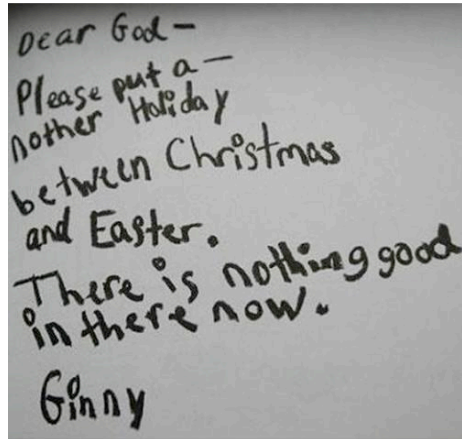
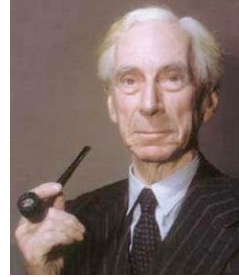


Through a child's eyes



Dear God -
Please put a -
nother Holiday
between Christmas
and Easter.
There is nothing good
in there now.
Ginny



Bertrand Russell

When asked, why he
rejected the resurrection
of Jesus:

“It’s simple—
not enough
evidence.”

Jesus’ unique credentials

- ➡ His coming was pre-announced
- ➡ He impacted all history - BC / AD
- ➡ He could not have been just a “good man.”
- ➡ He came for the purpose of dying.
- ➡ He was raised from the dead.



The Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus

1. The Gospels seem credible.
2. The existence of the Christian faith.
3. Other explanations are weak.
 - a. The **swoon** theory. (Islam)
 - b. A **fabrication** of the early church.
 - c. The **stolen body** theory. (Jews)
 - d. Hypnotic spell (**hallucination**) theory.

Jonah

The Sign of Jonah



Luke 11

“²⁹ And as the crowds were increasing, He began to say, “This generation is a wicked generation; it seeks for a sign, and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah. ³⁰ “For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so shall the Son of Man be to this generation. ³¹ “The Queen of the South shall rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. ³² “The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.”

Matthew 12

“³⁹ He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so **the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.** ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.”

Matthew 16

“¹ And the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Him asked Him to **show them a sign from heaven.** ² But He answered and said to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' ³ And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the **signs of the times?** ⁴ An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the **sign of Jonah.**" And He left them, and went away.”

The resurrection of Jesus is in view.

Matthew 16:21

“From that time Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, **and be raised up on the third day.**”

Summary

1. Jewish leaders test Jesus.

2. Jesus responds.

a. Noting “**the signs of the times.**”

- John the Baptist’s prophetic work.
- Jesus’ words and works.

b. No more signs except “**the sign of Jonah.**”

- Jonah & Jesus called for **repentance.**
- Jonah & Jesus were **raised** after 3 days.

c. The Gentiles got it and responded.

- The Ninevites received Jonah.
- The Queen of Sheba received Solomon.

d. Both will stand in judgment of Israel.

The resurrection of Jesus is basic to the faith.

1 Corinthians 15:1-5

“Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which you also stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that **He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,** and that he appeared to . . .”

The resurrection of Jesus is basic to our hope.

1 Corinthians 15:20-24

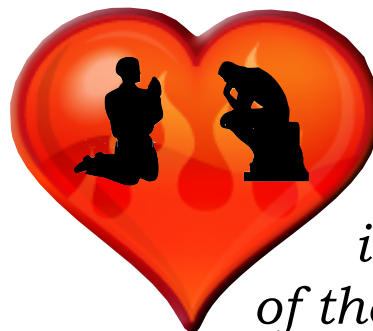
“But now **Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.** . . . Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.”

Faith is not just about rational evidence.

Luke 16

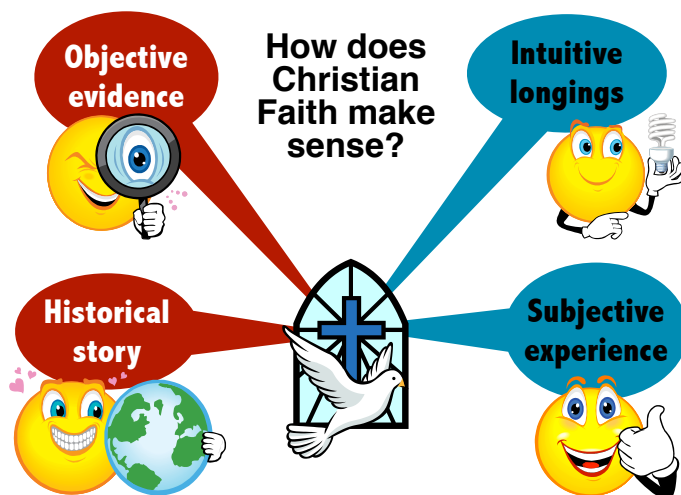
“³⁰ But he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’ ³¹ But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded **even if someone rises from the dead.**”

Jesus offered signs not proofs.



Proofs are in the heart of the beholder.

Christianity is believable not because the evidence demands it but because the evidence allows it and the deepest longings of the human spirit demand it.



Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence and / or extraordinary needs and extraordinary insight.

Lessons for us

- ➡ Like the Jewish leaders of Jesus' day we may be demanding more proofs.
- ➡ Receiving Jesus does not require more rational proofs, signs, and evidence.
- ➡ The resurrection is the climactic sign.
- ➡ Repentance is the needed response.

