Lakeview Missionary Church

Change Shows Change (true story)

By Christopher L. Scott
Moses Lake, Washington

I used to lose my temper all the time when I was young. I remember throwing my cell phone once and breaking it because it wasn't working right. I remember two times, I threw golf clubs and broke them. Along with losing my temper I also would lose control of my mouth. It embarrasses me to think of some of the words I would say amid my rage.

But when I became a Christian at twenty-three, my anger problems dissolved. That change of behavior is what Paul describes to believers in the city of Corinth.

"*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God"* (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, NASB).

Paul's main point here is that faith in God must make the believers in Corinth different than non-believers. The "effeminate" and "homosexuals" were people common among the Romans and Greeks. Fourteen of the first fifteen Roman emperors practiced homosexuality. Paul was making it clear that a Christian should not be confused with such things. Paul essentially tells us today that faith in God leads to a change in lifestyle.

The change for me occurred with my temper. No longer did I "lose my temper" after becoming a Christian. Instead, I now have control over it. It does not control me. This shows the change that has occurred because of my faith in God.

Do I still feel anger from time to time? Yes, of course. I feel that old temper start to flare up, like a volcano about to erupt, but I control it now. I'm no longer controlled by my anger because I am no longer a slave to my sinful nature. "*We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin*" (Romans 6:6, NLT).

Now I have the Holy Spirit that lives in me and helps me control that sinful anger. As Paul's words remind us, "*You were washed . . . you were sanctified . . . you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God"* (1 Corinthians 6:11, emphasis mine).

Through Christ's death on the Cross, our faith in Him for salvation, and the Holy Spirit that lives in us now, we have been set free from sin's power and control over our lives.

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Roan Mountain Baptist Church

"7 Evidences for Christ's Resurrection"

By Russell McKinney
Mitchell County

Certain legal experts have studied the case of Christ's resurrection and concluded that an honest jury would reach the verdict that Jesus really did arise from the dead. It is with this in mind that I present to you seven evidences for His resurrection. I wouldn't call this an exhaustive list, but I do believe it's a good one.

Evidence #1: The actions of the Roman soldiers who guarded Christ's tomb: Scholars say there could have been as many as sixteen soldiers in the Roman guard that were assigned to Christ's tomb, and Roman soldiers were the best in the world. They were highly trained and incredibly disciplined. The only thing they feared was the penalty that would befall them if they were negligent in their duty. And yet, on the morning of Christ's resurrection, that group of Roman soldiers shook with fear (Matthew 28:4), fainted (Matthew 28:4), and abandoned their posts (Matthew 28:11). Roman soldiers simply did not act that way.

Evidence #2: The tomb's broken seal: The Bible says that Christ's tomb was "sealed" (Matthew 27:66). A Roman seal of this sort was just two globs of wax and a cord. The sealing began with one glob of wax being placed upon the circular door to Christ's tomb, and the other glob being placed upon the tomb itself. Next, one end of the cord was fastened to the first glob, and the other end was fastened to the second. Finally, a signet ring was used to make an impression in the wax. So, what was it that made such a seal so intimidating? It was the fact that the seal carried with it the authority of the Roman government. The penalty for anyone breaking such a seal was upside-down crucifixion. Nevertheless, it was broken.

Evidence #3: The stone door was rolled away: Jesus was buried in a very expensive tomb. It had been constructed for Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy man who had become a follower of Christ (Matthew 27:57-60). The tomb was a small cave that had been cut out of the rock. Just in front of the tomb's opening was a trench. In this trench sat a massive circular stone that served as the door to the tomb. The stone weighed over a ton. Remarkably, however, the apostle John used the Greek word airo to describe what happened to that stone (John 20:1). This specific word indicates that the stone was literally picked up and moved quite a distance. How could such a stone have been moved in this way? The Bible says that an angel descended from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat down upon it (Matthew 28:1-2). That angel is what scared those Roman soldiers to the point of causing them to faint.

Evidence #4: Jesus, in His resurrection body, appeared alive to hundreds of witnesses: Early on resurrection Sunday morning, a handful of devout women saw the risen Jesus (Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10; John 20:11-18). Later that same morning, He appeared to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5). That afternoon, Cleopas and another unnamed believer saw Him (Luke 24:13-32). That night, He appeared to a gathering of ten of the remaining apostles (1 Cor. 15:5; John 20:19-23). The following Sunday night, He appeared at a gathering of all eleven of those apostles (John 20:24-29). Several days later, He appeared to a group of seven of the apostles on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and had breakfast with them (John 21:1-14). Sometime shortly after that, He appeared to the entire group of apostles at a mountain site in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20). That same appearance might also have been the time when over 500 people saw Him at once (1 Cor. 15:6). Additionally, He was seen at some unspecified time by His earthly half-brother James (1 Cor. 15:7) and by approximately 120 believers just before His ascension back to heaven (Acts 1:1-12). Imagine a trial in which over 500 reputable people each took the witness stand and said, "I know that Jesus arose from the dead because I saw Him in His resurrected body." You talk about compelling evidence!

Evidence #5: The coming of the Holy Spirit: Before Jesus was crucified He said to His disciples, "*It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (God the Holy Spirit) will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you"* (John 16:7, N.K.J.V.). Later, in Acts 2:1-13, the Holy Spirit's coming is described in detail. Consequently, the obvious indication is that Jesus resurrected, ascended back to heaven, and kept His promise to send the Holy Spirit.

Evidence #6: The change in the chosen twelve: Immediately following Christ's crucifixion, the eleven apostles (minus Judas Iscariot) went into hiding. Evidently, they were operating under the assumption that the same authorities who had arrested Jesus and executed Him would be coming for them next. But something happened that emboldened those eleven men to come out of hiding and start fearlessly proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus. What was it? It was their experience with the risen Christ. The change that came over them simply cannot be explained any other way. They knew that Jesus was alive!

Evidence #7: The fact that Christ's body was never discovered: Although a popular tourist site is strongly considered to be the tomb of Christ, there is still some debate about the actual location. However, the people of Christ's day knew exactly where He had been buried. It was common knowledge to them, which meant that any of them could have paid a visit to the opened tomb and checked it for a body. All that was required to stamp out the fledgling religion of Christianity was the decaying corpse of Jesus, and yet no such corpse was ever produced.

Well, there they are, my seven evidences for Christ's resurrection. But as long as I'm on the subject, let me give you one more piece of evidence for free. It is this: Jesus has changed my life. I'm like the fellow who said, "I know that Jesus is alive because I talked to Him this morning." Even more than talking with Him each morning, I try to walk with Him each day. By doing so, I can report that He has made me a new creation by causing old things to pass away and all things to become new (2 Cor. 5:17). You see, that simply wouldn't have happened in my life if death had been able to hold Jesus. Therefore, that is my own personal evidence for knowing that He truly is alive.

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