

Did Jesus REALLY Rise from the Dead? On the Resurrection (Vol. 1) | with Dr. Gary Habermas

(February 2, 2024)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, you only need to establish two primary facts to show that Christianity is true. You have to show that God exists. And then secondly, you have to show that Jesus rose from the dead. Because if God exists and Jesus rose from the dead, it's quite easy to show that Christianity is true, and that the Bible is indeed the Word of God. Now, the second question here, did Jesus rise from the dead, has a brand-new go to resource. The resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth in the first century, all the evidence that could be compiled into one book finally has been compiled into one book by the great Dr. Gary Habermas.

The new book is called 'On the Resurrection: Evidences - Volume One.' It came out this month. It's over 1000 pages long, and it's only the first of four volumes. And it's always a great pleasure to have Gary on the program. He's been working on this for decades, the resurrection. Gary, it's got to be a great pleasure to see volume one finally out. Tell our listeners and viewers, what's in volume one?

GARY:

Well, it's just short of 1100 pages. We start with philosophy and history. What are the nature of philosophy and history? Philosophy of history, historiography, post modernism and history, and method. And then we go to the background, and the background is did Jesus exist? What's the definition of a miracle? That might sound like a really easy question, but you could easily do a master's thesis on what's the definition of a miracle. And did Jesus exist? We do some background deals. Was Jesus a miracle worker? That's interesting. That's background, because virtually every critical scholar writing today concedes that he was a healer and an exorcist. And I should say something, Frank.

When these guys who don't even believe in the resurrection, concede this stuff, you say, well, what the heck are they conceding? If they don't believe in demons, and they don't think people are really healed, what are they conceding? What they're conceding is the Gospels are strong enough truth. I mean, they're close enough, that when Jesus healed people and cast out demons, the scholars don't have to believe in demons. But Jesus did, and the people did. So, what they're saying is what Jesus did, and those stories in the Gospels, either the stories themselves, or very similar ones really occurred. Jesus was really healing, and Jesus was casting out demons. If all casting out demons means is He was healing them of emotional or mental disease, (as sometimes we talked about schizophrenia and other things) they grant that that stuff happens.

They don't talk about what it is, where it is on the supernatural chart, and they don't talk about whether they believe it. The late Marcus Borg, for example, one of the founders of the Jesus



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Seminar said, we should keep in mind that on historical grounds, he says it is virtually impossible to believe that Jesus healed and exorcised. He was a healer; He was a miracle. He was a worker in that sense. They believe all that. Alright, then we jump into the resurrection. There's two long arguments in the book. One is for the minimal facts argument, several 100 pages. And then there's fewer 100, but there's still hundreds of pages on the five resurrection chapters in the Gospels.

I don't think that's five Gospels, but it's five chapters. Matthew 28, the first eight verses a Mark 16, Luke 24 (the longest of these chapters) John 20, John 21, and that I spend time on the first 11 verses of Acts 11, which goes up to the ascension. So, there's a minimal facts argument about well, in my manuscript copy it was 600 pages. And there's a gospel argument for reliability. People who think that minimalists don't do reliability, it's just silly and a mistake they make oftentimes because that part of the book was written two years ago, maybe three years ago, and it's been there all the time.

FRANK:

Well, you know, Gary, I've been through much of this book...

GARY:

We go all the way through it. there's a chapter on the end. The last chapter before some appendices. The last chapter is called, 'Moving from the Disciples Thought They Saw Jesus' (which is conceded by everybody). 'Moving from they thought they saw Jesus to they really saw Jesus. And that's how the book ends before the appendices.

FRANK:

Well, as I say, I've been through much of this book already. And it is now the go to resource, ladies and gentlemen, for anybody that wants to know the truth about the resurrection, the evidence for the resurrection, what scholars across the board believe about the resurrection. This is the book to get by Dr. Gary Habermas. Most of you know that Gary has been studying the resurrection for decades. He's probably the top scholar in the world on it now. He teaches at Liberty University. He's been there for decades. And this book is the book to get. Again, it's only volume one. For those of you that are watching the YouTube in our CrossExamined community, Gary's holding the book up right now. It is literally about 1100 pages. I got the Kindle version, so I could search it and highlight it. It is an amazing resource.

