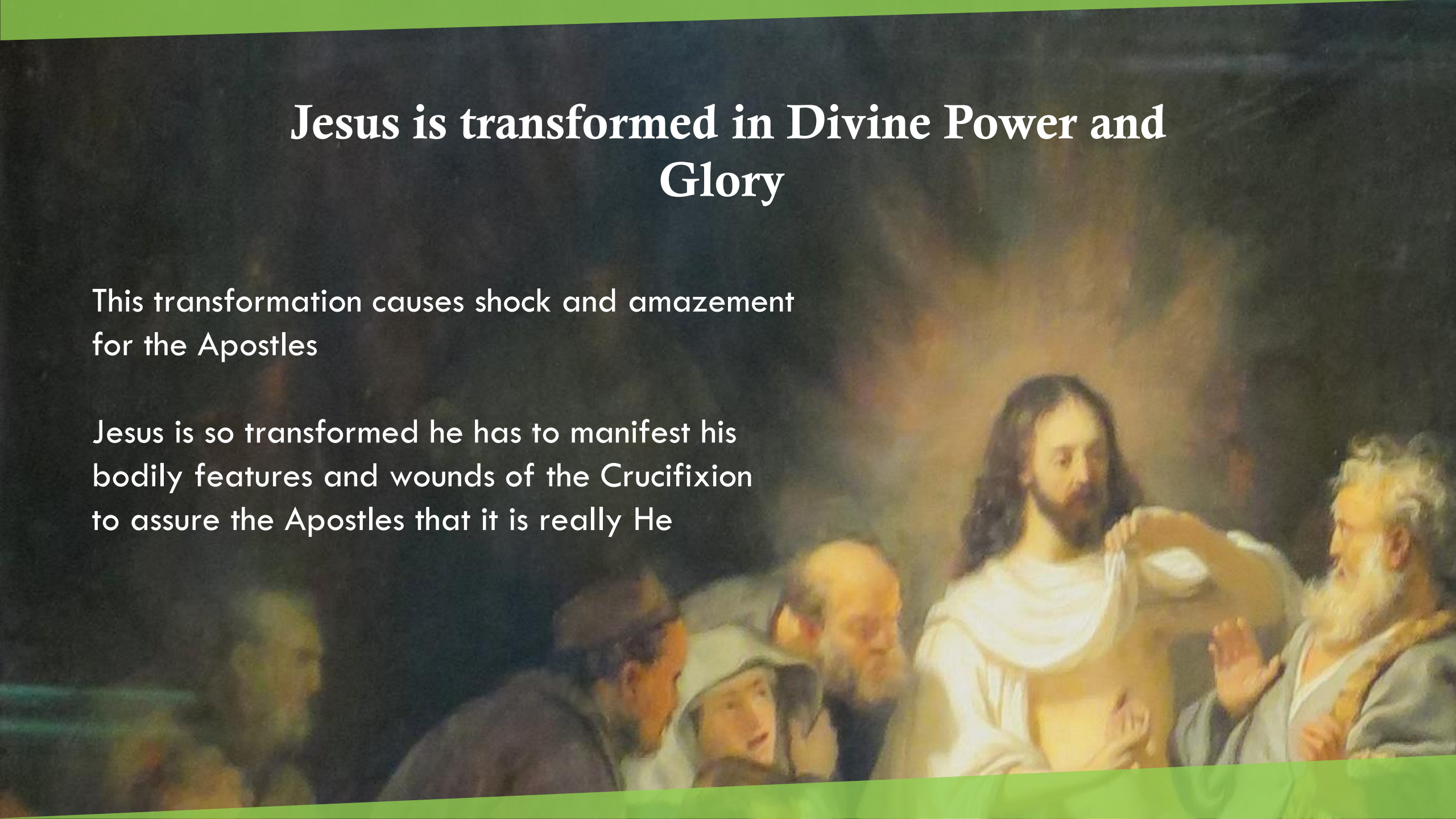


When the Apostles see Jesus, they identify Him as “the Lord” (Ho Kurios—the Greek translation of the divine name Yahweh—Jn 20 & 21)

Jesus is transformed in Divine Power and Glory

This transformation causes shock and amazement for the Apostles

Jesus is so transformed he has to manifest his bodily features and wounds of the Crucifixion to assure the Apostles that it is really He

