

## **Were the first Christians delusional when they said Jesus had risen from the dead?**

Some people have claimed that maybe Jesus didn't die on the cross. Maybe he only passed out. This might seem like a strange concept to most of us. But it is one that has been made by many opponents of Christianity, so if we're discussing the reality of Christ's resurrection it's something we need to address. This would mean that when he left his tomb he wasn't rising from the dead, he was just waking up and the apostles mistaken believed he had risen from the dead.

Realistically there is no way that this is the case. The whipping Jesus received before being crucified would have been so brutal that his muscles and organs may have been visible. Being crucified dislocated both shoulders. Nerves in the wrists and feet were destroyed when the nails were driven through. Roman executioners were paid to kill people, and they knew what they were doing. Also, they faced death themselves if they screwed something like this up. So the soldiers would not have allowed someone who had only passed out to be taken off the cross and buried. If somehow this impossible event had occurred Jesus would have been so physically broken by the torture he had endured that he certainly would not have been able to stand, walk, and teach as the resurrection stories have him doing. (see for example Lk 24:13-:35 and John 20:11-21:25) He would have been a broken, crippled mess and would not have fooled anyone into thinking he was the Son of God who had risen from the dead.<sup>1</sup> The idea that the resurrection was faked by Jesus when he passed out and then woke up is not in anyway plausible.

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<sup>1</sup> Strobel, Lee., *The Case For Christ*. (Grand Rapis, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 195-202.

So the apostles didn't make it up, and Jesus really died. So could it be that the stories of the risen Jesus were hallucinations? Maybe those who claimed to see Jesus after he rose from the dead were crazy, delusional, or hallucination. This seems extremely unlikely because so many people claimed to have seen the risen Jesus.<sup>2</sup> People claimed to have seen Jesus outside of his tomb (John 20:11-:18), walking on the road to a town named Emmaus (Lk 24:13-:32), on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius (John 21:1-:23), on a mountain top in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-:20), and in Jerusalem (Lk 24:33-:49). This is not a complete list of the New Testament accounts of people saying they had seen the risen Jesus. The number of locations in which the risen Jesus appeared, and the number of people who claim to have seen him, just seems to mean that the odds are impossibly low that these were all hallucinations.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 238-240.