

He
lives!



Four distinct accounts:

Matt.28:16-20

Mark 16:14-18

Luke 24:36-49

John 20:19-31

(also accounts in Acts
and 1 Corinthians)

4 Different accounts
therefore unreliable?



Implications of this:

Different Viewpoints: 4 Gospels often equated with 4 Beasts of Revelation (Rev.4:7) – each have different emphasis on who Jesus is, e.g.

Matthew = lion (king of beasts; Jesus = Messiah/king)

Mark = man (Jesus = son of man; plain straightforward account)

Luke = ox (animal of service and sacrifice for humanity)

John = eagle (Jesus = Son of God; heavenly realms)

Variations = entirely consistent with **oral historical testimony** (**different perspectives and viewpoints = evidence of authenticity**; Conversely, **uniform series of accounts** indicates either a single source or a possibility of collusion and hence = **less reliable source of evidence**)

Two Resurrection traditions in New Testament

1. The Empty Tomb:

Tomb of Jesus
in all 4 gospels,
but only once in
rest of NT:



Acts 13:29-31 ²⁹'They ... laid him in a tomb.

³⁰But God raised him from the dead,

³¹and for many days he was seen by those who had travelled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem.

They are now his witnesses (*martures*) to our people.'

All 4 Gospels have accounts of this, but tomb of Jesus mentioned only once outside the Gospels (other tombs mentioned, such as the tombs of David [Acts 2:29] and of Abraham [Acts 7:16])

Acts 13:29-31 – 4 elements:

They laid him in a tomb (v.29)

But God raised him from the dead (v.30)

And for many days he was seen by those who had travelled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem (v.31a)

They are now his witnesses to our people (v.31b)

Witnesses referred to 170 times in NT (*martus* [34] / *marturia* [37] / *marturion* [20] / *martureo* [79] = to bear witness of something that one has seen or heard – [we don't have to prove it! That's God's part...])

2. The Witnesses:

Why focus on witnesses?

Geographical spread of gospel

Empty tomb less significant for people outside of Jerusalem (non-locals can't go and see it for themselves = "9-day wonder")

Not simply a mere verification of facts

(tomb is empty, therefore...) – So what?

Focus is on encounter with the Risen Lord and on consequences of this

(Jesus is ALIVE! = not just a mere fact, but an existential reality that challenges us to the core of our being – e.g. my own conversion in 1960 ["He lives!"] = "Jesus is alive NOW in MY life")



Common features of the Resurrection Accounts: (Especially Luke and John)

Disciples initially fearful at Jesus' appearance – Luke 24:37 “They were startled and frightened, thinking that they saw a ghost”; John 20:19 “Doors locked for fear of the Jews”) – Jesus appears in middle of locked room: *Shalom aleikem*, “*peace be with you*”

(Luke 24:36, John 20:19) = “Giddyay” (but 2nd *Shalom aleikem* (John 20:21) [repetition gives special emphasis] = “may you lack nothing necessary to completeness” – i.e. **all-sufficiency of Cross and Resurrection**); fear >>> changed to joy and faith

Jesus gives tactile and physical evidences of resurrection (Touch me; eats piece of fish Luke 24:39-43; John 20:20 [also Thomas v.25-27) – cp. 1 John 1:1 ‘That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, when we have **seen** with our eyes, which we have **looked at** and our hands have **touched** – this we proclaim concerning the Word of Life.’

Radical change of understanding

(Paradigm shift: nothing is the same again) – Explanation of the Scriptures (Luke 24:45-47; cp. Emmaus Road vv.25-27, 32) = ‘Ah-ha!’ moment – Jesus’ teaching seen in new light.

Great Commission (Strongest in Matt.28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-18). But also Luke 24:47-48 “Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.”; John 20:21 “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you”)

Empowering by Holy Spirit (Luke’s account different from John’s):

- Luke 24:49 Told to wait for coming of Spirit (Acts 1:8; 2:1)) – focus is on **empowerment for individual and collective witness** (throughout Acts – Pentecostals tend to stress Lukan tradition = more individualistic);
- John 20:22 Jesus breathes on them saying ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ – focus is on:

New creation (cp.Gen.2:7 ‘God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being”) – but note that Johannine tradition also has stress on **subsequence** of infilling (John 14:17 “He lives **with you** (plural) and will be **in you** (plural)”) cp. Ezek. 37.

Communal participation in the Spirit (1 John 2:20 “But **you** (plural) have an anointing from the Holy One; and all of **you** (plural) know the truth”; 1 John 2:27 “The anointing **you** (plural) have received from him remains in **you** (plural)...”)

Communal versus Individual empowering:

We tend to individualise both the empowerment ('I've got the power!) and the work (John Travolta 1996 film *Michael*: 'Not my area') >>> ministry becomes the job of the gifted ministry professional

Ministry not the job of professionals, but of all of us = *empowering, witnessing community*

Anointing is not individual but communal [= you plural] ('ministry' not just the minister's job but the job of all of us) – individual roles, but community responsibility

Not an either/or (individual or communal) but a both/and (individual and communal)

Witnessing community (in sense of facilitating encounter with the Risen Lord) – all of us must encounter the Risen Lord ourselves in order to effectively witness of Him

Characteristics of empowered community:

- **Lives** in and by the Spirit (Jesus be the centre...)
- **Loves** in and by the Spirit
- **Moves** in and by the Spirit
- **Motivated** in and by the Spirit

Classic example of empowered witnessing community (Acts 4:31-33):

³¹After they had prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. ³²All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. ³³With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.'

He Lives! The Lord is Risen Indeed!