

A wooden cross is positioned on the left side of the frame, extending from the bottom towards the top. The background is a dark, textured brown. The cross is made of light-colored wood with visible grain and is illuminated from the left, creating a soft glow.

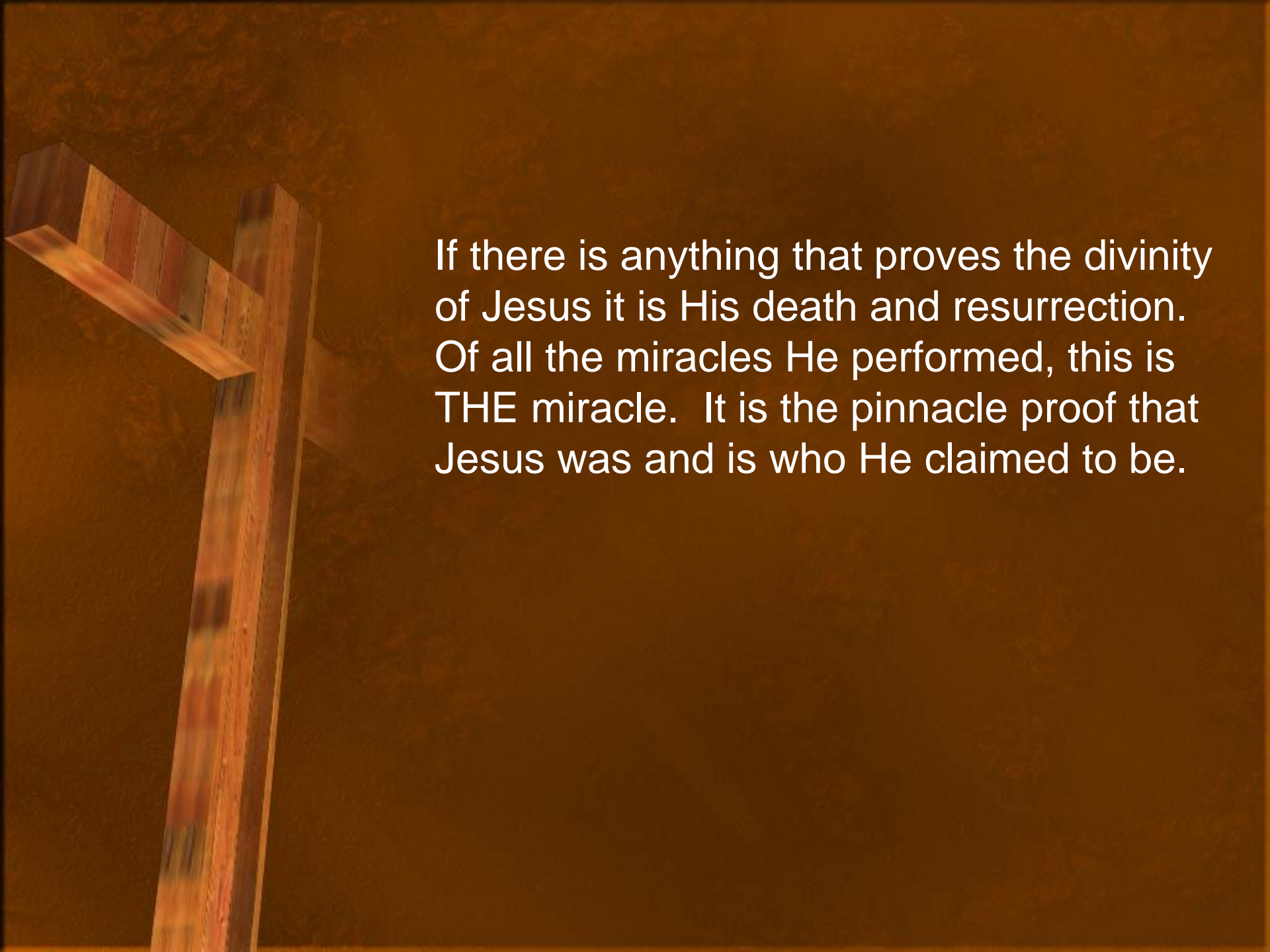
Christian Evidences

Lesson 9:

Jesus Christ, the Son of God
(Part III)

- From the moment that man first sinned, a plan was set in motion.
 - Sin separated man from God
 - He would provide a means of redemption
 - His plan unfolded over a great many generations
 - Finally culminated in the person of Jesus the Christ
 - Through His death and resurrection all have the hope of salvation

“... according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.” (Eph. 3:11-12)

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If there is anything that proves the divinity of Jesus it is His death and resurrection. Of all the miracles He performed, this is THE miracle. It is the pinnacle proof that Jesus was and is who He claimed to be.

The Death of Jesus

- Sure evidences of Jesus' divinity:
 - The manner of His death
 - The supernatural events surrounding it
- He predicted
 - The time, place, circumstances, and the reaction of His disciples to the event
- Signs at the actual time of His death
 - Opening graves around Jerusalem, ripping open of the temple veil, and the thick darkness
- No mere mortal could have known all the circumstances of His death in advance!
- Heaven and earth do not react to a mere mortal's death as they did to the death of this man!

Jesus Foretold His Death

- Can any mere man know the time and manner of his death?
- Jesus being both man and God was able to tell of His death in some detail.
- Also told His disciples how they would react to His death.
- Proved His divinity!

Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? “He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, “saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’ ” And they remembered His words. (Lk. 24:5-8)

Jesus Foretold His Death

- Mt. 12:38-40
 - Length of time between His death and the resurrection.
 - *“... the Son of Man [will] be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”*
- Mt. 16:21
 - Would be tortured and killed; who would do this; resurrection 3rd day.
 - *“... suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”*
- Mt. 17:22-23
 - Would be betrayed.
 - *“... about to be betrayed into the hands of men ...”*

Jesus Foretold His Death

- Mt. 20:18-19
 - Punishment described and manner of death.
 - *“... will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify ...”*
- Jn. 2:18-22
 - Resurrection from the dead the 3rd day.
 - *“... Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up ... He was speaking of the temple of His body ...”*
- Jn. 6:70-71; Jn. 13:21-22, 26
 - Who would betray Him.
 - *“... one of you is a devil ... He spoke of Judas Iscariot ... who would betray Him ...”*
 - *“... one of you will betray Me ... having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot ...”*

Jesus Foretold His Death

- Mk. 14:27; 14:50
 - How the apostles would react when He was captured and killed.
 - *“... All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night ...”*
 - *“Then they all forsook Him and fled.”*
- Mk. 14:29-30; 14:66-72
 - How Peter would react to His capture.
 - *Peter said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be ... even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times ...”*
 - *“... Peter was below in the courtyard ... I do not know this Man of whom you speak! ... A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.” And when he thought about it, he wept.”*

Events at the Death of Jesus



“And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.”
(Mt. 27:50-53)

- These were not normal events!
- Signs from God - the man who was dying was His only begotten Son
- Our reaction – should be as the centurion:
 - *“So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, ‘Truly this was the Son of God!’”*
(Matt. 27:54)

The Resurrection of Jesus

- Jesus Christ met death face-to-face, and defeated it!
- By His resurrection, every claim Jesus made about His divine nature was confirmed “with power”
 - Kept His word that He would be raised
 - And fulfilled a thousand-year-old prophecy by David
- Can the resurrection of Jesus be proven?
 - Yes!
 - More than adequate proof from the Gospel records