But Gary, before we get into this, we've got to respond to an objection that people like Bart Ehrman have. You quote Bart Ehrman over and over in this work. He is the skeptical New Testament scholar who teaches at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. You've debated him several times, Michael Licona has, and many others have, William Lane Craig has. But I heard Bart Ehrman recently say miracles can't occur. They don't occur. He's essentially saying naturalism is true. So, there's no way we could show that Jesus rose from the dead. How would you respond to him?

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GARY:

Well, first of all, when I teach courses, I use colors for Bart's book. His black book is 'Did Jesus Exist?' His red book is 'How Jesus Became God.' Okay, in his red book, the second one, he says, historians can tell that Jesus did XYZ. And they can even entertain the question of whether Jesus died on the cross, which he thinks is absolutely true, and that He was walking around and talking later. He said, historians can do that kind of stuff. But you're right. He says they cannot connect it to the hand of God. They cannot say God caused this event because that's not historical. Okay. So, that's what I was talking about when I said, these scholars believe Jesus did wonders, healing, exorcisms. Whether they believe in demons or not, they think those things happened.

The main thing to go after this thing Frank. I've got treatments of it in both the first two volumes. The main thing is, there is no argument that proves naturalism. When you debate atheists, you know, subcategory, when you debate atheists, they want to say of late (even sophisticated ones), I am an a-theist. What don't you understand about a-theist? And they'll say, if you're a-millennial, you don't believe in a millennium. I'm an a-theist. I'm not a theist. And if you say, I'm sorry. That's a position. What's your argument for it? Oh, I don't have to give you an argument. I'm only saying I'm not a theist. Not a theist is a position. And I've told guys in debates, not Bart. I haven't debated Bart, by the way.

But one day, an atheist said to me, I'm just saying I'm not an atheist. And I said, that's a worldview. He said, it's not a worldview. I'm not an atheist. I said, listen. All you need to take is an introduction to philosophy course. I said an introduction would probably be enough for you. You can't make assertions and not have a burden of proof. And when you have a burden of proof, if you're going to say I'm not an atheist, you've got to tell me why you're there. They can't do it. They can say what they are. They can give you an autobiographical comment. I am not a theist. Okay, wonderful. That's great. But you can't prove that atheism is true. Well, let's say naturalism or materialism. Now, oftentimes...

FRANK:

But hold on. Hold on, Gary. We'll come right after the break and deal with that, because they're just assuming that miracles can occur. They're just assuming God doesn't exist. And they have got to give evidence for their position. And we're going to talk about it right after the break. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network. Back in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network. We're talking to the great Dr. Gary Habermas. His magnum opus, volume one of four volumes just came out a week or two ago. And ladies and gentlemen, you might have trouble actually getting a hard copy of this right now, because it's already gone through the first printing. It's very rare to have a book that's 1100 pages on an academic topic like the resurrection sell out, but this one has. You can certainly get it if you don't see a hard copy version.

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You can certainly get the Kindle version, the eBook version, wherever you get eBooks. And it is well worth it. I'm going through the book right now myself. I'm probably about a quarter of the way through. It is an amazing resource. Again, it's about the evidence for the resurrection. The official title is 'On the Resurrection: Evidences - Volume One' by Dr. Gary Habermas. And one of the myths that we needed to bust before we even start talking about the evidence for the resurrection is the myth that naturalism is true. And Gary, before the break, you were saying that when you ask theists, atheist (people who are not theists) why do they think naturalism is true? How can you prove naturalism? They say what?

GARY:

They'll say, I don't have to prove it. I do not have a burden of proof. I am an atheist. You are or not amillennial. That means you do or you don't believe in the millennium. I don't believe in God. The prefix a negates the word. I simply negated your word. I don't have a worldview, they say, which is totally naive. Like I said, an intro to philosophy course cures that. I don't have a worldview. And I'm not asserting anything. Excuse me, you have a worldview. And you just asserted that you're not an atheist.

FRANK:

You're not a theist, you mean.

GARY:

Yeah, sorry. You're not a theist. Yeah. And you're taking one of the views, I'm a materialist. I'm a naturalist. I'm a whatever. You just bought into...no. I'm not doing that. I'm only saying I'm not an atheist. Well, you think you're a something. And what kills me Frank, is the two big arguments that are usually given are the problem of evil and evolution. Okay. The biggest problem for evolution is everybody knows it can't answer the cosmological question. A lot of Christians do this. I don't. A lot of Christians take all of evolution. They insert God at the beginning of it, and it's called theistic evolution. Evolution by itself doesn't cut it. And if you do evil, I have a long appendix where I talk about the naturalistic philosophers, the atheistic philosophers, big names, the biggest names who say, this does not disprove God. It makes it troubling.

