

## *The Absurdity of Atheism, 3 OF 3*

Here is a teacher of religion [who] professes to stake his entire claims upon his ability, after having been done to death, to rise again from the grave. (R. M'Cheyne Edgar, *The Gospel of a Risen Saviour*, 32)

Atheism likes to portray Christianity as the non-thinking man's sugar stick. In many circles (often, academic), to profess faith in Christ is to commit intellectual suicide. But in truth, it is unbelief that has set itself against reason and evidence; it is unbelief that believes the unbelievable and grasps at impossible straws.

The strongest reason for believing in the existence of God is empirical. By *empirical*, I mean knowledge that comes to us through our five senses. "The empirical approach to the being of God is so obvious and so straightforward that we should expect it always to be the major approach. The most convincing reason for believing that the moon is in the sky is not the inferential approach concerning the existence of the tides, but the direct evidence that men see it" (Elton Trueblood, *Philosophy of Religion*, 143). The empirical approach means that *I believe in the God of the Bible because He has been seen.*

1. **On the basis of accepted principles of textual and historical analysis, the Gospel records are seen to be trustworthy, primary source testimony for the life of Jesus.**
2. **In the Gospels, Jesus claims to be God in human flesh and says that His resurrection from the dead will prove His claim to deity.**
3. **The Gospels provide detailed, sound, eye-witness testimony demonstrating that Jesus was, in fact, alive after He had been put to death.**
4. **The eye-witness testimony to Jesus' resurrection passes every legal test used to establish the veracity of a witness.**
5. **The resurrection cannot be dismissed on *a priori*, philosophical grounds; its reality is unimpeachably established by the canons of proper historical investigation.**

Listen, atheists take a backseat to no one when it comes to believing in the *concept of resurrection*. They tell us that they can't believe in the resurrection but that they can believe life came from nonlife? Say what?! The difference between what they say they believe and what I believe doesn't amount to spit on the griddle—except for this: empirical/scientific evidence (1 John 1.1–3) exists for the resurrection; *zero evidence of any kind* exists for believing that something came from nothing, or that life came from nonlife, or for spontaneous generation, or the steady state theory (which turns the universe into a cosmic perpetual motion machine), or for anything else found at the atheistic starting line. Anyone who will take the time to look at the evidence will see that what I'm saying is so.

And understanding the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus doesn't require some sort of thinking that differs from ordinary thinking. When an individual takes the kind of reasoning he employs in his normal, everyday life and applies it to the issue of Christian truth, Christianity will be shown to be true over against all other worldviews.

So why doesn't everyone get it? The answer is simple—not everyone wants it. Unbelief is driven morally, not intellectually. Unbelief doesn't want the life implicit in belief—it doesn't want the life of the strait and narrow. *Unbelief comes from a hardened heart, not an enlightened mind* (Eph. 4.17–19), and it will believe and behave as it wants, regardless of how specious or stupid it must become in the process. This is what I meant two papers back when I said that atheism results from conclusions, not premises. Concluding that Christ won't let it go the way it wants to go, atheism denies Christianity rather than accept the host of evidence that can be marshalled in its favor.

The resurrection stands as the central event of history. To deny it is the height of human arrogance and irrationality.