The Empty Tomb

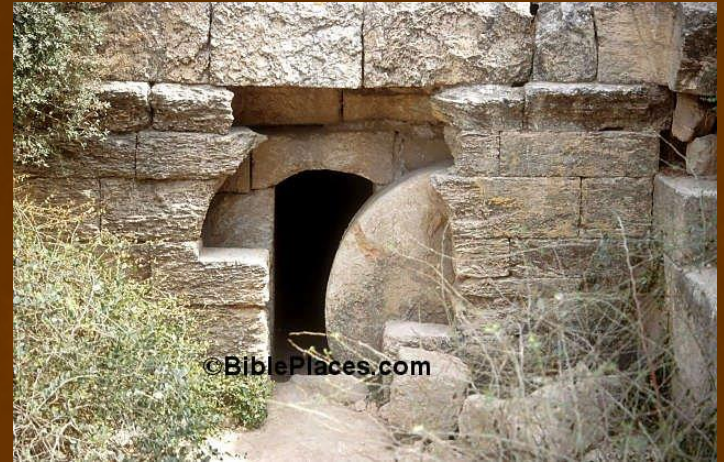
- Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea
 - *Jn. 19:38-42 – “... Joseph of Arimathea ... asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus ... then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury ... in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews’ Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.”*
- A guard was assigned by Pilate to make the tomb secure until the third day
 - The chief Priests and Pharisees knew of Jesus’ prediction. They feared His disciples might try to steal the body to deceive the people (Mt. 27:62-66).

The Empty Tomb

- The tomb was empty on the following Sunday morning!
- How did the tomb become empty?
- Note that it was impossible for Jesus to escape from the tomb undetected (if merely a man)
 - First, the Lord was dead prior to entering the tomb
 - *Mt. 27:50 – “... cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.”*
 - *Mk. 15:44-45 – “Pilate marveled that He was already dead ...”*
 - *Lk. 23:46 – “... Having said this, He breathed His last.”*
 - *Jn. 19:32-34 – “... when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.”*

The Empty Tomb

- Second, tombs have only one entrance or means of access
- Third, the opening was blocked by a massive stone door
 - *Mt. 27:60* – “... he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.”
- Fourth, the tomb was sealed and watched by soldiers
 - *Mt. 27:66* – “So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.”



The Empty Tomb

- The tomb was clearly empty on Sunday morning
- At least six of Jesus' followers saw the empty tomb:
 - Mary Magdalene (Mt. 28:1-10); Mary and Salome (Mk. 16:1-8); Joanna (Lk. 24:10); and Peter and John (Jn. 20:2-8).
- Some of the Roman guards, no doubt, saw that the tomb was empty (Mt. 28:2, 11-15)
- Jesus' enemies never denied that the tomb was empty
 - Merely attempted to explain why it was empty
- Peter proclaimed that the tomb was empty on the day of Pentecost
 - In the presence of thousands of Jews who would have denied it if they could (Acts 2:24-36).

The Empty Tomb

- Who moved the stone?
 - Jesus? Some suggest that Jesus was not dead and moved it.
 - Even if He were not dead, in no condition to move it
 - Would have been observed by Roman guards
 - The disciples?
 - The guards would have been aware of this
 - They were there for this specific reason
 - They knew the penalty for falling asleep or of collusion

The Empty Tomb

- Why did the chief priests and elders bribe the guards? (Mt. 28:11-15) What was reported among the Jews even to the time of writing of Matthew's gospel? What fact did this confirm?
 - The guards witnessed the resurrection; the Jewish leaders certainly did not want the guards recounting the actual events.
 - The thing reported by the Jews was this lie that the leaders bribed the guards to make: that the disciples stole the body while they slept.
 - This lie confirmed the fact of the empty tomb!

The Testimony of Witnesses to His Resurrection

| SCRIPTURE | NAMES (OR NUMBER) | CIRCUMSTANCE |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Mt. 28:1-10; Mk. 16:1-8 | Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, and Salome | Came with spices to anoint the body |
| Jn. 20:11-18 | Mary Magdalene | In the garden near the tomb |
| Lk. 24:34 | Simon Peter | Unknown |
| Lk. 24:13-35 | Two disciples | On the road to Emmaus |
| Jn. 20:19-25 | 10 of the Apostles | In a private room |
| Jn. 20:26-29 | 11 of the Apostles | In a private room |
| Jn. 21:1-23 | A number of disciples | As they were fishing |
| 1 Cor. 15:6 | Over 500 people | Unknown |
| 1 Cor. 15:7 | James | Unknown |
| Lk. 24:50-52; Acts 1:3-10 | All the Apostles | At Jerusalem, just before ascending from the Mount of Olives |
| Acts 9:1-9 | Paul | On the road to Damascus |

Where the Claim was First Published

- The claim that Jesus had risen from the dead was first published in the very city where it was purported to have happened
 - No one was able to controvert it!
- The people who were closest to the event in history and who would have wanted to put a stop to such a report were powerless in the face of the facts at hand
 - It was fully possible to check every piece of evidence, to interrogate every witness and to expose every tract of fraud.
- Only reasonable conclusion:
 - They were telling the truth and had nothing to fear from an investigation of their claim!