But you can have a view of God where you kind of go between the pegs and you make it work. And you can make your view of God work in spite of the evil in the world. I'll give you one example. Maybe the best book written on this subject is a great little volume by Alvin Plantinga, 'God, Freedom, and Evil.' When he gives his famous free will defense against the problem of evil, he's maybe the most sophisticated theistic philosopher in the world, he and Richard Swinburne. And he says at the end of the book, my defense answers the problem of evil by itself. I have answered the problem of evil. And the atheist will say, the biggest ones, I can give names, but the biggest ones have said, evil is a problem. It doesn't eliminate God.

So, if your two biggest arguments can't prove your worldview, why are you assuming the whole basis against me when you have not shown it's true? And then here's what gets me. You can

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tell I get worked up. This really gets me. Frank, this is what kills me. I'll go, let me give you 10 evidences for the resurrection. Those are wonderful. I need more. Okay, great. Let me give you a four more. Oh, yeah, but great claims require great evidence. Timeout. They only require great evidence when A) you're a naturalist (which can't be proven) and B) you keep asking me to give them no matter what and you haven't given a stinking one.

Why don't you try giving some arguments? No, I'm not going to go there. I guess you're not. But if you're not going to your view, don't use it against me. Don't use your views against me and dare to ask me for evidence. And no matter what I tell you, I need more. I need more. I need more. Hey, Bozo, why don't you start with one? Oh, well, I'm not on stage here. I'm sorry, you are. To be a naturalist of any sort, you have a worldview.

FRANK:

You see, despite being a great academic, Gary's also a hockey player. Hey Bozo, give me an argument! [Laughter] That's right. Hey friends, as we've talked about so many times on this program, if Genesis 1:1 is true, naturalism is false, and God exists. And the evidence shows that even many atheists are admitting that space, time, and matter had a beginning out of nothing. They don't think it's God. But what else could it be to create a whole universe out of nothing? And secondly, if we are just molecular machines, as the atheists say, we shouldn't believe anything we think, including the thought that Jesus did not rise from the dead.

So, they've neutered the argument from reason by making reason impossible. They made their reason impossible if there is no spiritual realm at all. And so, Genesis 1:1 shows there has to be a being like God, because the evidence shows that the universe had a beginning as even Stephen Hawking and many other atheistic scientists admit. And secondly, their ability to reason rules out naturalism as well. So, naturalism is off the table, Gary, if those facts are true.

Let me ask you another myth that maybe you can bust for us. And it's all over the book. But obviously, we can't cover 1100 pages here in this 45 minute podcast. But I think a lot of people, lay people, think that there's no way, Gary, you can use anything in the New Testament as evidence for the resurrection because these Bible writers were biased. And Gary, that would be circular reasoning. You're using the Bible to prove the Bible. How do you respond to that?

GARY:

I tell them, go read Bart Ehrman. If they dare to read 'Did Jesus Exist' by Bart Ehrman, here's a great little comment he makes. He says, I'm told that I'm wrong as an atheist New Testament specialist, because I use historical passages in the Gospels that everybody allows. But they say I'm wrong because I'm using the Christian book. He goes, let me ask you something. It's his illustration. If I'm doing a book on the American Revolution, am I, or am I not allowed to interview George Washington? And if I can't interview George Washington and other generals from both sides, well, then I can't interview British generals because their prejudice, can't interview George. I can't do a book on the Revolutionary War, not a good one. I can't talk to the eyewitnesses.

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And Bart, for example, to give one example, he doesn't think the apostles wrote the four Gospels. But he says in Galatians 1, which is accepted by everybody, and again, in Galatians 2, Paul made two trips to Jerusalem. The first time he spent 15 days with Peter and James, the second time, Peter, James, and John. And Paul specifically says, I was talking about the content of the Gospel, Galatians 2:2. And here's Bart Ehrman. Where do we get closer to eyewitnesses than this? So, Paul's interviewing Peter, and James, and later John. It's sort of like Bart mythically interviewing George Washington for the Revolutionary War. He said, if you don't think I'm going to go to the generals for the American Revolutionary War, you're crazy. You don't know how to do history. That's Bart on history, and he's an atheist.

