

"A positive whoosh of fresh air." Adrian Plass

The Atheist Who Didn't Exist

*Or the
Dreadful
Consequences
of Bad
Arguments*



ANDY BANNISTER

Foreword by Ravi Zacharias

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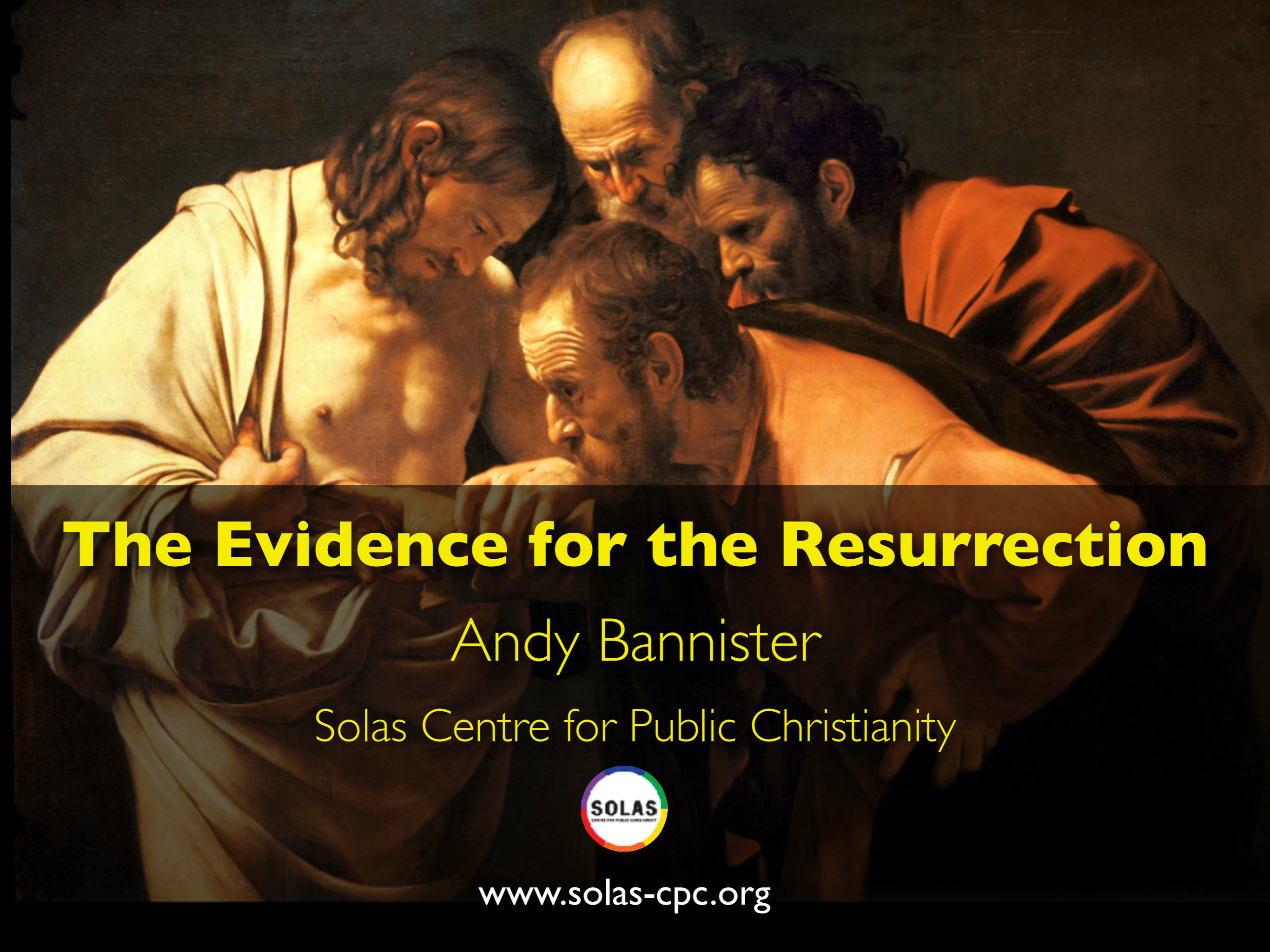
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The Evidence for the Resurrection

Andy Bannister

Solas Centre for Public Christianity



www.solas-cpc.org

“If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.”

1 Corinthians 15:14-19



Christianity is a **historical** truth claim

Luke 24:1-12

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to

them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’” Then they remembered his words.

Luke 24:36-49

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna,

Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and

he took it and ate it in their presence.

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of

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A Historical Case for the Resurrection of Jesus

Five Facts of History

1. Jesus was crucified and killed
2. His tomb was discovered empty
3. His disciples had experiences in which the risen Jesus appeared to them
4. Doubters and skeptics saw the risen Jesus and were converted
5. The early church was founded on the belief in the resurrection

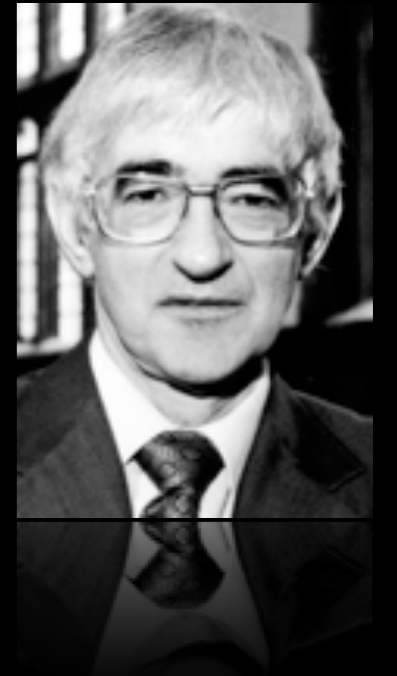


Fact 1

Jesus Was Killed By Crucifixion

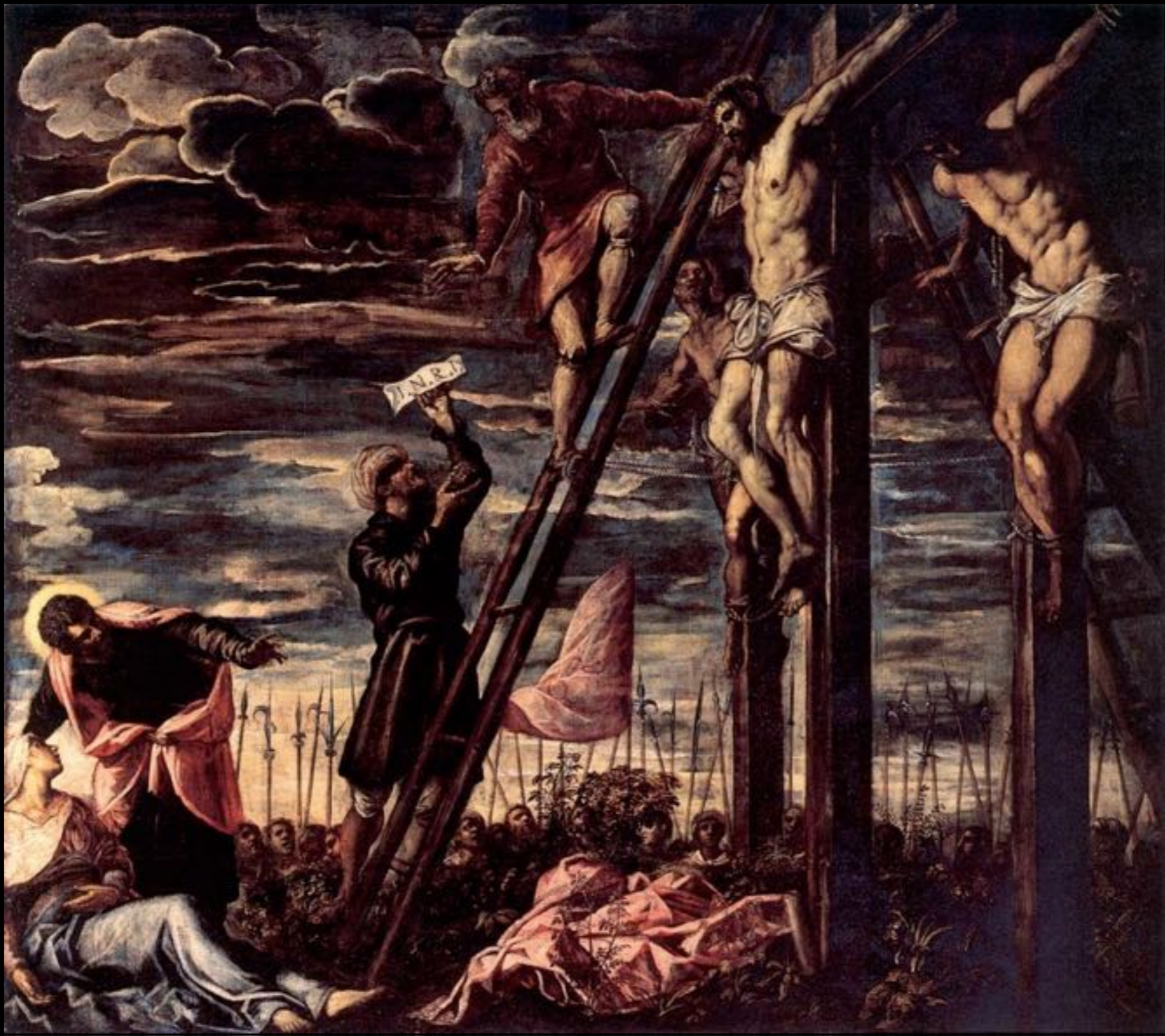
“That [Jesus] was crucified is as sure as anything historical ever can be.”

John Dominic Crossan



Fact 1

Jesus Was Killed By Crucifixion



The scandal of the crucifixion



Tacitus
d.AD 117



Josephus
d.AD 100

First-century Roman and Jewish historians report the crucifixion of Jesus

“Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate.”

Tacitus, *Annals*, XV:44

“About the same time there lived Jesus, a wise man for he was a performer of marvelous feats and a teacher of such men who received the truth with pleasure. He attracted many Jews and many Greeks. He was the Christ. When Pilate sentenced him to die on the cross, having been urged to do so by the noblest of our citizens; but those who loved him at the first did not give up their affection for him. And the tribe of the Christians, who are named after him, have not disappeared to this day.”

Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17.3.3



Crucifixion was an extremely efficient way of killing people

“[I]nterpretations based on the assumption that Jesus did not die on the cross appear to be at odds with modern medical knowledge.”

Journal of the American Medical Association

Crucifixion was an extremely efficient way of killing people



Fact 2

Jesus's Tomb Was Found Empty



Christianity began in Jerusalem — all its enemies needed to do was point to a body

“When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day”

Matthew 28:12-15



Women as the discoverers of the empty tomb: unlikely to be a fabrication due to the low view of women in first-century culture



Fact 3

Appearances of The Risen Jesus



The diversity of resurrection appearances makes hallucinations very unlikely

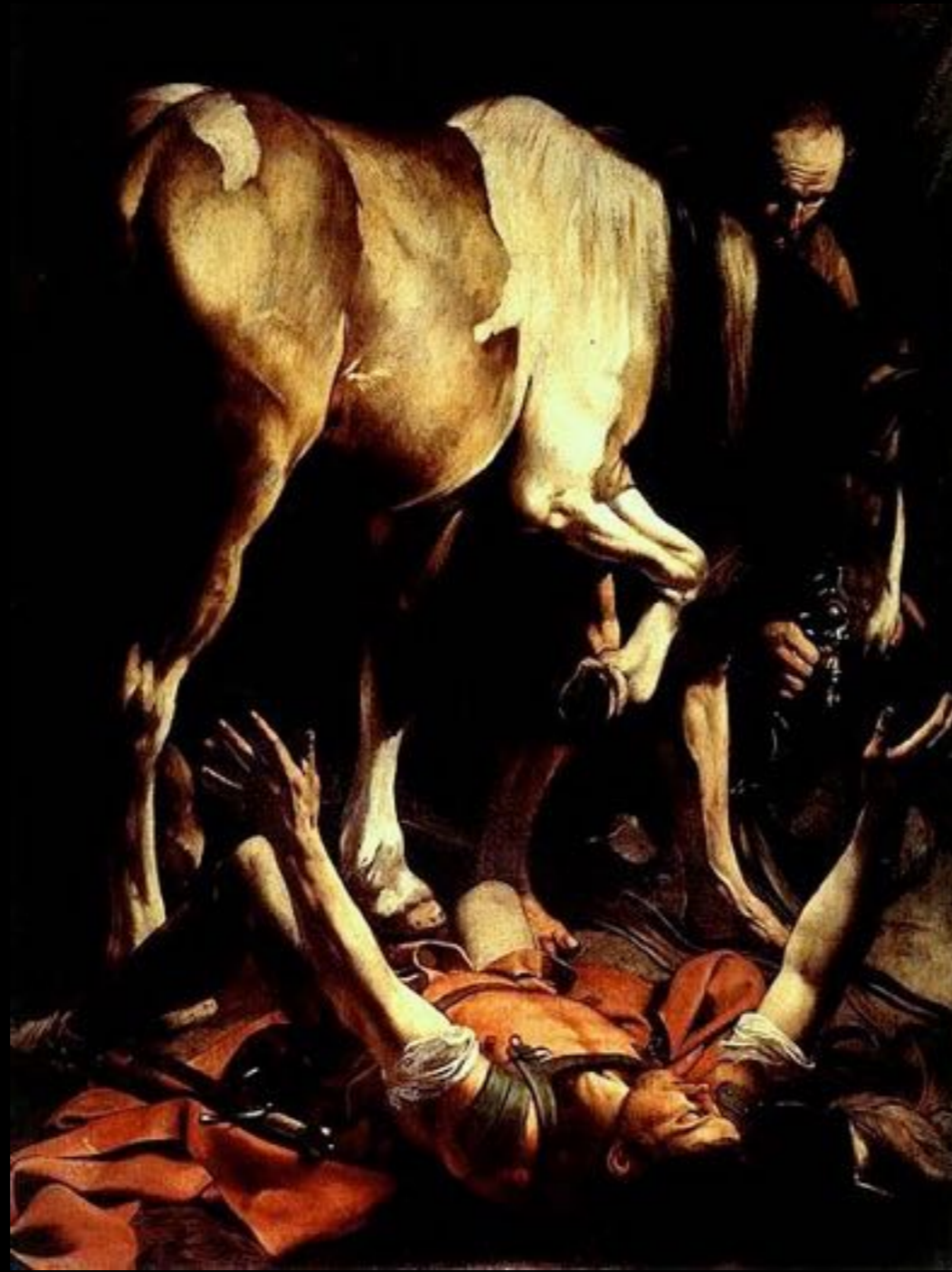
“If the disciples were totally disappointed and on the verge of desperate flight because of the very real reason of the Crucifixion, it took another very real reason in order to transform them from a band of disheartened and dejected Jews into the most self-confident missionary society in world history.”

Pinchas Lapide





All the resurrection appearances have a physical component to them



Fact 4

Doubters and Skeptics Were Converted



James, the Brother of Jesus

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James, the Brother of Jesus

- Didn't believe in Jesus during Jesus' lifetime
- The risen Jesus appears to him
- James becomes a leader in the early church
- Killed for his beliefs (according to the first-century Jewish historian, Josephus)



Paul: From Persecutor to Preacher



Fact 5

**The Early Church Was Founded On
Belief In Jesus' Bodily Resurrection**

The Early Church and the Resurrection

Three Astonishing Facts

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Three Astonishing Facts

- A “crucified” messiah was a startling claim.
- Resurrection was supposed to happen to all people at the end of history, *not to one man in the middle of history.*
- The first Christians were willing to face arrest, torture and death for their beliefs.

Explaining the Five Facts

1. Jesus was crucified and killed
2. His tomb was discovered empty
3. His disciples had experiences in which the risen Jesus appeared to them
4. Doubters and skeptics saw the risen Jesus and were converted
5. The early church was founded on the belief in the resurrection





If Jesus rose from the dead,
that changes *everything*

Jesus said: “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die.”