Subsequent Lives of the Apostles

- The apostles dedicated their entire lives to spreading the good news of salvation that came through Jesus the Christ.
- Were their actions consistent with men who honestly believed in Jesus or consistent with deceivers?
 - Many spent their whole lives preaching the resurrected Christ under extremely difficult circumstances.
 - They were cursed, hated, driven out of cities, imprisoned, and tortured because of their message; many died as martyrs.
- What would their lives more likely have been like if they were deceivers?
 - Profited from it – lavish lifestyle; position of greatness or power
 - Would not have endured persecution

False Theories

- The swoon theory – that Jesus did not actually die on the cross, but just fainted.
 - First, everyone believed Jesus was dead
 - The soldiers (Jn. 19:33), Pilate (Mk. 15:44-45), Jesus' followers (Jn. 19:39-42), the Jews (Mt. 27:62-66).
 - Second, physically not possible
 - No one who has been scourged, nailed to a cross for six hours, and had a spear pierce his side is going to be able to roll a large stone away from a tomb, which four women could not move.
 - Third, if this were true, why wouldn't the Jews have told everyone this? – that He had only fainted
 - It would have been easier for people to believe than that the guards slept.

False Theories

- The wrong tomb theory – that Jesus' followers went to the wrong tomb and only thought He had been raised.
 - Absurd
 - Ignores every detail of the resurrection reports
 - Would mean that not only His friends, but His enemies and the soldiers went to the wrong tomb
 - In fact, His body was seen in the tomb by at least four people
 - How long would it take before someone recognized the mistake
 - Surely, Joseph of Arimathea knew where his own tomb was

False Theories

- Friends stole the body – that His friends stole the body while the guards slept.
 - The story circulated by the Jews at the time (Mt. 28:15)
 - Where is the evidence that the guards actually slept? And what would have been their penalty for sleeping at their post?
 - How could the disciples have moved the stone without waking the supposed sleeping guards?
 - Why would the Jews have paid the guards to say the thing they had tried to avoid by posting the guard?