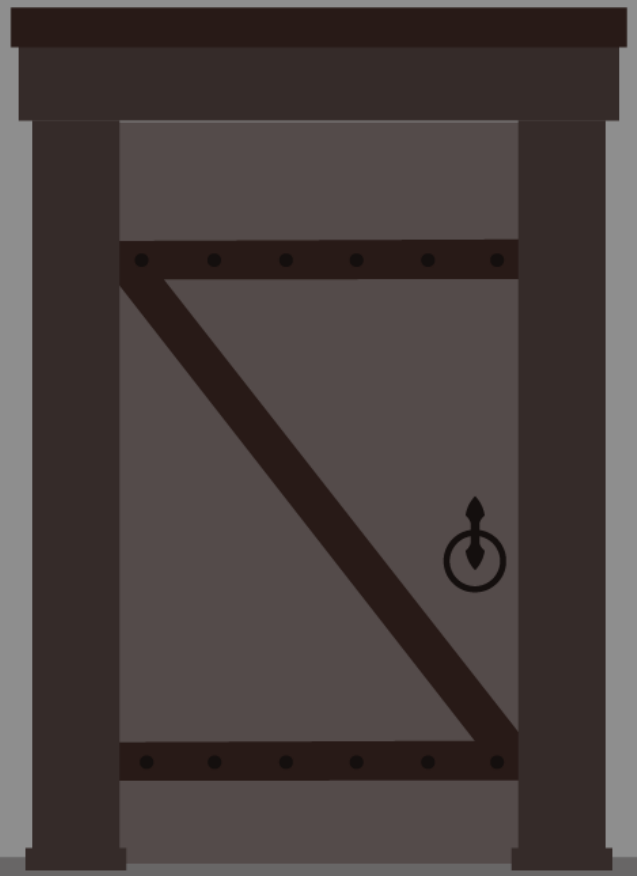


Why would the Apostles lie?

After Jesus' crucifixion and death
his closest followers were afraid and went into hiding.

They saw how the Jewish and Roman leaders
succeeded in torturing and killing Jesus.

They knew that if they continued
to preach about Jesus they would be
at risk of the same treatment.



Yet soon, the apostles began preaching that Jesus was resurrected from the dead and had appeared to them

Eventually, most if not all of the apostles would be killed for proclaiming that Jesus was risen from the dead

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The apostles claimed to have witnessed the risen Jesus
They knew claiming this put their lives at risk

The apostles would have known if it was true or not that Jesus had appeared to them after his death – they would have known if their belief in his resurrection was true or false

Consider the following

Very few people are willing to die
for what they believe to be **true**
or for a **good cause**

Hardly anyone, ever, has been willing to die
for a belief they know to be **false**

The apostles **knew** whether their belief
in the resurrection was **true** or **not** –
because they had **claimed to personally**
witness the resurrected Jesus

No plausible motives to lie

To earn money and power? No – the ruling classes at the time hated Jesus and his followers, Christians could only expect persecution

To invent a new religion that would become popular later on? No – knew their core claim (Resurrection and the Son of God) would seem absurd to Jews, Romans and Greeks.

To make themselves look good? No – knew they would be persecuted, knew people would think them ridiculous.

And why lie about ***Jesus?*** - Jesus insisted upon telling the truth.

2. Paul's Testimony to the Resurrection of Jesus

The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians (53 AD) contains a list of witnesses to the Resurrection

"Christ ... was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to **Cephas [Peter]**, then to **the twelve**. Then he appeared to **more than five hundred brethren** at one time most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to **James**, then to **all the apostles**. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to **me**." (1Cor. 15:3-8)

The witnesses are selected for their value as legal evidence

Paul mentions the five hundred, most of whom are still alive, implying that readers could consult these living witnesses.

The earliest witnesses to the Resurrection, the women at the tomb, are not in this list, because Jewish law of the time did not acknowledge their testimony as legal evidence.

Paul's Witness Dilemma

Paul next examines the **value**
of the witnesses' evidence

He lays out a dilemma
to show how the witnesses,

whether they believe in God
or not,

would have everything to lose
and nothing to gain
by **falsely testifying** to the Resurrection

Paul's Witness Dilemma

For believers

It would be a terrible sin to publicly lie
that they had witnessed the Resurrected Christ

"False witnesses against God"
forbidden by one of the ten commandments

Jeopardizing their salvation by
potentially undermining the religion of their forefathers

If they truly believed in God and religion
why would they do this?

