

SESSION SIX

*EVERYDAY
RESURRECTION
CONVERSATIONS*

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APPLYING HISTORICAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE RESURRECTION IN
EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONS

**I. REVIEW AND INTEGRATION OF ARGUMENTS FOR THE DEFENSE OF
THE RESURRECTION**

A. Review the main points from Sessions 1-5:

1. The “Received Text” (1 Cor. 15)
2. Empty tomb evidence
3. Post-resurrection appearances and martyrdom
4. Common objections and rebuttals
5. The Minimal Facts approach

II. FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

A. Conversation starters: How to initiate a discussion about the
Resurrection

1. Ask thoughtful questions.
2. Listen sincerely to objections, questions, and doubts.
3. Identify those in the conversation with other worldviews or
religious positions.
4. Find common ground in the conversation.

III. PRESENTATION OF THE PRIMARY ARGUMENT

A. Articulate a clear and concise defense.

1. Write out your own “Minimal Facts Approach” that can be stated in under five minutes.

2. Explain the importance of the Resurrection theologically.

3. Explain the importance of the Resurrection historically.

4. How would your answer change between a skeptic, seeker, or believer?

IV. ROLE-PLAY AND CASE STUDIES

- A. Divide into pairs or groups:
 1. One plays a skeptic or curious friend.
 2. The other gives a defense using one or more approaches (i.e. Minimal Facts, rebutting an objection, etc.).
- B. Rotate roles to practice different responses.
- C. Provide sample case studies (i.e., “Your friend says Jesus was just a myth,” or “A teacher says hallucinations were the cause of the reported appearances”).

- D. Build your own five-minute Resurrection argument. Share your argument with the class.

V. NAVIGATING COMMON CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIONS

A. Biblical Principles

1. With truth and love as Christ demonstrates (John 6-7)¹
2. Listening with the intent to understand (not just reply)^{2 3}
3. “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone” (Colossians 4:6).
4. “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15).
5. “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1).

B. Dealing with emotional objections (e.g., hurt by religion)

C. When not to argue: discerning spiritual readiness

D. Redirecting to the Gospel

VI. CASE STUDIES

A. A Conversation with Jamie

You’re attending a dinner party at a friend’s house two weeks before Easter. The discussion turns to the Good Friday and Easter Sunday holidays. Someone mentions the meaning of Easter being the Resurrection of Jesus. Your friend, Jamie, a thoughtful and studious agnostic, says,

“I have read material on Easter, but I just don’t think there is good historical evidence to believe that Jesus actually rose from the dead. I think those who reported this event were just confused or the event itself has just become legend. People in the first century were gullible and stories became exaggerated. I’m not trying to be hostile to Christians, but it just seems like a stretch to believe this story. Maybe someone stole Jesus’ body or maybe the disciples were hallucinating.”

¹ David Keehn, “Responding to Objections with Truth and Love,” *The Good Book Blog*, August 31, 2015, accessed on 6/16/2024, www.biola.edu/blogs/good-book-blog/2015/responding-to-objections-with-truth-and-love.

² The Humanitas Forum on Christianity and Culture, *The Virtue of Listening – because there are no little people*. Feb. 3, 2015, accessed on 6/16/24, www.humanitas.org/?p=3229.

³ Francis Schaeffer’s response is a good model, as quoted from *The Humanitas Forum on Christianity and Culture, The Virtue of Listening – because there are no little people*. Feb. 3, 2015, accessed on 6/16/24, www.humanitas.org/?p=3229. “If I have only an hour with someone, I will spend the first 55 minutes asking questions and finding out what is troubling their heart and mind, and then in the last 5 minutes I will share something of the truth”

Jamie turns to you and says, "Aren't you a Christian? Do you really believe the Resurrection actually happened? How could you believe this story historically?"

QUESTIONS:

Write 2-3 sentences on how you would initially respond to Jamie and set the tone of your answer?

Write a brief outline on how you would explain the historical evidence for the Resurrection to Jamie in 4-5 minutes.

How would you conclude the discussion with Jamie?

B. A Conversation with Ali

You are at your place of employment and a Muslim co-worker, Ali, wants to discuss the role of Jesus in Christianity. He is intelligent, kind, and a devout Muslim. You confidently respond with passages in the Gospels demonstrating His virgin-birth, sinless life, death on the cross, Resurrection, appearances, and ascension. Ali, respectfully disagrees with your position with Jesus as deity and challenges the whole idea of any crucifixion and resurrection. He states, "Jesus only appeared to die on the cross, but did not actually die."

QUESTIONS

What objection is Ali using to discredit Jesus' crucifixion?

How would you rebut this specific objection? What other objection to Jesus' crucifixion do Muslims commonly use?

How would you conclude your discussion with Ali?

C. A Conversation with Steve

You are at your high school reunion weekend celebration and having breakfast with six old friends. Steve, a community college professor in philosophy, brings up religion rather loudly. He states, "I don't know how any of you could be a Christian. It's just all mythical and propaganda. How could anyone believe in that resurrection story? You can't tell me that anyone could come back from the dead." Steve knows you are a Christian and turns to you and asks, "What's the historical case for your alleged Messiah? Convince me!" His tone is harsh and confrontational. Many at the table laugh softly, but several are genuinely interested in your answer.

QUESTIONS

How do you maintain your composure with Steve? How do you think through the historical evidence clearly? Write 2-3 sentences on how you would immediately respond with respect, but confidence.

Write 4-5 sentences describing the three reasons to believe that the Resurrection is historically true. Would your response given to Steve be the same as the rest of your friends sitting around the table? Why or why not?

What personal encouragement could you give to those interested at the table in learning more about this topic? List two resources that would be helpful to them.

VII. RESOURCES AND NEXT STEPS

- A. Recommended books, websites, or podcasts for further growth
- B. Write your own “Resurrection defense” as a personal apologetic tool
- C. Engage in one meaningful conversation about the Resurrection this week