False Theories

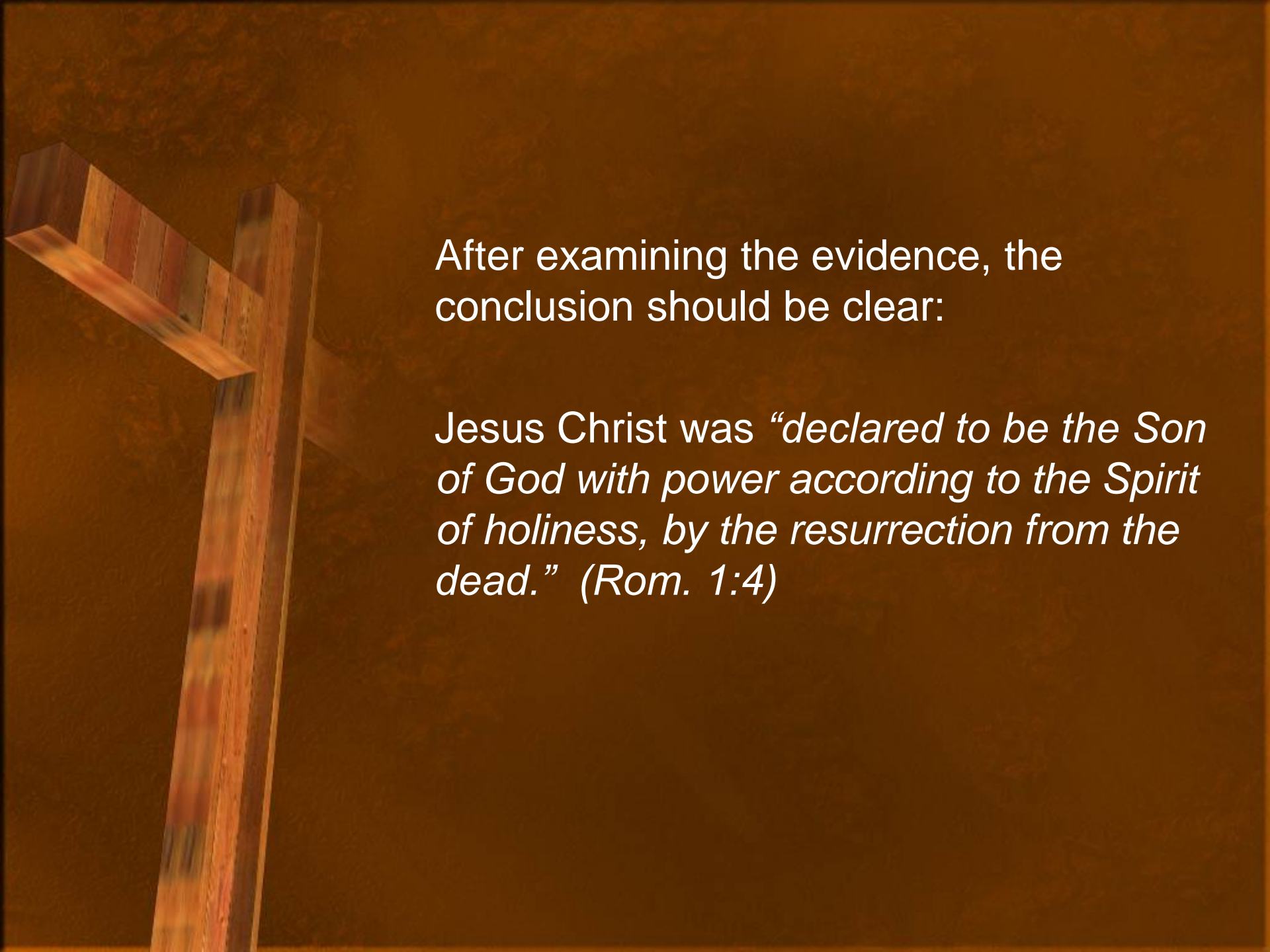
- Enemies stole the body – that the body was stolen by Jews to keep the Christians from doing so.
 - Took the body and hired a guard to watch an already empty tomb?
 - If actually happened, why didn't they expose the disciples' lie?
 - All they had to do was produce the body.
 - What would they have had to gain by concealing the most powerful evidence against the resurrection?
 - If they had done so, it would have ended Christianity before it began.
 - Again, this theory ignores the eye-witness accounts of His resurrection.

False Theories

- Hallucination theory – that the disciples never actually saw the Lord's risen body, but only imagined they did.
 - Some eyewitnesses were not easily convinced
 - Thomas – why would one so skeptical hallucinate this?
 - Women were initially perplexed about it (Lk. 24:4)
 - The disciples' reaction to Mary's report – did not believe (Mk. 16:11)
 - Two disciples from Emmaus were slow to believe (Lk. 24:25)
 - His appearance to them must have been convincing
 - They dedicated their lives to the message that Jesus was raised from the dead.
 - Many died for that belief.
- The only answer is that they saw Jesus in the flesh

False Theories

- “I believe it and that is enough” theory – that Jesus only lived on in the memory of His followers.
 - Does not address any of the biblical evidence.
 - Makes faith vain as Paul said (1 Cor. 15:17)
 - It is not enough to merely believe (or hope) that Christ was raised. Otherwise, our faith might as well be based on a lie.
 - It should be based on the solid evidence that is available.
 - How could we hope to convince others if we’re not convinced ourselves?

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After examining the evidence, the conclusion should be clear:

Jesus Christ was *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”* (Rom. 1:4)