So, the answer is this. I use the facts which atheist, agnostic, non-Christian, New Testament scholars will concede as being easily true. Bart gives fifteen independent sources for Jesus dying by crucifixion within 100 years. That's his historical period, very fair. Thirty AD to 130 AD, how many sources are there? Well, he lists a good number and many of them are not in the New Testament. They are not. So, that's another answer. Don't use the New Testament if you're that hung up on it. But Bart gives 15 sources for crucifixion. So, here's my answer. Do it the way the atheistic New Testament scholars, and go tell them they're crazy,

FRANK:

And you point out in the book, Gary, over and over again that scholars from atheist all the way to Christian agree on these essential facts because there is historical data in the New Testament. And we're not taking the New Testament documents as some kind of inspired text when we do that. We are simply looking at them as historical documents written down by people who may have been eyewitnesses. Of course, we agree that there is eyewitness testimony in the New Testament documents. Some will dispute that. But we give, and you give evidence, Gary, throughout the book that there is eyewitness testimony in there. So, we're not using the Bible to prove the Bible. We're using historical sources that later turn out to be the Bible. Sorry, Gary, go ahead. What were you going to say?

GARY:

Well, I use 12 total facts that I go over in this book. Virtually everybody concedes the twelve. Then I go, okay, well, I'm going to get real critical here. I'm going to be a skeptic. I'm going to go from the 12 that almost everybody accepts, to the six that everybody accepts, and those are minimal facts. And the biggest name critics accept the six facts, and I will use their basis. After Bart gives that example where he says, why can't I interview George Washington? Why can't I go right to the horse's mouth for my report? He says this. He goes, I do not use these texts because they're in the Bible. That's not my reason. And he's totally right on that. We don't use it because it's in the Bible. We're using texts that are reliable historically. And like I said, in Bart's list of 15, we're getting close to half of those sources rather than the New Testament.

FRANK:

Gary, you also talk about the criteria that historians use to try and discover whether someone is telling the truth. One of them, of course, is the principle of embarrassment. And there's so many

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embarrassing details in the New Testament documents, that even if these writers were biased, you wouldn't think they would include these embarrassing testimony or these embarrassing stories. You know, why would Peter be rebuked by Jesus? Why would he deny Him three times? Why would they run away at the crucifixion? Why would the women be the first witnesses at the tomb, Gary? This doesn't make any sense if they're making all this up.

GARY:

The men were afraid to accompany the women. And you know, people say embarrassing doesn't make it true. Let's talk about how embarrassing. I mean, three times in the Gospels, Mark 3, Mark 6, John 7, it says Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him. And one text, Mark 3 says they thought He was mentally disturbed. They agreed with the people in the town. What? First of all, the brother of Jesus didn't agree? That's right. And he thinks Jesus was mentally disturbed? That was probably thought by somebody. It wouldn't be recorded because that's too damaging to Jesus' reputation.

FRANK:

Yeah, it's not an invented text. And these people, ladies and gentlemen, the New Testament writers had every motive to say Jesus did not rise from the dead, not every motive to say He did. Because by saying He rose from the dead, they were kicked out of the synagogue, beaten, tortured, and killed. They were not inventing this for their own benefit. They really believe this happened and we're going to talk more with Dr. Gary Habermas. His brand-new, fantastic you need to get book is 'On the Evidence for the Resurrection' by Gary Habermas. Over 1100 pages, check it out. We're back in two with more.

Ladies and gentlemen, do you want to be fearless in your faith? Well, if you're anywhere near Dayton, Ohio on February 16 and 17, join me and many others for the Fearless Faith Conference in Xenia, Ohio. Go to DaytonApologetics.com for more. It's going to be a two-day event. I'll be there, Greg Koukl, Alisa Childers, Jorge Gil, Phoenix Hayes, John Ferrer. We're going to show you how to be fearless in your faith, even on some of the hottest cultural issues. Just go to DaytonApologetics.com and see it there. Then on the 20th of February. I'll be at flat Creek Baptist Church. That's on a Tuesday night. We're going to be talking about 'Correct, Not Politically Correct: About Same-Sex Marriage and Transgenderism.' So, check all that out there.

And then the following weekend, February 24th and 25th, I'll be way up in Vancouver. Actually, it's more close towards Abbotsville, Canada. That's on the Vancouver side on the West Coast, at Main Street Church. You can go to our website CrossExamined.org. Also note, on certain Monday nights, we're going to be doing 'Digging Up the Bible' again. It's going to be streaming live on our YouTube channel, our website 7:30 PM. We're going through the top archaeological discoveries of the Bible. This Monday, February 5, we're going to be talking a lot about archaeological evidence from foreign countries that confirm the exile. So, you don't want to miss that. Just go to CrossExamined.org and look for our YouTube channel, two words. Cross Examined is the YouTube channel.

