

WITNESSES TO THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS
I COR. 15:5-11

Introduction:

- A. Men seek for proof.
 - 1. Prove it! A cry heard often.
 - 2. Usually people who demand proof won't accept it.

- B. In the field of criminal law, an eye witness is of inestimable value.
 - 1. In the Bible, 2 or 3 witnesses established guilt
 - 2. Our courts are satisfied with 2 or 3 witnesses.

- C. Many Christian doctrines are not open to the "eyewitness demand."
 - 1. Eternity, Antichrist, Holy Spirit.
 - 2. The resurrection is well documented.

- D. The resurrection of Jesus had "eyewitness" testimony.
 - 1. Well over 500 people of impeccable character.
 - 2. People whose lives have been an influence on all the world for good.

I. THE RESURRECTED JESUS WAS SEEN BY CEPHAS.

- A. "and that he was seen of Cephas."
 - 1. Luke 24:34 "The Lord indeed is risen and hath appeared to Simon."
 - 2. II Peter 1:15-16.

II. THE RESURRECTED JESUS WAS SEEN OF THE TWELVE.

- A. "then of the twelve."
 - 1. John 20:19-20.
 - 2. I John 1:1-4.

III. THE FIVE HUNDRED WERE EYEWITNESSES. U6

- A. "after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once."
 - 1. There is no specific record of this event.
 - 2. It may have been on the occasion of post-pentecost.
- B. Some of these were living.
 - 1. "Of whom the greater part remain unto this present day, but some are fallen asleep."

IV. JAMES WITNESSED JESUS' RESURRECTION.

- A. "after that he was seen of James."
 - 1. Neither does this event have further record.
 - 2. The important fact is that the Corinthians knew whom he meant.
- B. "then of all the apostles."
 - 1. Acts 1:3.
 - 2. Post-resurrection training program.

V. PAUL SAW THE RESURRECTED CHRIST.

- A. "and last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due season."
 - 1. born = ekstoma - an untimely birth, "abortion."
 - 2. Paul was a unique apostle, he did not follow the same pattern as the others.
 - 3. He became an apostle but in a different and unique fashion.

VI. PAUL DID NOT FEEL HIMSELF WORTHY OF BEING AN APOSTLE. V9

- A. "for I am the least of the apostles, that I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."
 - 1. least = elachistos - the least in magnitude.
 - 2. meet = hikanos - coming to, reaching to; hence sufficient, competent, adequate.

3. For I belong to the lowest rank of the apostles, and am not deserving of the name "Apostle."

B. Why?

1. "I persecuted the church of God."
2. The forgiveness of sin does not obliterate the memory of it.
3. The other apostles did not persecute.

VII. PAUL AND THE GRACE OF GOD. V10

A. Paul was not worthy, but God made him worthy.

1. "but by the grace of God I am what I am."
2. God's bestowed grace empowered Paul.

B. God used a laboring Paul.

1. "and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."
 - a. vain = kenos - empty, referring to the contents of anything.

C. "but I labored more abundantly than they all;"

1. laboured - kopiao - to be beat out, to be weary.
2. abundantly = peissoteros = above the over-above.

D. "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

1. Yet actually I wasn't doing it, but God worked through me, helping and blessing me.
2. Again, Paul acknowledges God's power.

VIII. ALL OF THE APOSTLES PREACHED THE SAME GOSPEL.

- A. "Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed."