



How Do We Know That Christianity is the True Religion?

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

One question that many, if not most, Christians have struggled with at one time or another is: How do we know that Christianity is true? We just happened to be born in a Christian dominated nation, and most of us, in Christian homes as well. Isn't our faith just a reflection of our culture and upbringing? After all, people who were born and raised in Muslim cultures are just as sure that their religion is the one true faith. The same is true for most other ancient religions as well. How can any religion make the claim for

superiority over the others? The politically correct dogma of multiculturalism has eroded the confidence of many Christians to confess Christ as the ONLY Savior of the world because such a claim seems arrogant and rude. The presupposition is that all religion is of earthly and cultural origin. Even many Biblical "scholars" today deny the very concept of Divine revelation. Every religious system arises from the hearts of men and is measured by its utilitarian value for society, they say.

Christians do not share this presupposition, because we believe that God has revealed Himself to the world. The author of Hebrews writes, "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets." Moses received spoken revelation at the burning bush, and written revelation from God on the Holy Mountain. Through Moses, God communicated His Word through the first five books of the Bible. After Moses, God sent many prophets to the nation at many

(Continued on page 2)



Inside this issue:

Schedule for Holy Week	3
Christ Academy	4

That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31

times and in many ways. Their writings were, and are, considered “holy” because they were revealed by God. The writer of Hebrews goes on to say,

“but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs” —Heb. 1:2-4

Jesus is the ultimate revelation from God (John 1:18). That’s why He is called “The Word made flesh.” Jesus assures us that His doctrine came down from heaven. All the prophets before Him bore witness to Him, and all the apostles and evangelists after Him claimed to speak His word. In Jesus, we have the One who is God Himself, the “exact imprint of his nature.” No other religion makes such a claim. But the question is still asked, “how do you KNOW this?” Perhaps Jesus was just a very clever man who led people to believe such things. Perhaps Jesus just did a better job at this deception than Emperors who claimed divine status. The observation of C.S. Lewis on such an argument is still a valid objection against it. Jesus is nothing like the many nutcases in history who have claimed divine status. He is not a Nero or Caligula, neither a cultic kook like David Koresh. Jesus is

the preeminent moral leader of the ages. Even unbelievers usually acknowledge that. That’s why His teachings have prevailed through the ages when all these other charlatans have been exposed. That presents a very clear alternative. Lewis says, *“Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse.”* (from *Mere Christianity*)

But the real foundation for our confidence in Jesus - and everything else in Christianity - is His resurrection from the dead. After He cleansed the Temple the Jewish leaders demanded to be shown credentials of His authority from God. His famous answer involving the destruction and rebuilding of the Temple was a cloaked prophecy of His resurrection on the third day. Thus, when required to show proof of His identity, Jesus pointed to the empty tomb. The resurrection is actually the foundation and proof for Christianity itself. If Jesus fulfilled this prophecy, then why would anyone dispute His claims and teachings on any other matter? The Resurrection is the final and ultimate proof that He is the Son of God with power (Rom 1:4). And if He is the Son of God come down from heaven, then the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are God’s revelation from heaven because JESUS assures us of their accuracy and authority (John 10:35 and others). If Jesus is the Son of God come down from heaven then His interpretation of the Old Testament and of His own ministry is absolutely trustworthy. The prophets do, indeed, bear witness to Him (John 5:39, Acts 10:43). If Jesus



Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506). *The Resurrection*

is the Son of God come down from heaven, then He is, as He claims to be, the mediator of the New Covenant foretold by the prophets. And if Jesus is the Son of God come down from heaven then the blood that seals the New Covenant is His own blood which was poured out on the cross (Matt 26:28). If Jesus is the Son of God come down from heaven, then He is the ONLY Savior of the world as He claims to be (John 14:6). If Jesus is the Son of God come down from heaven, then the Baptism He instituted does, indeed, wash away sins and make us children of God, the Supper He instituted does, indeed, feed us with His body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins, and the absolution declared by His Church in His Name and by His Command, does, indeed, forgive sins in heaven as on earth. And if Jesus is the Son of God come down from heaven, then all His promises of future events are as sure as His Word. He WILL

(Continued on page 3)

return in glory to judge the world in righteousness. He WILL raise our bodies from the dead and transform them into His glorious image. He WILL bring us into a new creation where there is no more pain or death or sorrow. ALL of these truths stand or fall on the resurrection of Jesus.

St. Paul puts it as boldly as it can be stated: “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins” (1 Cor 15:17). And if Christ IS RAISED it is foolish to doubt anything He teaches and promises through the Scriptures. But how do we KNOW that Christ was raised? Some think that this is just another frivolous claim that has no evidence to back it at all. They think it is a myth created by the Church to honor Jesus. But that refutation of the resurrection is much easier to say than to prove, for when one looks at the simple historical evidence this and other refutations of the resurrection do not themselves hold water. We know that there MUST HAVE BEEN an empty tomb on Sunday morning, because the great claim of the disciples immediately after the

event would easily have been crushed by producing the corpse of Jesus. Obviously the enemies could not produce such evidence. Secondly, it is only reasonable to conclude that the disciples were telling what they considered to be the truth when they declared the resurrection, because there was no earthly benefit at all to make this claim, and tremendous motivation to be silent. The twelve apostles lost everything for their confession and eleven of the twelve were brutally martyred. We know of no precedent where people will suffer such loss to promote what they themselves know to be a lie. Simple reason tells us that they must have had powerful evidence of the resurrection to proclaim it under such dire conditions.