Paul's Witness Dilemma

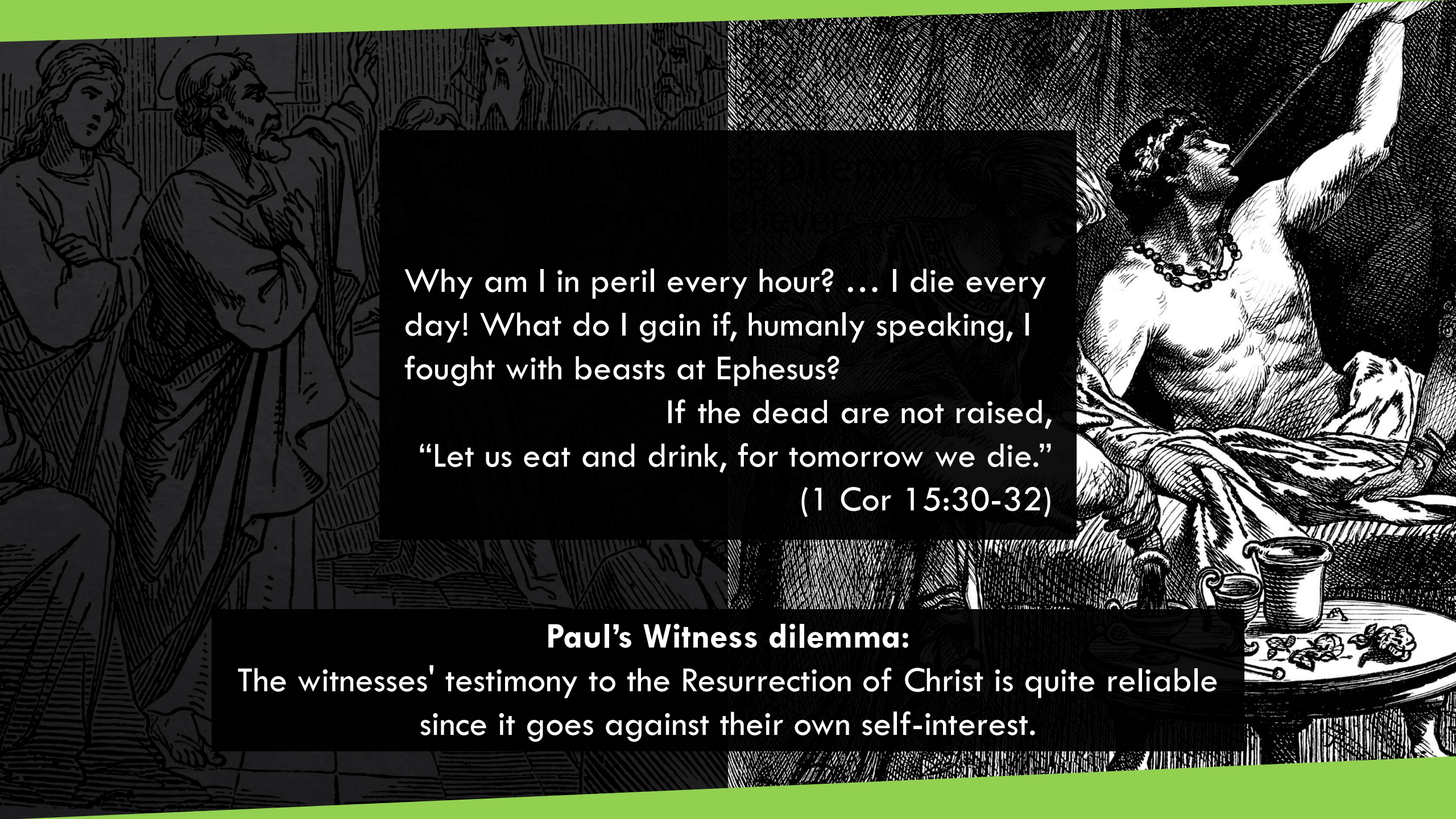
For unbelievers

They would still face other consequences for lying about the Resurrection

Conflict with the Jewish tradition:
Expelled from synagogues and shunned by communities

Harassed by the Roman authorities:
Faced persecution, torture, and death

Why would someone endure all this needless suffering for testifying to a lie?



Why am I in peril every hour? … I die every day! What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus?

If the dead are not raised,
"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."
(1 Cor 15:30-32)

Paul's Witness dilemma:

The witnesses' testimony to the Resurrection of Christ is quite reliable since it goes against their own self-interest.

St. Paul

At one point he was a committed Jew who actively persecuted Christians.

Then something happened.

He became not only a Christian, but perhaps the most influential Christian of the era, one who established very many churches.
He even ended up martyred (dying for the truth of his faith in Jesus).

St. Paul

Conversion of St. Paul:

Paul himself says he experienced the resurrected Jesus appearing to him.
(see 1 Corinthians and the Acts of the Apostles)

A plausible explanation for the radical change in Paul's life was that he was telling the truth: the resurrected Jesus really did appear to him.

3. N.T. Wright's historical analysis of the resurrection

Scripture scholar N. T. Wright:
Two aspects of the early church are difficult to account for without the reality of the resurrection

A. The remarkable success of Christian messianism

B. The Christian mutations of Second Temple Judaism

A. The remarkable success of Christian messianism

Many messianic movements
at the time of Christ

Same pattern every time:

- **Charismatic leader** attracts enthusiastic followers
- **Leader dies** (usually killed by the authorities)
- **Followers scatter** and movement quickly dies out

