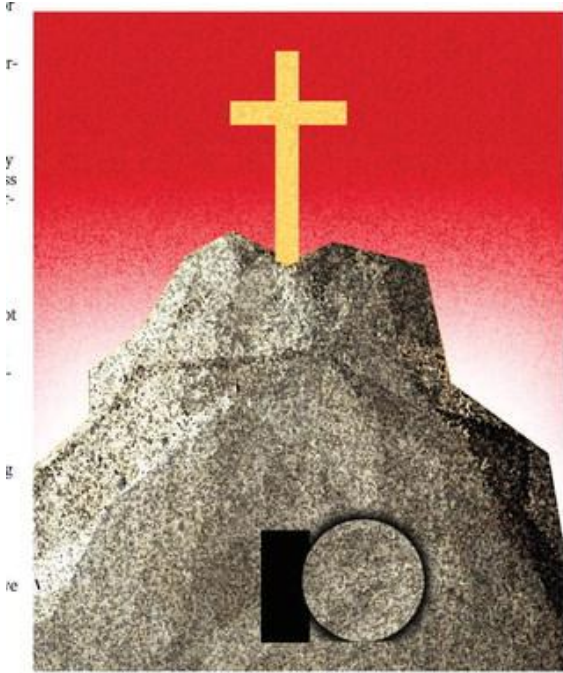


Historical facts of the resurrection

Christians haven't died just for beliefs; they have died for truth

[Washington Times](#), By Everett Piper, April 6, 2026



Charles Spurgeon once said: “The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is one of the best attested facts on record. There were so many witnesses to behold it that if we do in the least degree receive the credibility of men’s testimonies, we cannot, and we dare not doubt that Jesus rose from the dead. ... The resurrection is a fact better attested than any event recorded in any history, whether ancient or modern.”

C.S. Lewis added, “To preach Christianity [means] primarily to preach the resurrection. ... The resurrection is the central theme in every Christian sermon. ... The resurrection, and its consequences,

[are] the ‘gospel.’”

G.K. Chesterton chimed in: “The history of Christianity cannot be understood unless it is realized that it started with the staggering miracle of a dead man who was a live man, and who was not a ghost.”

This is why I am a Christian. I am a follower of Jesus Christ because I know the resurrection is real. I am a Christian because my faith is grounded in history, not hysteria; in facts, not fiction.

If you take any time at all to investigate it, then you will quickly find that the Christian faith is different from any other religion. At its core, what makes Christianity unique is that the first Christians actually believed Jesus rose from the dead — and they then proved their conviction by giving their lives to defend it.

Now, some may retort that there are innumerable examples of other men and women who were willing to die for similarly strong beliefs. After all, hundreds of Muslim terrorists and antifa anarchists have died for what they believed, right?

Still, any cursory reading of Scripture shows that the earliest disciples of Jesus didn't die for something they just "believed." They died for something they knew was true. They knew the resurrection wasn't a lie. They knew it wasn't just a belief. They knew it was a fact and not fake.

It has been said, "Many men may die for what they think is true. But no one dies for what they know is a lie." Herein is the evidence: The blood of the martyrs proves that the resurrection is a fact.

Why would these men and women have given themselves over to be beheaded, crucified, eaten alive by lions and sawn in two for something they all knew they had made up? Or, in today's vernacular, why would anyone fly themselves into buildings if they knew their cause was a lie? From the first days of the church, one thing has been crystal clear: The resurrection is real, and without this fact, there would be no basis for our faith.

Back to C.S. Lewis: "Our Lord's life and death were in no sense the basis of Christianity. ... The miracle of the resurrection and the theology of that miracle come first; the biography comes later as a comment on it. Nothing could be more unhistorical than to pick out selected sayings of Christ from the gospels and to regard those as the datum and the rest of the New Testament as a construction upon it. The first fact in the history of Christendom is that a number of people [said] they [saw] the resurrection. If they had died without making anyone else believe this 'gospel,' no gospels would ever have been written."

The Apostle Paul declared, "If Christ has not been raised, our faith is futile. ... If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied."

Adrian Rogers preached, "The resurrection is not merely important to the historic Christian faith; there would be no Christianity without it."

D.L. Moody proclaimed: "The resurrection is the keystone of the arch on which our faith is supported. If Christ has not risen, we must impeach all those witnesses for lying. If Christ has not risen, we have no proof that Jesus's crucifixion differed from that of the two thieves who suffered with him."

John MacArthur concluded: "The truth of the resurrection gives life to every other area of gospel truth. The resurrection is the pivot on which all Christianity turns and without which none of the other truths would much matter." In short, Christians don't claim Christianity because of Jesus' exemplary life.

Rather, as Lee Strobel writes, we “become Christian because the evidence is so compelling that Jesus really is the one-and-only Son of God who proved his divinity by rising from the dead.”

Charles Wesley sang out 250 years ago: “Christ the Lord is risen today; Sons of men and angels say. Raise your joys and triumphs high; Sing, ye heavens and earth reply, Hallelujah!”

I am a Christian because of the historical fact of the resurrection. I know Christ is risen, and he is risen, indeed! Happy Easter and long live the True King!

Everett Piper (dreverettpiper.com, @dreverettpiper), a columnist for The Washington Times, is a former university president and radio host. He is the author of “Not a Day Care: The Devastating Consequences of Abandoning Truth” (Regnery). He can be reached at epiper@dreverettpiper.com.

ILLUSTRATION BY **HUNTER**