

26-0715wc Neighborly Apologetics

Dr. Del Tackett's Neighborly Apologetics Webinar Series

26-0715wc - NA- 9-Jesus' Resurrection, Part 6, Dr. Del Tackett

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Neighborly Apologetics Transcript

26-0715-Transcript: 9 - Jesus' Resurrection, Part 6 (0:04 - 56:25)

Title: *The Early Polemic and Creed*, **Facilitator:** Scott Reynolds

Part 1

(0:04) You've taken time out of your obviously busy schedules to be here tonight. (0:10) We appreciate that very much and pray that the Lord is going to bless our time, give (0:16) us an opportunity to look at what I think is one of possibly the strongest arguments (0:23) for the resurrection of Christ. (0:28) It's a little bit technical.

(0:32) So what I mean by that is that it's not as obvious as some of the others, and yet I think (0:38) at the same time it's something that every believer really should know and have embedded (0:45) within their heart and mind. (0:47) So not just so you can pass a test or something, but so that you can interact with your neighbors (0:55) as you begin to build those relationships with them and as they begin to ask questions (0:59) that you would be able to respond and to know the importance of the polemic that we're (1:07) going to talk about tonight and the early creed, I just think there are things that (1:12) ought to be in your toolkit, so to speak. (1:17) So let me go ahead, I'm going to share my screen, we have some slides again tonight.

(1:22) And as Marc said, I will be sending those out in a PDF form at the end of our time here (1:34) tonight. (1:35) So don't feel like you have to copy everything, take notes, just sit back and we'll allow (1:43) the Lord as we look at his word and what he has provided for us to speak to us. (1:51) So again, we took December off, so we're going to again lay the groundwork for what (1:58) we're doing here and why we're here.

(2:01) And we call this neighborly apologetics. (2:05) We call it that because we're talking about building within our heart and our mind the (2:12) ability to respond to our neighbor as we begin to build those relationships with them. (2:21) All of that is in the context of the royal law, the king's law, the king of kings, as (2:30) Jesus has given us the royal law to love your neighbor.

(2:35) And from that, we believe that God has therefore entrusted the primary work of the kingdom

(2:40) to the common, everyday Christian family, and it is the desire of Christ and the design (2:48) of Christ and the vision of the Lord for his people that this is how the body of Christ (2:55) would engage the world around us. (2:59) And so in doing that, we then carry, as we read in 1 Peter, that role of the priest, (3:09) that we are the royal priesthood, and we fulfill those priestly duties within our neighborhood. (3:20) We are on our knees.

(3:22) We take the names of those people that God has providentially placed near us. (3:28) We take those names before the throne of grace. (3:31) We pray diligently that God will begin to work in their hearts and mind that he would (3:37) grant to you a relationship with them in which they would begin to ask for the reason (3:45) for the hope that is in you, and that we would then be prepared and our families would (3:50) be prepared.

(3:51) This is a family ministry, and that ministry would be carried out in a way that you and (4:01) your family are learning together. (4:03) Mrs. Smith, it turns out, Mrs. Smith has an issue associated with the resurrection. (4:11) She believes it's a myth.

(4:13) She believes it was just a legend that arose, as many people do, then tonight is the night (4:21) for us to shore up our ability to make that defense, but to make the defense not in an (4:30) academic way, but to make that defense in the loving, gentle, apologetic way that the (4:38) scripture calls us to, for example, in 2 Timothy, the Lord's servant must gently instruct (4:46) his opponents in the hope that God will grant them repentance, leading them to a knowledge (4:53) of the truth, and they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil (4:58) who has taken them captive to do his will. (5:02) In fact, today we were praying that, as I think in a week or two we're going to open (5:12) up this prayer time to anyone who wants to join us. (5:15) I've been praying every Tuesday at noon Eastern for God to grant our nation repentance, that (5:23) we would come to our senses.

(5:25) We would escape from the trap of the devil who has taken us captive to do his will. (5:31) So hopefully maybe you can join us in that prayer time. (5:35) It's just five minutes, but these are the kinds of things that we pray for our neighbors (5:40) as well.

(5:41) We pray that God is going to grant them repentance. (5:43) We pray that God will grant us the opportunity to build that relationship with them, and (5:48) in that relationship, that Mrs. Smith would be willing and open to express her doubts (5:57) or the beliefs that she has come to from who knows where, that Jesus is a myth, that all (6:04) of that came from a legend that was built up over time. (6:10) And if you happen to be looking at your internet, which I don't know that I encourage people (6:16) to do that anymore, but there is a rise in hostility towards Christianity.