If these two points are very reasonable assumptions for any historian, then how does one reasonably explain the empty tomb, the dramatic transformation of the disciples, and the massive gathering of the Christian Church around a shameful cross? The evidence for believing the Biblical explanation for these things is

actually much stronger than the evidence for the various alternative stories. And EVERYTHING in your life and eternity is at stake in your own answer – either way. Obviously we do not base our faith in the resurrection or Christianity upon historical evidence and reason. It is the Spirit who worked faith in our hearts through the preaching of the Gospel (Rom 10:17). Without the Holy Spirit faith is impossible. The enemies of Jesus looked straight into irrefutable evidence for His miracles and resurrection, but STILL rejected Him against better knowledge. But it helps to know that this resurrection of Jesus did not happen in a corner, nor was it reported only two or three centuries later when all the evidence was lost. It is a monument that stands in the historical record itself.

Take heart! Stand firm! Be bold!

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN,
INDEED!

AMEN.

—Pastor Huebel

Schedule for Holy Week and Easter

Maundy Thursday, April 17

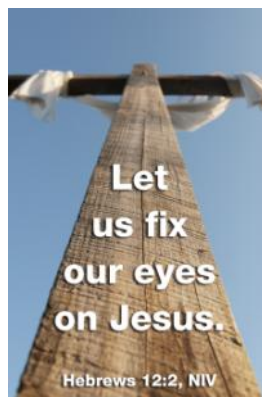
7:30 pm: Maundy Thursday Divine Service
with Holy Communion

Good Friday April 18

7:30 pm: Good Friday Tenebrae (Darkness)

Holy Saturday, April 19

8:00 am—7:00 pm: Prayer Vigil
7:30 pm: Service of Confession



Easter Sunday, April 20

7:00 am: Easter Sunrise Communion
Service
8:00 am: Easter Breakfast
8:45 am: Easter Egg Hunt
(children through 5th Grade)
9:30 am: Sunday School
10:45 am: Festival Worship with
Holy Communion



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Early Childhood Center: (817) 431-6139

Classical Academy (K—8): (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Mrs. Ellen Malzahn, Principal, Academy

Mrs. Vicki Main, Kantor

Mrs. Shirleen Simek, Financial Director

www.messiahkeller.org



Christ Academy from the CTS Website

<http://www.ctsfw.edu/page.aspx?pid=922>

Dear Parents,

As a 15-year-old youth, I didn't have much education in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod besides confirmation. No one in my family was a pastor; no one was a church worker. I had great respect for my pastor and a deep love for the Word of God, but I didn't know what kind of education my pastor had, where he studied, or what he did in day to day parish work. I didn't know what 'being a pastor' was all about.

Then I attended Christ Academy—High School in 2000. The Academy not only afforded me clarity of direction by explaining the process of higher education in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, but it gave me peace in knowing that this was the vocation I would begin to pursue with all my heart and mind. Moreover, many of the friendships forged over those two weeks in 2000 are still going strong.

Many of our students have never been away from home for two weeks. And yes, your child might be timid at first. However, after a short time within the fellowship of his peers, led by the guidance of our professional staff of ordained pastors and professors, he will be comfortable and his excitement for the event will grow.

I cannot promise that your son will come away from Christ Academy with the same clarity of direction I had, however, it will give your son an occasion to reflect on the meaning and purpose of the Holy Ministry. The weeks will introduce him to his faith in such a deep and enriching way, as well as introduce him to other Christian young men from all over the country. This is an experience he will not soon forget. So we welcome your sons to our seminary. Please call me and I would be glad to discuss our mission with you!

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Andrew Yeager

Dear Pastors,

Christ Academy—High School is designed to form youths in partnership with the formation given in the home congregation, by the local pastor. We cannot recruit future pastors without your help – it takes the eyes of wisdom from the men of God put on the front lines to name and raise up men for the Holy Ministry. It is our desire to work alongside you to build up the youth in your congregation, to strengthen their Lutheran faith convictions, and prepare them for the Holy Ministry.

Your devotion and time spent with these young men is the beginning of their journey to the seminary. That is why the application process for Christ Academy—High School starts with you. We are asking for you to endorse the young men coming from your congregation to Christ Academy and if possible, to help raise the funds needed to get these young men here.

Feel free to give us the names and contacts of any young men you would like us to contact.

May the Lord bless and preserve our mutual service to the benefit of His Kingdom!

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Andrew Yeager



(The young man on the left is Nathan Burk. He is one of several of Messiah's young men to attend Christ Academy at the Ft. Wayne seminary.)