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I'm talking to my friend Dr. Gary Habermas. And this magnum opus volume one has just come out. It's called 'On the Resurrection: Evidences', over 1100 pages. And just before the break, Gary, we were talking about the fact that the New Testament writers had no motive to be biased. They were the ones that actually got the brunt of saying Jesus had risen from the dead. But here's my question, Gary, and you cover this brilliantly in the book. And it's actually going to be expanded further in volume two. You're admitting, and even unbelievers are admitting that the New Testament writers, the Apostles, the disciples really believed they saw Jesus risen from the dead. Why are skeptics admitting this, Gary? Why are they saying, yeah, they must have seen something?

GARY:

Yeah, the fact that the disciples had real experiences (and it's often said that way), real experiences that they believed were appearances of the risen Jesus. You will look hard to find a critical scholar with a terminal degree in a relevant field, New Testament, theology, history, classics, archaeology, philosophy. You'll be hard pressed to find one specialist who denies that. That's why at the end of the first volume, I have a chapter on moving from they thought they saw to they really saw. And Frank, you've already covered what's a really important part of that moving from they thought they saw to they saw. Don't assume naturalism on me. Don't go back at that point and say, yeah, but we don't know that world exists. And I give two arguments.

Number one, you don't have a single argument that proves naturalism is true, but you're going to base everything against me on it. If you just let the evidence speak, you've got 1100 pages of evidence against you. But here's the other thing I say. I'll often say, timeout. Now, Dale Allison made this part of his comment on the book. He recommended this book. Dale Allison said, Gary argues from NDEs to resurrection appearances. He says, we have to consider this argument. Okay. Here's what I say. They'll say there's no other world. No world exists. I'll say, do you want to talk about near death experiences? I won't give the guy's name. I probably should. I was talking to certainly one of the two or three most influential atheistic thinkers in the country in the field, an accredited scholar with a degree that's relevant.

And right when he said to me, what about the world should make me open to somebody rising from the dead? I said, well, let's just take a time out. He said, what about the world? He asked me about the world. I said, can we discuss near death experiences? And he said, "I do not want to discuss near death experiences." And I said, you just cut a leg out of the argument because once again, you're making an assertion with no data. But here's the argument. If there's an afterlife, which NDEs are almost impossible to deny. There's hundreds of evidence cases. If there's an afterlife, don't tell me I can't talk about an event that happens in the genre we call afterlife. The resurrection of Jesus, it's a key event for Christians. It's His afterlife. It's our afterlife. But it is afterlife.

So, don't stop and say that world doesn't exist. Frank, I won't get off the subject. But when these guys are saying they looked down and saw the doctors beating on their chest, and they say, stop it, stop it, stop it, guess what? The doctors don't look up at them, some wispy spirit, and

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say, hey. Don't tell me my business. I'm trying to bring you back to life. They don't have a clue the guy's up there yelling at them. There's another dimension. It exists empirically. We have empirical data for another world. And that's their main reason for saying there's no miracles. They don't know. But if there's an afterlife, why can't I talk about the resurrection? Plus, that event is well evidence on its own. So, I say this worldview stuff is baloney coming. If that's your main reason, you're in trouble.

FRANK:

Well, Gary, you have a chapter toward the back of this new volume on near death experiences. And these are veridical, ladies and gentlemen. What we mean by that is, they can be verified. It's not just someone says, yeah, I saw my grandmother who had pre-deceased me. It's someone that goes up over the hospital and says, I just saw an accident on third in main. And when he wakes up on the table, he tells the doctor, and the doctor actually checks the news report or walks outside and sees there was an accident on 3rd and Main just like the guy described.

GARY:

In the police report, if the guy was out for a half hour or 40 minutes, which happens, the accident from the police report happened during the 40 minutes. And it's over before the 40 minutes are over. Yeah, when they say things like I saw Jesus, or I saw an angel, or I saw my deceased grandmother, there's no evidence for that. I don't know if they did, but they're in another realm. Because when they're screaming at the doctor, their wife doesn't say to them, dear, please come down to your body. I want to spend the rest of life with you. They don't know the person's out there. They don't know they're talking there.