(6:20) And I have taken note of a number of things that are being produced that have those kind (6:26) of headlines that lead people to think these things, that it was a myth and so forth. (6:33) So tonight our topic is the importance of the early polemic and the creed and the fact (6:41) that they were early and they performed early is important for us to know. (6:47) So that is where we're headed in the context of all of this.

(6:52) We laid forth 12, yay, 13 categories of apologetics that we believe the believer in Christ in (7:00) our culture today should know or be familiar with or at least understand where to go. (7:05) And if you begin to learn that your neighbor has an issue with free will or something like (7:13) that, you will know that you could go and study with your family together how you were (7:19) going to be able to interact with your neighbors. (7:22) We started with the problem of evil and

suffering.

(7:26) We went through that and then we jumped down to number nine, the claims of Jesus and the (7:30) resurrection, just simply because it is so critical for us to know that and it will possibly (7:37) be the largest and longest one that we do. (7:42) And so we've been going through this. (7:45) We've looked at the promise and the prophecy of Christ, his life and his words.

(7:52) We looked at his death and now we're in the realm of looking at his resurrection and then (8:01) apologetics for his resurrection. (8:06) So last time we also talked about the resurrection of Jesus being the heart and the key of the (8:16) Christian apologetic. (8:17) I think we mentioned at one time that there are a number of really famous preachers who towards the (8:27) end of their life would declare that they wish they had spent more time talking about the (8:33) resurrection.

(8:34) Because if you look at the apostles and if you would consider the apostles serpents, the (8:42) apostles, as they spoke and talked, they were almost always referring to the resurrection of the (8:48) Lord Jesus. (8:50) And so it must be a key part of our conversation with others and to recognize not only in our heart (9:00) and mind, but also as we express to others how the resurrection has split time in a split earthly (9:08) time and human time. (9:10) We've tried to change the acronyms from BC and AD to BCE and common era and those kind of things to do (9:19) the best we can to try and put some space between our acronym and the way we time things and Jesus.

(9:28) But you can't get away from it. (9:30) It's bifurcated in time between the time before Christ came and after Christ came. (9:40) So the resurrection is sitting at the middle of the split of that time.

(9:47) And Paul writes how critical it is when he says, if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in (9:55) vain and your faith is in vain. (9:57) That is a stark, stark statement for the scriptures to declare to us that our faith is in vain if Jesus (10:06) had not been raised from the dead. (10:11) If Christ has not been raised, Paul said, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

(10:18) Now, that's something that you may want to spend some time contemplating and thinking about because (10:26) it should point us constantly back to the importance of the resurrection, not just in our apologetic with (10:36) others, but the importance of the resurrection in our own faith and life, that daily recognition that (10:44) we serve the risen Lord Jesus, that he is alive and that he has taken up his abode within us. (10:52) Oh my, what remarkable thoughts those are for us to contemplate. (11:01) So last time, remember, and this is the bridge here between what we just spent some time talking about (11:08) in November and the polemic and the creed before us, we talked about the appearances of the physically (11:16) risen Jesus and there are many.

(11:22) Here is the list. (11:23) Magdalene at the tomb, other women, Cleopas on the road to Emmaus, the 10 in the locked room to Peter, (11:33) to the 11 in the locked room eight days later with Jesus, with Thomas, on the Sea of Tiberias, (11:42) on the mountain, 500 at the same time to James and so forth. (11:49) And many, many more that we would assume as Jesus spent all that time with them.

(11:55) In other words, the importance of the resurrection of Jesus was not just some rumor that was going (12:02) around. (12:03) Someone had possibly seen, we don't know about it and so forth.

(12:07) He appeared to many people.

(12:10) He appeared to the 500 at the same time. (12:14) And what Paul says about that is really critical and leads us into our topic tonight. (12:22) Paul wrote after that, he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time, (12:29) most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

(12:34) And so this is the critical element that we're going to look at tonight, that these things that (12:42) occurred, the events that occurred around the resurrection of Jesus and his appearances to (12:49) people were proclaimed during the lifetime of those to whom he appeared. (12:57) And so that you are open when you start to make these claims, (13:03) when there are people who are living who could stand up and refute that claim, (13:11) then it is a powerful testimony of the truth of what it is saying. (13:15) Why? Because you can just ask people and they can tell you whether or not it is true.

(13:20) So we're going to look at the importance of the early polemic and decree. (13:25) Now, don't run away here when we use the word polemic. (13:30) It's going to be, it's a good word.

(13:34) But it's a word that really is talking about a cultural argument, a cultural discussion. (13:40) It's a point, counterpoint discussion that was going on early in the era of the church. (13:50) The creed, you may well know what creeds are.