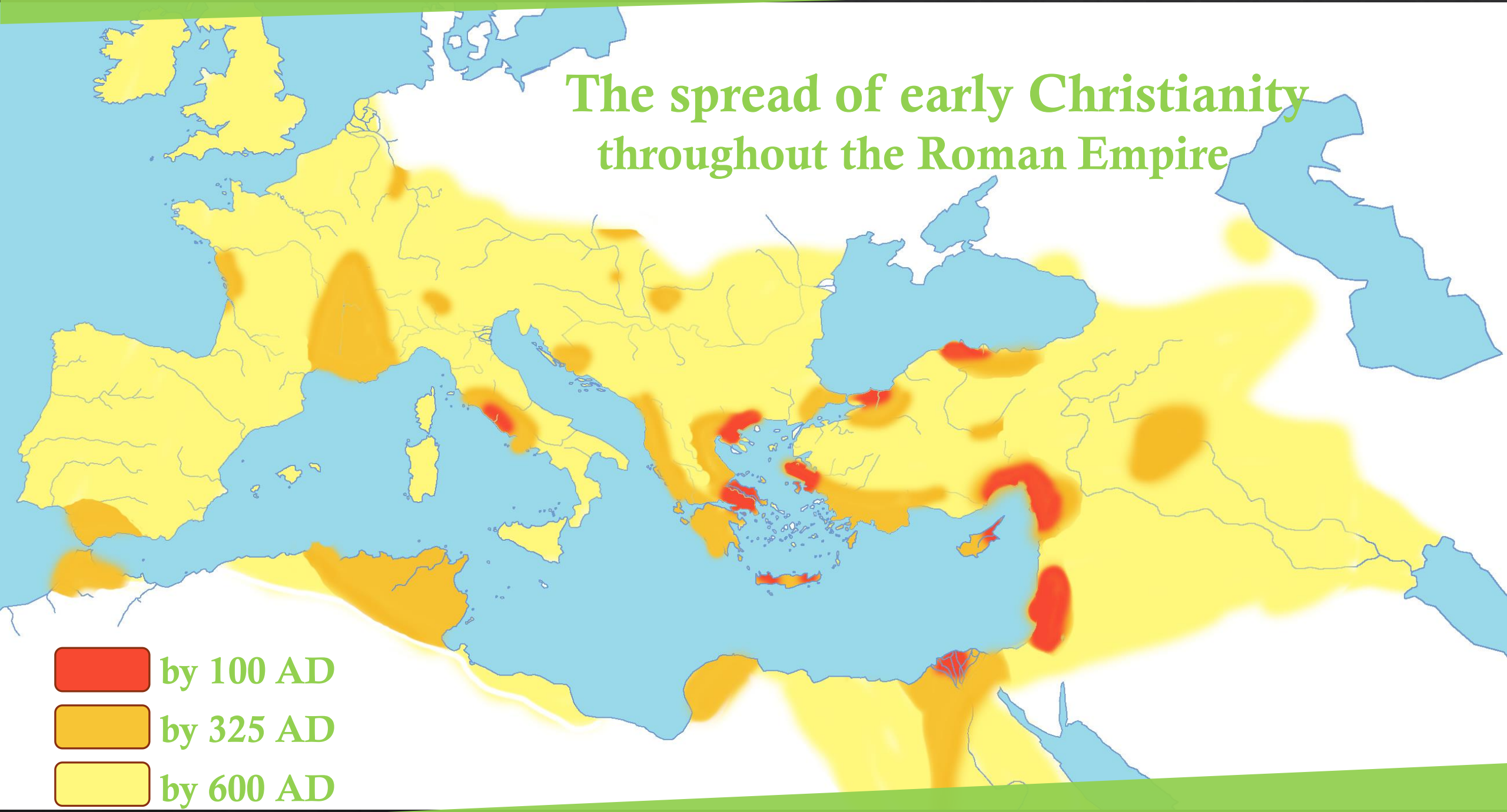
Example in the gospels: John the Baptist