John 11:25



What is Wrong With the World?

OCTOBER 18, 2018

Ask somebody "What's wrong with the world?" and everybody has an opinion. Everybody thinks "something" is wrong with the world—but what if most people have mistaken the symptoms for the diagnosis? The Christian faith has a lot to say about what the real cause of the world's problems might be—and... [Read more](#)



What is the Gospel? Part two

OCTOBER 9, 2018

What is this "gospel" that Christians get so excited about? In the latest episode of SHORT ANSWERS, Andy Bannister shows how to answer that question in just three words. Whether you're an atheist, skeptic, agnostic, or seeker baffled about the whole thing—or a Christian who'd love to be able... [Read more](#)



What is the Gospel?

SEPTEMBER 20, 2018

Short Answers 35: What is the Gospel? What does it mean, and why does it matter? In the first of a two-part series, Andy Bannister unpacks the term and explains why its meaning is important. Share SHORT ANSWERS on social media Please share this video widely with friends or... [Read more](#)



Is religion the cause of most wars? | Andy Bannister

JULY 3, 2018

Religion is the main cause of wars. Is it? Some atheists certainly claim so. "Look at Israel/Palestine, Northern Ireland, ISIS, 9/11!" they say. In episode 34 of SHORT ANSWERS, Andy Bannister asks whether it's true or not and explores an alternative solution that could get to the real heart of the... [Read more](#)



JUNE 21, 2017

From Grenfell to Aleppo, the news is daily filled with fresh examples of anguish and suffering, violence and tragedy. Does a world in which towers burn, bombs explode, and loved ones suffer show that there is no God, at least not a loving God who cares for us? In SHORT ANSWERS... [Read more](#)



Have you ever heard someone claim that atheism is simply a lack of a belief? Is that true? Or is there some positive content to this alleged non-belief? Andy Bannister in episode 18 of SHORT ANSWERS encourages our atheist friends to think a little more deeply about the need to test... [Read more](#)



MAY 26, 2017

"You Christians reject Zeus, Thor, Wotan and the Flying Spaghetti Monster. We atheists just reject one god more." Andy Bannister found this such an interesting argument he devoted a whole chapter to it in his book, "The Atheist who didn't exist" In this 4 minute long ShortAnswers episode, Andy draws... [Read more](#)



MAY 6, 2017

If someone holds to a traditional Christian understanding of sexuality, then they must be homophobic, right? It's a charge that is constantly heaped at Christians these days, the most recent example being the UK media pressure on Tim Farron over the question of gay sex being sinful. But is it... [Read more](#)



APRIL 26, 2017

It's one thing to "say" you believe something; another to live "consistently" with what you claim. As SHORT ANSWERS passes a viewing milestone, Andy Bannister responds to some questions our atheist friends have raised about some of our videos. If you're an atheist who believes in goodness, meaning, or human rights... [Read more](#)



MARCH 30, 2017

Did Jesus really rise from the dead? The story of Jesus' resurrection is central to Christianity but few people are aware that there are powerful historical reasons for believing in it. This Easter, perhaps the chance isn't too late to look at the evidence, but faith in the Jesus of history. This... [Read more](#)



MARCH 16, 2017

If there is no God, is life meaningless, purposeless, and without any point? In this latest SHORT ANSWERS video—and with help from Richard Dawkins of all people—Andy Bannister explores why life can't have meaning without God. Share SHORT ANSWERS on social media Please share this video widely with... [Read more](#)



MARCH 4, 2017

Everybody is passionate about human rights, right? But what are human rights and why do we have them? And what's the best basis for the belief in human rights and dignity—the atheist claim that we're just atoms and particles, or the Biblical idea that humans beings bear the image of... [Read more](#)



FEBRUARY 22, 2017

How do we know what truth is? Do we live in an era when one person's truth is just another's post-truth? Is that even true? In episode 11 of SHORT ANSWERS, David Robertson examines "post-truth," the Oxford English Dictionary's Word of the Year for 2016. Share SHORT ANSWERS on social media... [Read more](#)

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