(13:53) A lot of people don't like creeds. (13:55) I want to hopefully change your mind about that because the creeds were those things, (14:01) they were a statement of beliefs that were formed, that were created. (14:04) And they were created because there was some challenge to, we will say, the biblical worldview.

(14:13) The declaration that Jesus was who he said he was, that he had risen from the dead. (14:19) And when there was a challenge that arose to that biblical worldview, (14:24) then usually councils met or people met together and they produced a statement of belief (14:32) that would counter that challenge. (14:36) In some cases, it was called a heresy.

(14:39) And so that's what creeds were for. (14:42) And we find a creed that was formed very early on. (14:46) Now, last time we looked at these accusations, these also lead us to tonight.

(14:52) The accusations that the appearances of Jesus were merely hallucinations. (14:57) When we talked about how silly that is, there are no group hallucinations. (15:03) We went through that last time, that the appearances were a mistaken identity.

(15:09) We talked about the silliness of that. (15:12) The disciples who had spent three years with Jesus, Mary who had spent her entire life (15:17) with her son from a baby to an adult, how could she get it wrong? (15:23) The resurrection was a spiritual resurrection. (15:26) It really wasn't a physical resurrection.

(15:29) But you still have the empty tomb. (15:32) You have the grave clothes and all those things that we talked about. (15:35) This last one leads us into our time tonight.

(15:38) We pointed forward back in November and now we're here. (15:44) This final accusation is that the appearances that we talk about, (15:49) all of those are part of the resurrection myth, all part of the resurrection legend. (15:56) So Jesus didn't really appear to Magdalene.

(15:59) Jesus didn't really appear to the 11. (16:01) Jesus didn't appear to the 500. (16:03) He didn't appear to James.

(16:04) He didn't appear to all those. (16:05) All of that was just part of this legend and myth that got written up later on. (16:13) And so those resurrection events didn't really happen.

(16:18) Now, there's a very interesting survey that was taken recently in Britain. (16:23) And I'll call your attention to it because we don't have a survey that was taken here. (16:28) This was taken in Britain.

(16:30) 22% of Brits don't believe that there was ever a real Jesus. (16:38) That it's all fake. (16:40) That it's all some kind of a myth that is made up.

(16:45) It's a deception that was made up to some extent from a conspiracy or whatever, (16:53) but it was a legend, it's myth. (16:54) And all of that stuff never really happened. (16:57) Well, if you were to look at that percentage, let's say that that percentage was true here in America.

(17:03) And supposedly some people say that almost half of Americans (17:08) would believe that Jesus rose from the dead. (17:11) Then almost half of the other people believe that all of this is a myth, (17:16) which what that should tell us right now is that it is highly possible that you (17:24) will run into this kind of thinking. (17:28) If you begin to engage your neighbors, as the royal law calls us to do, (17:34) and people begin to openly declare to you their thoughts on all of this, (17:39) it is highly possible, it could be a 50-50 proposition here that you're going to find (17:45) that people will use this charge as an accusation that it was all really a myth.

(17:55) It was what happened after years and years, (17:59) and people started to put together this thing called Christianity and so forth. (18:05) Well, the evidences that we looked at last time also lead us to the polemic and the creed. (18:13) The evidence against those accusations, the real death of Jesus, the physical death, (18:19) we looked at all of those evidences, and what I think is one of the strongest, strongest elements (18:26) are the wrappings, the grave clothes that were left in the tomb.

(18:30) No one would steal a body and first unwrap the body, a sticky mess, (18:37) and leave those wrappings in the tomb. (18:42) The sealing of the stone, the guards that were posted at the tomb, (18:48) all of these events that occurred around that, the earthquake, the appearance of the angel (18:54) and other angels rolling away of the stone, the guards being filled with terror, cleaned or posed, (19:02) women singing empty tunes, angels, Peter and John examining the tomb and the grave wrappings, (19:09) and then finally the soldiers reporting that the tomb was empty, (19:15) and that then begins the rise of this polemic. (19:22) And so this is our connection here, and we will then look at that passage.

(19:28) Now before we do, I laid out a timeline for you. (19:32) If it's too small, if you're looking at this on a phone, you will get the copies of this if you want to, (19:38) but basically look at the concept here. (19:43) Before we had looked at the life of Jesus, the words of Jesus, and so forth, (19:48) but if you want to talk about how long it takes for a legend to rise, (19:55) how long does it take for a myth to arise, we'll look at some expert statements here in a little bit, (20:04) but the reality is it takes several generations before a myth can even begin to arise, (20:12) and the reason for that is because you can't start forming a myth (20:16) when there are people still alive who could say that's crazy, that never happened, (20:24) or children of people who were there.

