

**Sermon Notes**  
**National Presbyterian Church**  
**April 5, 2015 EASTER DAY**  
**Is What You See All You Get?**  
Mark 16:1-8, 12:18-27  
David Renwick

**I. Belief in the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus changes**

**What we believe** about

1. God – Interested
  - not just in the spiritual world, but in the material world
  - not just in our “spirits” or “souls,” but in us as whole human beings, body, soul and spirit!
2. Jesus
  - His authority – why we listen to his teaching
  - His divinity – why we worship him
3. Ourselves
  - Meaning and purpose of our short (or not so short?) lives

**II. But what’s the basis for this belief? Why believe it?**

1. It best explains the stunning change in the Christian day of worship  
From Saturday to Sunday . . .
  - The Saturday Sabbath celebrated the power of God in creation
  - The Change to Sunday as the holy day could only have happened if there was evidence of a new act of creation or “new-creation”
2. It best explains the ongoing faith of the disciples and the origin of Christianity itself.

**Was it Hallucination? Wishful thinking?**

- i. Jesus seen with holes in hand and side
- ii. Jesus seen together with others
- iii. Jesus seen repeatedly
- iv. Jesus’ followers were
  - a. average people – not too smart
  - b. scared that they too would die
  - c. didn’t have the intellect, wherewithal, or audacity to make up a story they knew to be untrue, that convinced them and others to die for Jesus

- v. No commonly held belief in the ancient world
  - a. understood the after-life as “an individual bodily existence”
  - b. or that bodily resurrection could happen within history
- vi. The Sadducees didn’t believe in any life after death AT ALL (Mark 12:8-27)

**Skepticism may not be new, but what about Science?**

- Q1. Doesn’t science make the after-life, and bodily resurrection unlikely?  
Or . . .  
Q2. If we cannot see or prove it, why should we believe it?

- A1. Science uses observation, but working hypotheses, based on what we have never, and perhaps can never observe are part of the method:  
A2. What’s the prevalent explanation for the observable acceleration of the expansion of the universe?
  - a. Dimensions of reality as yet unobserved
  - b. “Dark Energy and Matter” (95%+) in the universe, that we have never observed:

Nothing explains what we observe happened after that first Easter better than that the first, very average followers of Jesus . . . saw and heard something or someone: Jesus, in the body, alive again, on a Sunday!

**Check the facts**

. . . belief in the bodily resurrection transformed them for good!  
. . . and can have the same transformative power for us as well . . .

**Read NT. Wright: Surprised by Hope, Harper One:2008.**

**See NASA website**

<http://science.nasa.gov/astrophysics/focus-areas/what-is-dark-energy/>

**Mark 12:18-27 – 1<sup>st</sup> century Skepticism!**

18 Some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus and asked him a question, saying, 19 “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that

*‘if a man’s brother dies, leaving a wife but no child, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.’*

20 There were seven brothers; the first married and, when he died, left no children; 21 and the second married her and died, leaving no children; and the third likewise; 22 none of the seven left children. Last of all the woman herself died. 23 In the resurrection whose wife will she be? For the seven had married her.”