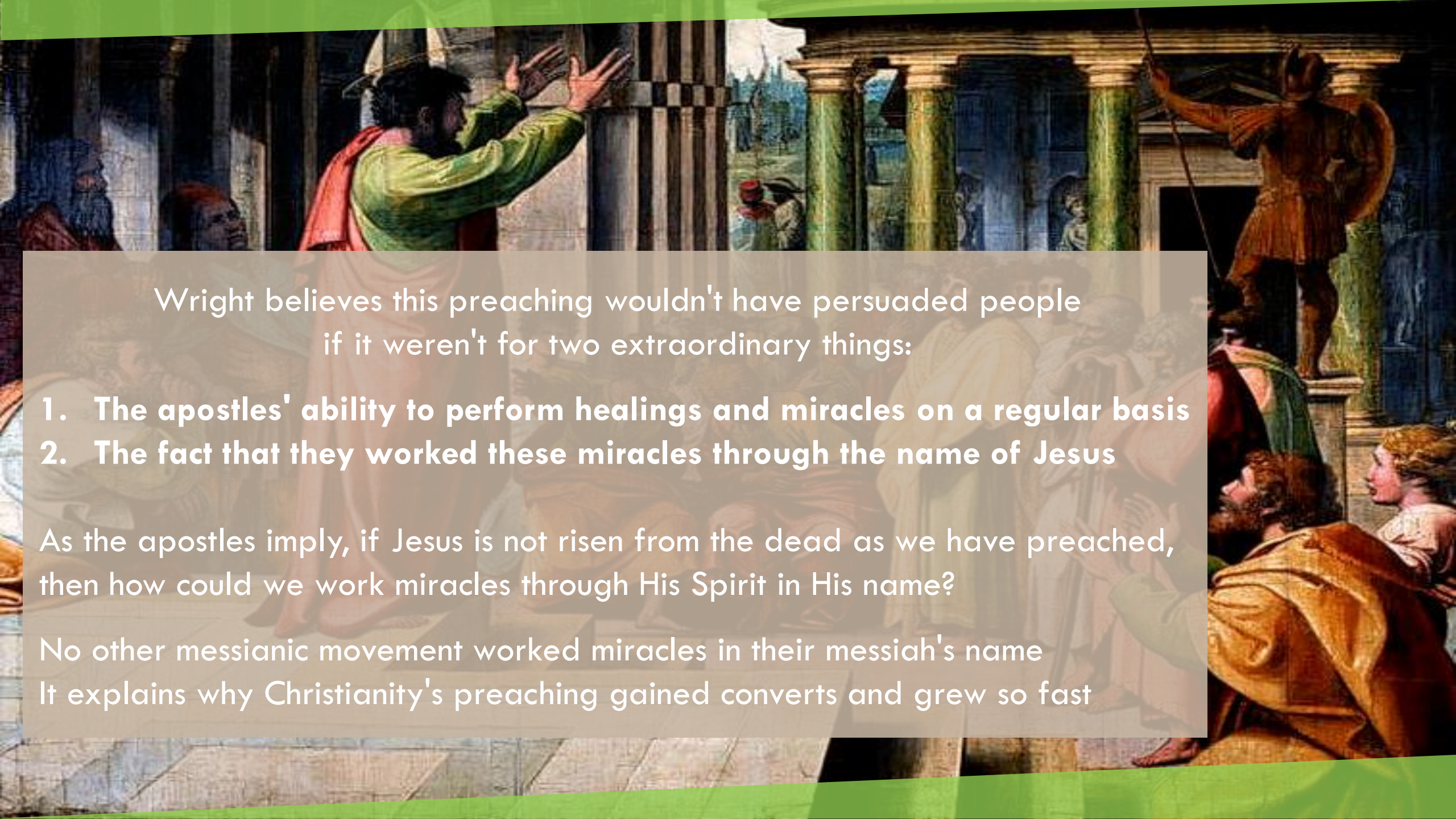
A. The remarkable success of Christian messianism

Christianity is the one dramatic exception to this pattern:

-The authorities kill Christ
-Disciples start preaching everywhere that their crucified leader is not only resurrected but Divine
-Preaching is a success and the movement grows massively
-In a few generations, Christianity becomes socially influential even as it is persecuted by the legal authorities

Where did this remarkable momentum come from?


The spread of early Christianity
throughout the Roman Empire
by 100 AD
by 325 AD
by 600 AD