(20:27) Why? Because they talk to their parents or even grandchildren or great-grandchildren (20:32) who talk to their dad or grandpa who talked to people who were there, (20:37) and so normally it takes three, four, five generations before a myth even begins to form, (20:43) and then it takes several generations for that kind of a legend to begin to evolve (20:48) and finally settle into something that is believable or whatever. (20:53) It just takes a lot of time, but if you look at what God has given to us, (21:00) the polemic is formed within some people within months, (21:07) we'll talk about that in a second, (21:09) and the creed was formed within months or years of the resurrection of Jesus. (21:18) There is no time, there's not enough time for this to be called a legend, (21:23) there's not enough time for it to be called a myth.

(21:25) Now what we're talking about right here is something that I think is extremely important (21:30) for the body of Christ to know, to be able to talk about that with people who (21:41) glibly, and I say that in a kind way because they just, you know, (21:47) they have heard somebody say that and it's an easy out to say, well, it's just a myth, (21:54) to begin to talk about how long do you think it takes for a myth to form? (22:00) You may even talk about some people who are alive today. (22:03) How long do you think it would take before you could make up a myth (22:08) about some famous people today and discuss that and then be able to say, you know, (22:16) these things weren't formed in the third, fourth, fifth generation from Jesus. (22:23) They were formed immediately within the lifetime of those people who were there.

(22:30) So let's look first of all at the early polemic. (22:36) And again, we were talking about a polemic. (22:39) The polemic is this point-counterpoint, a cultural argument or discussion that is going on.

(22:51) We're looking at Matthew 27. (22:53) Here is where we pick up the polemic. (22:57) It's not the beginning.

(22:58) We'll come back to the beginning in a few slides here, but this is the heart of it. (23:03) Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, (23:07) the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate and said, (23:11) sir, we remember that when he was still alive, that deceiver, speaking Jesus, (23:18) said after three days, I am to rise again. (23:21) Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day.

(23:26) Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal him away and say to the people, (23:30) he has risen from the dead and the last deception will be worse than the first. (23:35) Pilate said to them, you have a guard? (23:37) Go, make it as secure as you know how. (23:41) They went and made the grave secure and along with the guard, they set a seal on the stone.

(23:46) We talked about all of that. (23:48) Talked about the seal, talked about the guards and so forth. (23:51) But here we have then the second part of the story of the guards.

(23:56) This is now after the earthquake, after the angel has appeared, the stone is rolled away. (24:03) They are like stone. (24:06) They are so filled with fear as anyone would.

(24:09) Even an earthquake just by itself fills one with fear. (24:12) Then they have an angel appear to have them roll back a stone. (24:18) These guards then head back to the chief priest.

(24:23) Now, while they were on their way, leaving the tomb, some of the guards came into the city (24:29) and reported to the chief priest all that had happened. (24:32) When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, (24:38) they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers and

said, (24:41) you were to say his disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep. (24:48) And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble.

(24:53) Because if these were Roman soldiers, they had a horrible, horrible death awaiting them (24:59) if they had fallen asleep. (25:03) And they took the money and did as they had been instructed. (25:07) And here's this important part of what Matthew says.

(25:10) And this story was widely spread among the Jews and is to this day. (25:18) So this is an argument that was laid forward at the very time of the resurrection. (25:29) And that argument continued until the day that Matthew penned his gospel.

(25:35) Let's go back to the very beginning of this argument, which is found on the night of the trial. (25:43) Again, the high priest was questioning him, Jesus, and saying to him, (25:48) are you the Christ, the son of the blessed one? (25:52) Are you the Messiah? (25:54) And Jesus said, I am. (25:56) And you shall see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power (26:01) and coming with the clouds of heaven, (26:04) tearing his clothes.

(26:06) The high priest said, what further need do we have of witnesses? (26:09) You have heard the blasphemy. (26:11) How does it seem to you? (26:13) And they all condemned him to be deserving of death. (26:17) So that really actually is the first point in this point, counterpoint, polemic.

(26:26) And the first one is that Jesus is the Messiah. (26:30) And to some extent, if you look at the entirety of Christianity, (26:36) it wouldn't be wrong to boil it down to this point. (26:41) Jesus is the Messiah.

(26:44) He is the son of God. (26:48) Well, the counterpoint is that he's not the Messiah. (26:53) Look, he's crucified and he's now dead.

(26:57) End of story. (26:58) That's what the chief priest, the high priest, the priest, the Pharisees, (27:04) that's what they were trying to do. (27:06) If they could kill him, if they could crucify him and lay him in a tomb, (27:14) then this whole nonsense of being the Messiah would be at an end.