There is another world, and we have empirical data. By the way, that essay that you're talking about in near death experiences reproduced in the book, was published with permission by Blackwell, which claims to be the leading secular research company in the world. And it's a pretty big claim. Because you know where they're located? In Oxford, right down the street from the famous university, and they claim to be the top research press. These guys aren't Christians arguing for this stuff. It's the data. And by the way, I'm doing two more now from the same thing. It made a big splash.

FRANK:

Oh, excellent. So, ladies and gentlemen, you have the argument from the beginning of the universe. If nature had a beginning, the cause must be supernatural. You have the argument from reason itself. If we're just molecular machines, we shouldn't trust anything we think. But of course, we can trust things we think. So, our minds aren't just made of chemicals. We are actually thinking there's a spiritual realm. We don't just have a brain. We have a mind, and we can reason to conclusions, valid conclusions. And now Gary's also bringing up near death experiences. In other words, there's remote viewing. There are people who are separate from their body who are experiencing things that can be verified. So, this is not a naturalistic world where only natural events occur.

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So, the evidence for the resurrection, which is voluminous in this book by Gary Habermas should, if you're open minded, say, yep. There's a lot more evidence that He rose from the dead than to say that certainly He stayed in the tomb. Maybe Christianity is indeed true. In fact, I can't believe this quote that you have in here, Gary, from Bart Ehrman. This is on page 385 of your book. Here's the quote. Bart says, we can say with complete certainty that some of the disciples declared that Jesus soon appeared to them, convincing them He had been risen from the dead. Here's Bart Ehrman, an atheist saying, yeah, the disciples had experiences, and it convinced these people that Jesus had risen from the dead. So, what does he say happened then if it wasn't a resurrection, Gary?

BART:

By the way, he goes on in that same context, and he says, I don't object to this. It's an historical fact. That's what's said right there. The only thing he says to it is, yeah. It is. But we can't prove God did it. And by the way, that's for a later volume. I do have a whole thing of the connection between God. But here's the point. Number one, if there's an afterlife from a completely different secular argument, then why can't I talk about the afterlife, a specific case? They go, you don't know God did that. But there is another domain that goes after the naturalism, as we've said. But an additional problem, they can't even prove their view. So, they keep saying more evidence, more evidence, more evidence, and they can't handle the evidence they have, that the evidence is there.

By the way, a book was published a few years ago, by a major university philosophy professor in an Ivy League book. The whole book was saying miracles don't happen and the resurrection of Jesus is not a fact, the whole book. I did a review for an Oxford University journal. And my whole point in the review is, this guy assumes naturalism from start to finish. And the way I explained it is, you're playing pool, and somebody lifted up the end of the table, so all the balls fall into one end.

And if I don't lift up the corner of the table, I'm not going to let you play pull on my table. So, the table is [unintelligible]. The point is, the guy assumes naturalism and says, well, golly, since naturalism is true, (since naturalism is true without a single effort) your miracle talk is bogus. Why don't you get your hands off the table and quit lifting the table up? Not once in the book is any evidence given. It's totally assumed.

FRANK:

Now, Gary, toward the end of the section that you do on fact number two, there are six minimal facts Gary looks at. Fact number two is followers had experiences that Jesus had risen. That's what we're talking about right now. And Gary, you say that you have a minimum of 20 different texts, not only Christian texts, but texts from say, early church fathers and also texts from pagans that talk about the crucifixion and perhaps even the resurrection. Can you just unpack that for just a minute?

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GARY:

Yeah, it goes back to, because he's not the only one that does this. It's just really convenient of Bart where he lists. It's no one place for him. You have to put all the pages together. But he'll give seven sources for the crucifixion here, six more here, four more here. And there's 15 total sources for the resurrection in New Testament and non-New Testament sources. He accepts all within 100 years.

FRANK:

Wait, for the resurrection or crucifixion?

GARY:

Crucifixion. Now my point is, you can use the same sources doing the same thing that allow crucifixion to tell you about these experiences. You do it the exact same way. You got some of the Gospels that are credited because multiple attestation, enemy attestation, et cetera. You've got those. Then you've got the sources outside and they all say these experiences are legit. I'm saying the same sources that do crucifixion also do these experiences. You get there the same way. That's why Bart says there's no objection. They're historical fact.

FRANK:

By the way, you can still get the hardcover book on Amazon and Christian Book Distributors before they run out. They have a supply. So, get it now 'On the Resurrection: Evidences' by Gary Habermas. One more segment in two minutes. We'll be right back. Don't go anywhere.