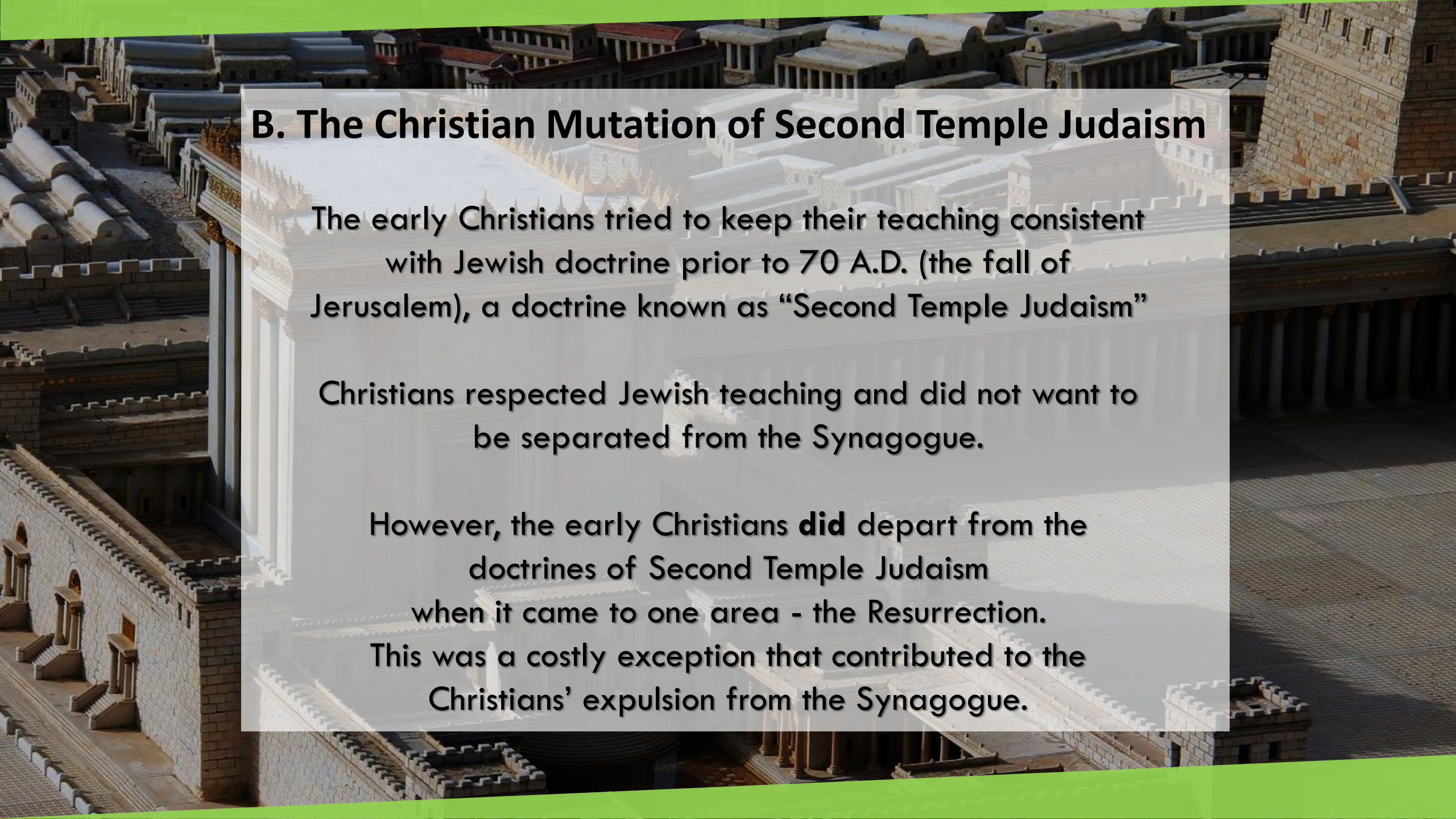


Wright believes this preaching wouldn't have persuaded people
if it weren't for two extraordinary things:

1. **The apostles' ability to perform healings and miracles on a regular basis**
2. **The fact that they worked these miracles through the name of Jesus**

As the apostles imply, if Jesus is not risen from the dead as we have preached, then how could we work miracles through His Spirit in His name?

No other messianic movement worked miracles in their messiah's name
It explains why Christianity's preaching gained converts and grew so fast



B. The Christian Mutation of Second Temple Judaism

The early Christians tried to keep their teaching consistent with Jewish doctrine prior to 70 A.D. (the fall of Jerusalem), a doctrine known as "Second Temple Judaism"

Christians respected Jewish teaching and did not want to be separated from the Synagogue.

However, the early Christians **did** depart from the doctrines of Second Temple Judaism when it came to one area - the Resurrection. This was a costly exception that contributed to the Christians' expulsion from the Synagogue.

Second Temple Judaism

Resurrection = returning to one's physical body

No one would rise until the end time

No connection between the Messiah and the Resurrection

Resurrection a minor and peripheral (marginal) doctrine

Christianity

Resurrection = transformation into a spiritual and glorified body, the soma pneumatikon

Jesus is risen already (before the end time)

It is the Messiah himself (Jesus) who is resurrected

Resurrection the central doctrine that justifies and connects the entire faith

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is worthless and your faith is worthless. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.
(1Cor 15:13-15)

What motivated these Christian changes of Jewish doctrine?

Hard to explain outside the actual experience of an unexpected, glorified risen Christ. (Remember that Paul needed to **make up a new term** to describe this idea of a glorified body.)