(27:20) Now, if Jesus had not risen from the dead, that would have been the end of the story. (27:25) And there would have been a very short polemic at that period of time in the history of man. (27:31) A man arose, said he was the Messiah, that he was the son of God, he was God himself.

(27:41) And the chief priests and the leaders had him crucified, put in a tomb, and that was it. (27:50) And it would just be another man making claims and it would have been it. (27:54) But that was not the end of this polemic, (27:58) because all of a sudden there was a point, Jesus rose from the dead.

(28:02) And you can imagine that there would be those... (28:06) The counterpoint is, no, his body is still in the tomb. (28:09) You can't say he's risen from the dead because he's in the tomb. (28:12) He was crucified and he's dead.

(28:14) But the point is, no, the tomb is empty. (28:18) And the counterpoint to that is, well, the disciples stole the body. (28:23) The point is, no, the soldiers, there were soldiers guarding the tomb.

(28:27) How could the disciples steal the body? (28:30) And the counterpoint is, well, they fell asleep.

(28:33) So you see how all of this was being developed by the Pharisees (28:39) and how to answer these questions and points with counterpoints. (28:44) But the final point is that the soldiers were bribed to say that.

(28:50) And that's where the polemic ends, because there is no counterpoint to that. (28:58) That was the end of the polemic. (29:05) The soldiers had fallen asleep.

(29:08) The disciples had stolen the body. (29:11) And yet the point is that the soldiers were bribed to say that (29:15) and then there is no counterpoint to that. (29:17) And a lot of that is because the tomb is empty.

(29:20) The grave clothes are there. (29:22) All of those evidences are there. (29:24) So we're left with this polemic, this argument, (29:27) this cultural argument that goes back and forth.

(29:29) But what's important about this is this polemic, (29:32) this argument about whether Jesus had risen from the dead (29:36) or the disciples had stolen the body, (29:40) the guards had fallen asleep or not, da-da-da, back and forth. (29:44) This is not something that somehow shows up three or four generations from the event. (29:51) This is not something that is somehow crafted, you know, 100 years later.

(29:57) This is an argument that's going on right then, right now, (30:01) at the very moment in time that Jesus has risen from the dead. (30:08) And because the tomb is empty, we have to have these counterpoints (30:12) associated with the disciples stole the body. (30:15) There's no reason for that counterpoint if the tomb is not empty.

(30:20) So this polemic arising so early (30:26) is an incredible witness and testimony and defense (30:30) that these things actually happened. (30:32) They're not a myth. (30:34) They actually happened.

(30:37) So that is the polemic, this point-counterpoint. (30:40)

Part 2

(30:41) Let's look now at the creed. (30:44) The statement of belief that counters a challenge.

(30:52) Now, Webster, if you go back to Webster's old 1828 dictionary, (30:56) which I do all the time, he defines a creed this way. (31:01) It's a brief summary of the articles of Christian faith as the Apostles' Creed, (31:09) that which is believed, and then it was quoted there. (31:11) Well, the Apostles' Creed most likely arose to counter the heresy of Marcion.

(31:20) And the Creed of Nicaea was written to counter the charges from Arian. (31:29) The Nicene Creed to counter the charge of Polynarianism. (31:35) The Creed of Chalcedon was to oppose the Nestorians, the heresy of Nestorians, and etc.

(31:45) So you look at the creeds that were created, (31:49) they were created as a statement to counter some charge, (31:57) what we would call a charge against the truth of God. (32:01) And here is the statement of that truth. (32:04) The things that we believe in the face of that charge.

(32:10) So here is the Creed. (32:12) We find it in 1 Corinthians 15, as Paul has written it. (32:19) Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preach to you, (32:24) which also you receive, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, (32:30) if you hold fast the word which I preach to you, unless you believed in vain.

(32:37) For I delivered to you, as of the first importance, what I also received, (32:45) that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, (32:50) and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, (32:54) and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. (32:57) After that he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, (33:02) most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep. (33:07) Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, (33:12) and last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared to me also.

(33:19) Now, what you need to take note of here is the way that Paul introduces this, (33:28) what is what we call a Creed. (33:31) And it's introduced by some very important terms that were well known in rabbinical arenas. (33:40) For I delivered to you, he says, what I also received.

(33:45) These terms are well-known rabbinical terms that introduce a Creed, they introduce a tradition. (33:52) So this is in the history of that era from the rabbinical tradition, (34:00) these are words that precede the giving of a Creed. (34:08) Paul then follows immediately with a list which is also typical of a Creed.