Ladies and gentlemen, you get a knock at your door. It's a Jehovah's Witness, or it's a Mormon, or you're working with someone who's a Muslim. How do you evangelize some of those folks? How do you interact with them in a coherent way? How can you plant seeds that hopefully one day will sprout, where people will come to know the truth about Jesus? You need to take the brand-new course, 'Conversations with the Faith' by Dr. Brady Blevins.

He's going to show you practical ways to plant seeds, to evangelize not only Muslims, but also Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses. That class starts February 5. If you're listening to this after that, you can still join it, probably a week or so after because the first Zoom session (if you take the premium version) won't be for a week or so into it. So, you can still join the class. Just go to CrossExamined.org. Click on online courses. And if you just want to take them in a self-paced way, you can take those as individual modules. So, if you just want to take the class about Mormons, or Jehovah's Witnesses, or Muslims, you can.

Just go to the same place, CrossExamined.org. Click on Online Courses. You'll see it there. You'll also see the great Dr. Gary Habermas' course on the resurrection. If you want to take that you can as well. He's my guest today. And the brand-new book is out. Volume one of a four-volume set, Gary's magnum opus, 'On the Resurrection: Evidences'. Over 1100 pages, we've just been scratching the surface, obviously, on it. And Gary, you're not doing this book, obviously, to make money. None of us Christian authors, unless we're really up in the

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stratosphere, make a lot of money on books. Why did you decide to spend your life studying the resurrection? What's really in it for you personally?

GARY:

You know, that's crazy. You know, I've done hundreds of interviews. One question that comes up a lot is this one. Why did you pick the resurrection and give us all these evidences that we can benefit from? I'll bet you did it because you're altruistic and you want to help other people. I'll go, I wished I were, but that's not how it started. It started because I was deep in doubt for many years, 10 straight and parts of the last 10 for 20 total. And you go, well, you were probably a kid, or you weren't thinking deeply enough, or whatever. Let me tell you something. After I got my PhD doing my dissertation on the resurrection at a secular school, doing my dissertation of the resurrection, after it was over, I almost became a Buddhist. It stunned me one night to realize how close I was to becoming a Buddhist.

And so, I mean, I was doing it because I was answering my questions. Now, if it answers my questions, I wonder if it's the chief event in the New Testament, which virtually every theologian and the whole New Testament agrees. If the Gospel is the deity, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the resurrection is the center of those three facts. Paul says without it, there's nothing. So, I realized, if it helped me, it can help others. And if the center is true, I told the group up in Pittsburgh yesterday. I told the group in Pittsburgh, I said, folks, let me start my lecture this way. If Jesus is the Son of God who died the cross, rose from the dead, Christianity is true.

Frank, the most common objection to Christianity from Friedrich Schleiermacher 1799 to date, the number one criticism easily of the Gospels and Christianity, is the Gospels have contradictions. The Gospels have problems. Here's the advantage of doing things the way you've been describing it here. I use minimal facts. If someone says to me, there are dozens of contradictions in the Gospels. I'll say, hey, timeout. We're not talking about the passages that you think are contradictory. We're talking about the ones that everybody agrees are historical. And that's what the case is based on. Well, yeah. But if there's a lot of contradictions and things, that makes the other ones less likely. Really? Then why do atheist, agnostic, and non-Christian, New Testament scholars unanimously concede these data? Why?

Because the problems don't bother them. Let's put it this way. If all you had from the New Testament was these six, if all you had was this, He's the Son of God, died for your sins, rose from the dead. Guess what? Christianity is true on that little basis. Yeah, but you can't prove...enough. If you give me those three facts. You just admitted Christianity. So, I did it, Frank, because it was my own answer to doubt. But I realized it could minister to other people, and that's the thing that floats my boat right now. Programs like yours, programs that go out and people can think about it. And I love Greg Koukl's synods. I'm not trying to convert you. I'm trying to put a stone in your shoe. I love that. I want to put stones in people's shoes. I just want you to think about it. That's all I'm asking. Think about it. This could change your life. Yeah, that's why I did this.

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FRANK:

And you also personally had a tragic experience when your wife, Debbie, died when she was 43 years old back in 1995. So, what does the resurrection mean to you, personally, Gary?

GARY:

Yeah, she's the mother of my four children. She was only 43. I'm remarried now to a family friend, knew for 15 years. But like I tell people, God's blessed me twice. I've had two of these great marriages. But Frank, I had just ended my time of doubt, maybe four or five years before Debbie died. And I thought to myself, fantastic. It's not enough that my wife and the mother of my four children dies. I'm probably going to be pummeled headlong back into my doubts, again. Frank, they never started. They never came back.