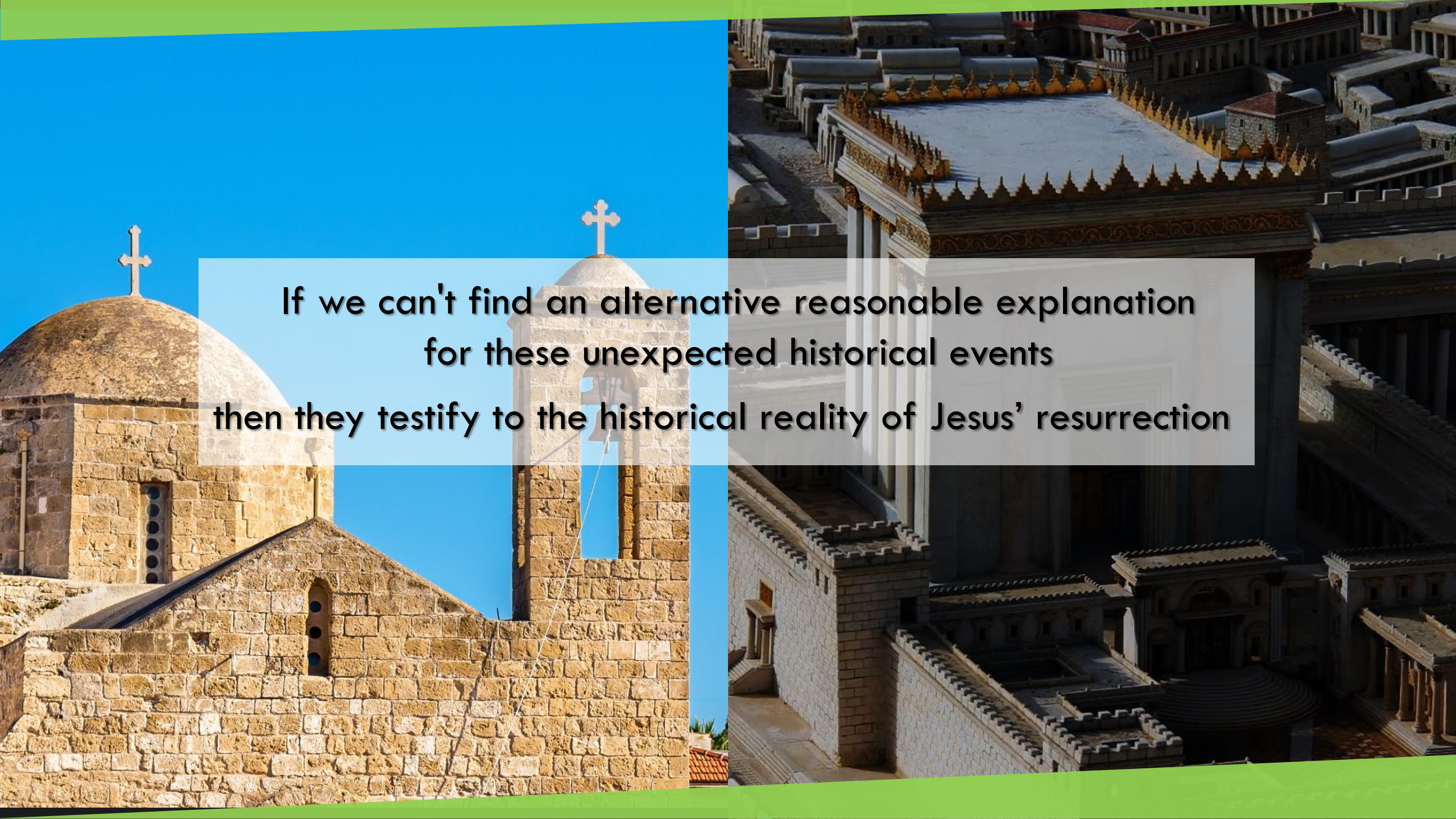
Why arbitrarily change the picture of the resurrection from a resuscitated **physical** body to a glorious **spiritual** body?
Why elevate the resurrection from a **minor** doctrine to the **most central** doctrine?

Since this was the **only area** the Christians insisted on deviating from Jewish doctrine, it's hard to see where this conviction came from, if not from actually witnessing the Resurrection.

Two historical mysteries that seem to point to the resurrection

The unexpected growth of Christianity as a messianic movement

The unexpected departure from Jewish doctrines in the unique area of the Resurrection



If we can't find an alternative reasonable explanation
for these unexpected historical events

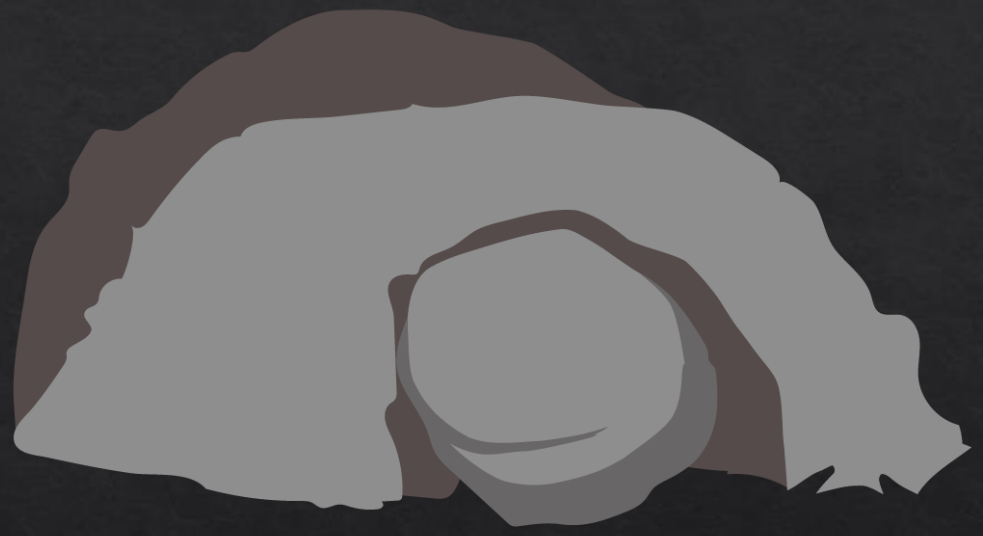
then they testify to the historical reality of Jesus' resurrection

4. The empty tomb

Not direct evidence of the Resurrection
but indirect support for it

The Jewish authorities had an interest to refute the
Resurrection by showing the body of Jesus …
which they apparently couldn't do.