(34:12) So the pattern was, this is what I delivered to you, or this is what I received, (34:19) and then there is a list of those things. (34:22) And Paul does that. (34:24) And those who are much more versed in Greek and so forth would say that this Creed, (34:32) and the way the Creed is written, is so foreign to the way Paul writes, (34:37) that it is clear what Paul is stating here.

(34:41) He is quoting a Creed that had already formed, that had already been put together. (34:50) Christ died for our sins, according to the Scripture. (34:53) He was buried.

(34:55) He was raised on the third day, according to the Scripture. (34:58) He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. (35:01) He appeared to more than 500 brethren.

(35:03) He appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and then finally Paul adds to me. (35:11) So

the Creed already, as Paul is writing to the Corinthians, (35:18) and he is writing to the Corinthians probably somewhere around maybe 57 AD. (35:29) And so he is writing within 20 years or so of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

(35:37) And already at that time, a Creed has been formed. (35:43) And not only this, but Paul had received it. (35:47) He is now writing it to the Corinthians, but he is saying he had already received it before.

(35:54) And there are many people think that he received it at that time that he went to Jerusalem (36:01) and met with James and Peter. (36:04) And so it is very, very possible that the Creed had been formed within a matter of months (36:12) or within at least a year or two of the resurrection of Christ. (36:17) And as we look at what was the purpose of the Creed, (36:19) the Creed basically says, look, Jesus rose from the dead.

(36:22) It doesn't. (36:23) And he appeared to all these people. (36:25) And so the Creed is attempting, obviously, to challenge the challenge (36:32) that Jesus didn't rise from the dead, which was that polemic (36:38) that occurred right after the resurrection of Jesus.

(36:42) So we have this very early Creed that has been formed, well formed, (36:48) in such a way that Paul is now quoting that Creed (36:52) and passing it on to the brothers and sisters in Corinthians. (37:01) So let's look at this passage. (37:03) After that, he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time, (37:07) most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

(37:13) And so this is within the lifespan of those people who were alive at that time. (37:23) So it can't be a lot of years. (37:27) It is within the time frame of those who are alive in which the Creed has been formed.

(37:34) So in other words, you can check it out. (37:35) You can ask these people. (37:38) So myths and legends don't arrive this early, unless, of course, it's true.

(37:46) So this is Dr. Sherwin White, a professor at Oxford University, a famous historian. (37:51) He declared that even after two generations, (37:54) there is too much historical truth embedded in people for a legend to commence. (37:59) You can't even start to form a myth or a legend unless you're out beyond two generations.

(38:11) Julius Mueller, a theologian back in the early 1800s, issued a challenge, (38:18) and that challenge still stands, a myth. (38:21) And his challenge was, he challenged anybody to find a legend or a myth, any legend, any myth, (38:28) that had developed this early from the events that the myth was pointing to. (38:36) No one, of course, no one has met that challenge because myths don't arise.

(38:41) They can't arise that early. (38:43) And these are the kinds of things that you and I need to know. (38:48) Well, it might be important for us to ask this question.

(38:53) Why do people spend time trying to prove that Jesus doesn't exist or that Jesus didn't rise (39:03) from the dead? (39:05) You know, there are societies of mythicists whose sole purpose, (39:12) the society's sole purpose, the only reason they've come together (39:17) is to prove that Jesus is merely a myth, that he's merely a legend. (39:23) In fact, the Jesus Project was founded not too many years ago for the purpose of debunking (39:28) the historical Jesus. (39:33) There have

been numerable books that have been written, and the object of the book was to deny (39:40) the historicity of Jesus, and at the heart of that, to deny the historicity of the resurrection.

(39:49) And as you know, for years, it seemed that every Easter, (39:54) Time and Newsweek and other magazines were obsessed with debunking Jesus. (40:00) In fact, I was thinking about this today. (40:03) I didn't get a chance to look it up.

(40:05) I don't know how to even research it, but I would not be surprised if you look at the (40:09) history of Time magazine or the history of Newsweek or those other main magazines, (40:17) and you were to say, okay, who has been on the cover of Time magazine more than any other person? (40:24) I think it would be Jesus. (40:27) But he's not on the cover of Time because Time wants to honor Jesus. (40:32) He's on the cover of Time because the article is there to debunk him.

(40:39) So this should be eye-opening. (40:41) And I think, my personal opinion, it should be eye-opening for Mrs. Smith. (40:46) It should be eye-opening for your neighbor.

(40:48) Just simply ask that question. (40:49) Why do you suppose it is that there are societies formed to debunk Jesus? (40:59) Why do people dedicate so much time to this? (41:02) There are campus clubs that were built for the purpose of debunking Jesus. (41:12) Why don't we have societies formed to debunk the existence of Plato or Aristotle or King Arthur, (41:17) which is, we have kind of a dubious history of King Arthur.

(41:21) Why is there a club to debunk Aristotle? (41:28) What is it about Jesus? (41:29) And of course, we have to ask ourselves and ask our children and ask Mrs. Smith, (41:36) what is it about Jesus that has provoked so much effort, so much time (41:46) to try and debunk the historicity of this man and to debunk the claim that he rose from the dead (41:59) in the light of so much evidence? (42:06) You know, it's easy to declare that the resurrection appearances, for example, of Jesus (42:15) are nothing more than legend. (42:18) It's an easy charge to make, but it really has no valid basis. (42:26) And you and I are going to continually run into those people who have bought that story.

(42:37) And it leads us to try and answer the question we just raised. (42:41) Why? (42:42) Why is it that people grasp on to these stories, even when there is so little (42:51) evidence for them to be true, even in the light of what we're talking about today, (42:56) that you can't form a myth and a legend in a short period of time in which we already have (43:04) a polemic and we already have a creed that is formed. (43:07) You can't do that within a few years of that event.

(43:13) You can't make an appeal to people who are still alive. (43:16) I mean, to those that could go and get a testimony of those people still alive and say, (43:23) no, no, that really didn't happen. (43:27) And the reason is because there is a spiritual desire within the fallen nature of man (43:40) to somehow do away with Jesus, to somehow put him away, to somehow maybe (43:51) build a paper wall called a myth that you can get rid of him.

(43:55) That's what the Pharisees wanted to do. (43:58) They wanted to just get rid of Jesus, because Jesus was going to turn their (44:06) whole life upside down and all of the power that they had accumulated to themselves. (44:12) And you and I are in the same situation today, the exact same situation today.

(44:17) We don't call people Pharisees, but their position is the same. (44:23) There is a power that we have accumulated to ourselves and our culture today that we (44:30) have called, I've called

homo deus. (44:33) That we want to live as if we are God, that my heart speaks divine things.

(44:44) That I am the center of the universe and my heart is the center of truth. (44:52) My heart speaks truth. (44:56) And we want the world to bow down to that.

(45:00) We want the world to use our pronouns. (45:01) We want the world to do our bidding. (45:04) We want the world to look at us and affirm us.

(45:11) And Jesus stands in the way. (45:16) Jesus stands in the way. (45:18) Jesus is the one that says, look, if you want to follow me, you must take up your cross.

(45:28) If you want to follow me, you must deny yourself. (45:32) You must say no to yourself. (45:37) Jesus would come and say, you must put to death the deeds of the flesh.

(45:45) And so we don't want that. (45:47) We don't want, the Jesus we want is the Jesus we made me we can craft. (45:52) And that's going on right now.

(45:55) As I spoke of earlier, there is a flood of these things now hitting the internet. (46:03) That just in their first picture and title, it is clear what they're trying to convey to people. (46:15) And there are a number of those that are trying to convey that Jesus would be (46:22) fine with all of this that's going on.

(46:25) In fact, he would love this. (46:29) And so we live in the same kind of world. (46:32) The Pharisees wanted to do everything they could to get rid of Jesus.

(46:36) And your neighbor might be in a position where they don't want Jesus. (46:43) And that is why you must pray for them. (46:45) We must diligently in our priestly role to bring their names before the throne of God.

(46:55) That he would grant them repentance. (47:00) That they would come to their senses. (47:02) They would escape from the trap of the devil to take that has taken them captive to do his will.

(47:10) And that is our priestly role. (47:12) That is what Jesus has asked us to do. (47:17) And this again is why I believe understanding the early nature of the resurrection creed (47:24) and the polemic is so very, very important in our defense.

(47:30) For the reason for the hope that is in us. (47:35) So this is the importance of the early polemic and creed. (47:39) Next time we're going to look at the charges that there are contradictions in all of these events (47:49) around the resurrection.

(47:50) The timing, there are contradictions in the timing. (47:55) There are contradictions in the events. (47:57) There are contradictions in the places of the resurrection.

(48:01) You know, Mark says this about the disciples not going to Galilee. (48:06) The veteran says they had to go to Galilee. (48:08) How do you put all that together? (48:10) And so we're going to attempt to do that next time.

(48:14) I'm going to have a map for you. (48:17) And we're going to attempt to try and show you how all of these events could have occurred, (48:25) just as the scripture tells us they occurred, to give you an increased hope and assurance (48:39) that the word of God can be trusted. (48:42) That the word of God is true, and you and I can rely upon it, (48:50) even in the face of those who raise

the issue of there are so many contradictions (48:56) in the resurrection story that how can anyone believe that? (49:00) We're going to spend our next time together showing you exactly how all of that fits together.

(49:08) And so with that, Marc, I'm going to stop sharing here. (49:14) I'll turn this back over to you, and we'll close things up and pray. (49:18) And what else needs to be said here, Marc, before we do that? (49:21) Okay, well, thank you, Dr. Tackett.

(49:23) Just a couple of quick reminders. (49:25) We did record tonight's live stream, so if you came a little bit late, (49:30) or there's someone you'd like to share this with and forward the recording to, (49:34) that will be in your inbox in the morning, hopefully early, but we'll see. (49:41) Also, there will be a PDF, Dr. Tackett's slides we'll include with that live stream.

(49:46) And then along the way, I took notes where I thought there might be a link (49:51) or something that would be helpful for you. (49:54) So that'll be included in the email that goes out. (49:57) But of course, if you have any questions, just hit reply to the email that you received, (50:01) and we'll do our best to get back to you as soon as possible with answers to your questions.

(50:06) Again, great. (50:07) Thanks for being here. (50:08) It was great to have you.

(50:09) And I think with that, Dr. Tackett, do you want to close our time in prayer? (50:12) I'll do that. (50:13) Thank you. (50:15) Oh, dear Father and Son and Holy Spirit, we thank you.

(50:20) We thank you for the word that you've given to us. (50:23) We think of the thing that Jesus told Thomas that night, (50:29) blessed are those who believe and have not seen. (50:34) And that is us.

(50:36) We have not seen, as Thomas did that night, (50:40) when you put his hands in the wounds on your side and the nail prints in your hands. (50:48) And yet, Father, we believe. (50:50) Why? (50:50) Because you have left to us your word and the record of all of these things.

(50:58) We thank you, Father, for that. (51:00) We praise your name for how you have given us this evidence. (51:07) Now, this is not a leap in the dark for us, but our faith is founded upon the surety and the reality (51:15) of things that are true because you have declared them to be true.

(51:20) And the evidence is there. (51:22) We pray, Father, for those who are trapped in this kind of thinking, (51:28) or maybe even some people you're denying who have been trapped in this thinking. (51:32) We pray, Father, that you would remove those obstacles in front of them, (51:37) that you would open their heart and their mind, (51:40) just as we ask you might do that with our neighbor, (51:45) as we walk in a way that is loving towards them and builds a relationship with them.

(51:52) And, Father, that you would provoke within them questions (51:56) as a result of this trusted relationship, (51:59) that they sense that there is a kindness and a goodness. (52:03) All the fruits of the Spirit are there that are winsome to them. (52:10) And that they would indeed begin to ask those questions.

(52:13) And, Father, that you would prepare us, prepare the body of Christ, (52:16) that we might be ready as a family, our children, (52:21) that we would be able to not only pray or write for Mrs. Smith, (52:25) that we would be ready to speak with her and to answer her questions in a gentle

way, (52:32) in a loving and kind way, not to win an argument. (52:38) But, Father, that we might help the scales be removed from her eyes (52:43) as you begin to work in their heart and mind. (52:47) And, Father, we pray that the body of Christ would begin to do what you've asked us to do, (52:51) that we would begin that process of fulfilling our priestly role, (52:57) bringing people before the throne, (53:00) asking, Father, that you might open eyes and open hearts, (53:03) that you would grant us favor in their sight, (53:06) that we might begin to build those relationships, (53:09) and that you would help us prepare to give a defense for anyone who asks us (53:14) for the reason for the hope that is in us, and yet do it with gentleness and respect.

(53:22) So, Father, we pray that you would stir up your people in this land, (53:28) and that in so doing, Father, you would grant us (53:32) the requests of our prayer, that you would grant us as a nation repentance, (53:36) and that you would grant our neighbors repentance for those who have turned away from you. (53:42) And, Lord, for the body of Christ, we pray that you would strengthen her, (53:46) that you would cause her to be reformed and to be renewed in these times, (53:54) and maybe even more difficult times than we can imagine that confront us in the years to come. (54:01) But, Father, we would be ready and prepared so that we might flourish in the midst of whatever (54:09) may come down the path towards us, all for your glory, Father.

(54:16) None for us. (54:18) We will not snatch that from you. (54:20) It is your glory, and that is what we seek.

(54:24) Soli de Gloria in Jesus' name. (54:27) Amen. (54:28) God bless you all.

(54:29) Thank you for being here tonight. (54:30) Thank you, Marc. (54:32) Thank you, everyone.

(54:33) Have a good evening. (54:34)