And I had a make believe conversation with God on my front porch. I mean, I sat there and thought this. I didn't hear from God this way, but I had a child monitor next to me so I could run upstairs every time she turned over. She died of stomach cancer. And I was asking God, why her? Why now? Why 43? Why when you call me to be a professor? I can't even do it.

And I pictured Him saying, what kind of a universe is this? And I said, well, I don't know. It's a universe where you raised your Son from the dead? And He said, that's a good start. He said, listen. You don't have to answer any of these questions. There is an answer to why she's sick, but I can't tell you about that right now. It's pretty heavy. You only have a PhD.

I pictured God saying that and going, if all you know is that I raised my Son from the dead, go on with your ministry. You got what you need. And as I walked away, I thought, it's a theme in the book of Job. Job realized at the end that he didn't have to have his questions and my pain and suffering answered because he knew the God who was in charge. And Job said, I know enough about God to trust Him in those things I didn't know. And that's the story He gave me.

If you know the Gospel is true, let's shelve the rest right now. Let's just put it on. Let's say if I raised my Son, Christianity is true. That was the end of my doubts, and it happened a few years before she died that my doubts ended. It sustained me ever since. I don't think I've doubted since then. I mean, it's been 30 years, and I don't think I've doubted, by God's grace. But Frank, everybody doubts. It's probably the most common question among believers and atheists. Atheists doubt. C.S. Lewis doubted. Other atheists have said that. They doubt.

So, it's not just true, factually. It's ministerially true. It's a life changer. If there's eternal life for those who've committed to this, they've walked a mile, they've said I do to God through Jesus. That's the whole benefit of this. We're not just doing this to have a debate and try to prove something. It's something that can change your whole life and change all your eternity.

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen don't allow the things you don't know to cause you to doubt the things you do know.

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GARY:

Excellent, yes.

FRANK:

And you do know that God exists. And you do know, especially after reading Gary's new book, that Jesus rose from the dead. All the other questions are just academic after that. Because if those two facts are true, that God exists and Jesus rose from the dead, then what C.S. Lewis would call Mere Christianity is true. And you can be saved from your sins, not only forgiven, but given his righteousness. Sure, we can have questions about Bible differences. Sure, we can have questions about the God of the Old Testament killing the Canaanites. Sure, we can have questions about different aspects of theology that may trouble us. But that doesn't change what we do know. And Gary, I remember you saying this. It's very powerful. You once got a card about walking. Can you explain that? Walking hand in hand?

GARY:

Yeah. My mother, who was best friends with my wife, that's odd to be best friends with your mother in law. They were very, very close. And there came a day after she passed away. I was receiving cards. And she said, Gary, for the sake of the kids, you've got to put the pictures away. This is a few months later. You've got to put the pictures away and put the cards away. You save them. They're keepsakes, but you've got to put them away. To me, it was the last card I got, Frank. I opened it up, and I couldn't even read it. And I told people the line in it later. I couldn't say it for about a year. And this was the line.

The line said, how will you feel when one day you are in heaven, and your wife who just died is there, and you are walking hand in hand through God's kingdom? I thought, oh my gosh. Because we buried her. We watched. We saw the casket go into the ground. There's no question she's irreversibly dead. And the card said, you guys will be walking again. And by the way, that's what I pictured God's saying to me at the very end. That card, I put it into that discussion. And God said, son, I can't answer these questions for you right now. I'm not going to tell you the problem of evil.

Everybody's worried about it. I'm just going to tell you, you're going to be in the kingdom someday walking hand in hand with your wife. And Frank, when He told me that, it like broke my heart on the front porch because she hadn't died yet. But it caused me to realize, if that's true, back with Job. I don't know why these things happen, but I can trust the God who made them happen because I know the data.

FRANK:

Gary, you've done a great service. You're a hero in the faith. A modern-day hero with this book. And I know you're still working on the other three volumes. Thanks for what you've done, my friend.

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GARY:

Thanks, Frank. Three are at the publishers right now. I'm on Volume 4.

FRANK:

Beautiful. The volume, ladies and gentlemen, is called 'On the Resurrection: Evidences - Volume One' by Dr. Gary Habermas. Check out his website too, GaryHabermas.com. Amazing resources up there. It's always great having Gary on. And Lord willing, I will see you here again next week. God bless.

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