This indicates that the burial place was likely empty,
as we see in the gospel account where the authorities charge
that the Apostles stole the body.



Motivation helps establish credibility

The Gospels **report the charge** by Jewish authorities that the apostles stole Jesus' body.

The gospel writers wouldn't want to make up an unflattering charge we can assume the **authorities actually made it.**

The authorities wouldn't want to claim Jesus' body was missing unless **the tomb was empty,** we can conclude that it was.

(If the authorities could have produced Jesus' body, their problems would have been over.)

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Later Jewish tradition continued to accept that Jesus' tomb was empty

We know this through, for example, Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* (2nd c.) and the Jewish *Toledot Yeshu* (6th/7th c.)

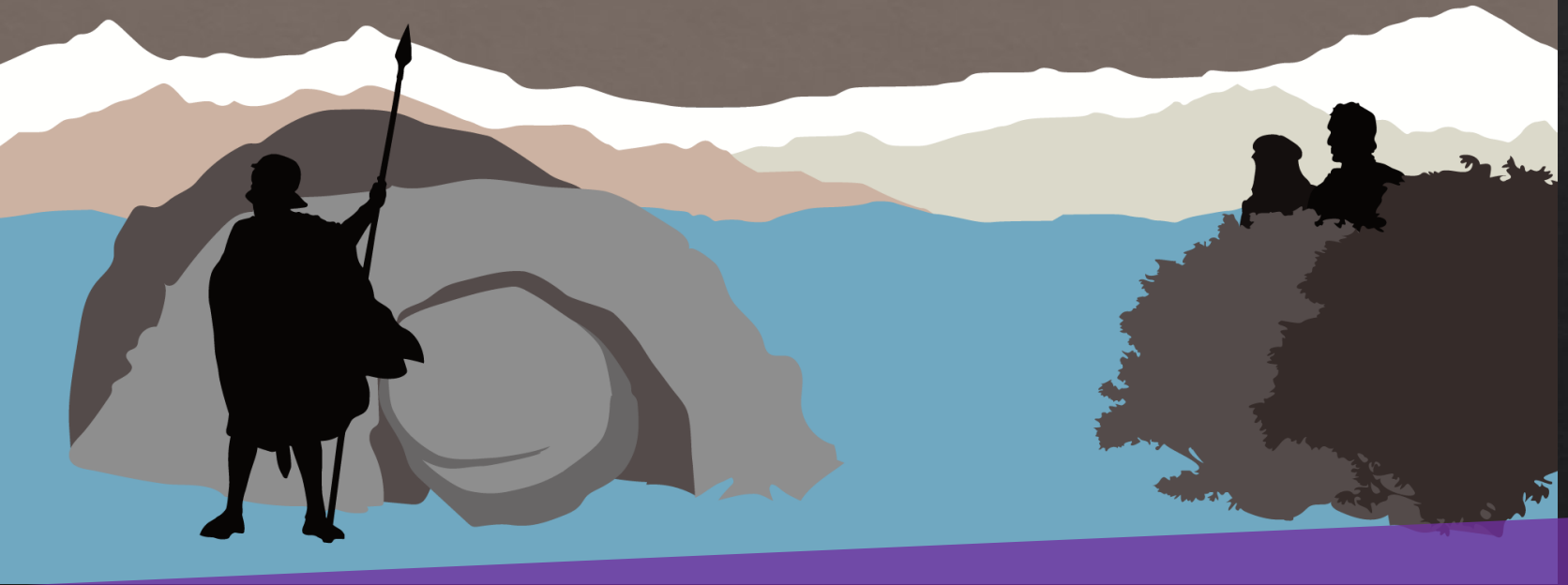
Justin Martyr

What motive would there have been for the apostles to steal Jesus' body?

If Jesus was fully dead – he was not the Son of God but an ordinary human, and a lying, delusional one at that.

If the apostles were caught trying to steal Jesus' body – they'd be seriously punished.

Why take such a risk to steal the body of someone who was delusional, lied to them, and endangered their lives?



They had nothing to gain from stealing Jesus' body.

The Jews and Romans had no reason to take the body

They would have produced it if Jesus' disciples began preaching that Jesus rose from the dead.

Producing Jesus' dead body would show that the resurrection claim was false.

The first witnesses to the empty tomb

The Gospels report that a group of women first discovered the empty tomb a few days after Jesus' death. It was they who first testified about the tomb being empty.

At the time women's testimony
was not accepted
in Jewish legal custom

They are not the witnesses
the Gospel writers would invent
if they were trying to fabricate a
story about the tomb being empty

For all these reasons

it is reasonable to conclude that the tomb was empty

This supports the claim that Jesus really did rise from the dead

The fact that women were the first witnesses to the resurrection is a positive affirmation of women in the eyes of God.

Indeed, the Gospels generally portray women in a more positive light than the apostles—consider for example the various accounts of the Syrophoenician woman, the Samaritan woman, Mary Magdalene, Martha, and Mary the Mother of Jesus.