

Joh 11:25-26 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, (26) and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Why?

1. The empty tomb
2. Post-crucifixion appearances
3. The apostle's transformation
4. Emergence of the church
5. Sunday as a day of worship

Mat 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. (2) And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. ... (5) And the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. (6) "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying.

Mat 27:63-66 and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' (64) "Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, lest the disciples come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." (65) Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how." (66) And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.



The garden tomb

A typical rolling stone tomb showing the size of the stone.

Mar 16:3 And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"



A guard – The contubernium was the smallest organized unit of soldiers in the Roman Army and was composed of eight legionaries.



The easiest way to put a stop to the things that followed would have been to show the body in the tomb.

The disciples couldn't have overcome the guards.

A Roman guard who fell asleep on duty was killed.

Mat 28:12-14 And when they had assembled with the elders and counseled together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, (13) and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.' (14) "And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble."

The tomb was empty and no explanation can be given except Mat 28:6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying.

1Co 15:8 and last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

There are ten appearances given besides the one to Paul. Nine are in the Gospels (Mary Magdalene in John and Mark, the other women in Matthew, the two going to Emmaus in Luke, Simon Peter in Luke and I Corinthians, the ten apostles and others in Luke and John and Mark, the eleven and others in John, the seven by the sea in John, to over five hundred in Galilee in Matthew and Paul and Mark, to the apostles in Jerusalem in Luke and Mark and Acts and I Corinthians) and one in I Corinthians (to James).

The apostles changed.

Mat 26:69-74 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” (70) But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.” (71) And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” (72) And again he denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.” (73) After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.” (74) Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster crowed.

50 days later, Peter is no longer afraid of what men may do to him.

Act 2:14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words.

Act 8:3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

Act 22:19 And I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that in one synagogue after another I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you.

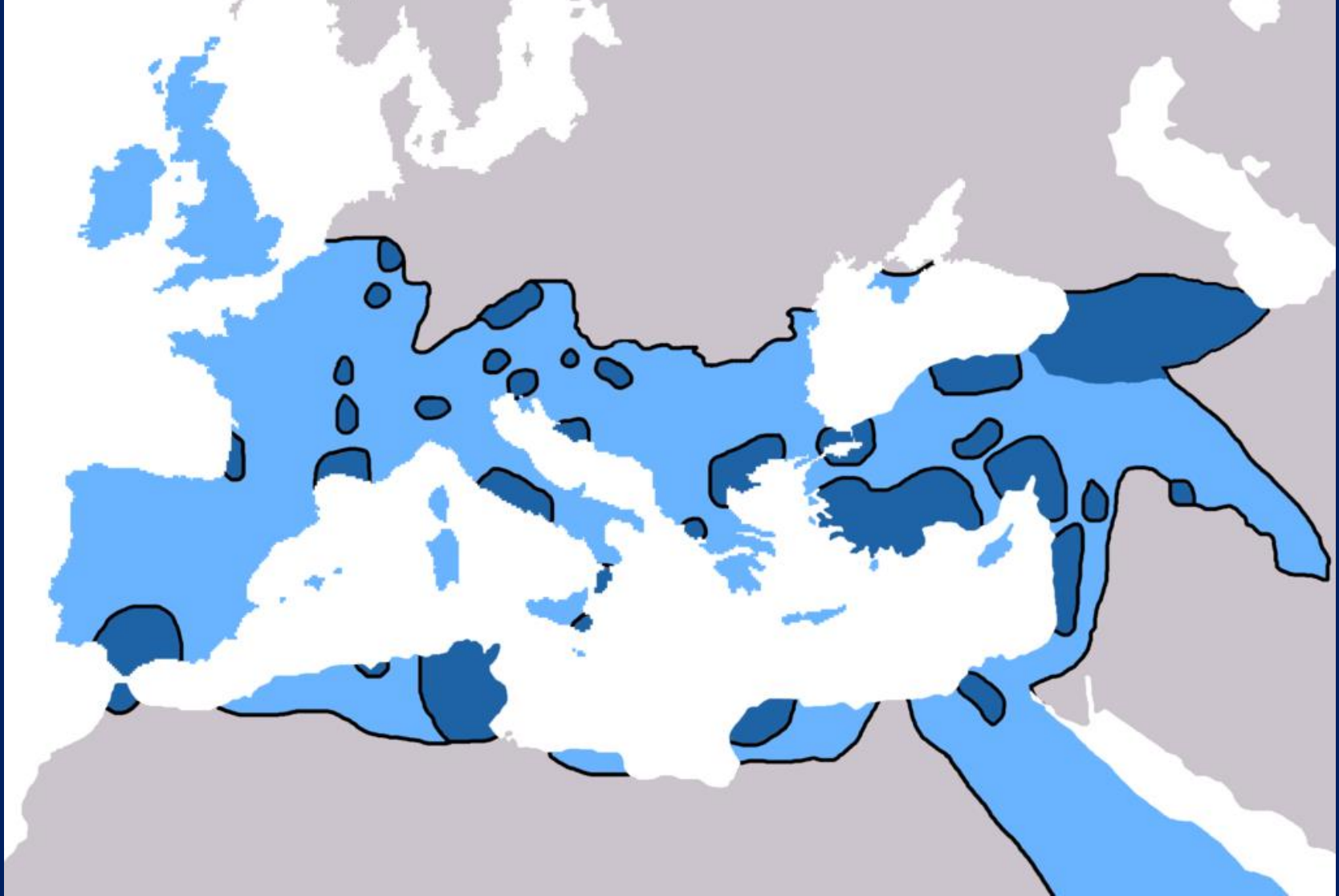
Act 23:1 And looking intently at the council, Paul said, "Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day."

Gal 1:14-17 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. (15) But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, (16) was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone; (17) nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

The emergence of the church.

Act 4:4 But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

Act 21:20 And when they heard it, they glorified God. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed. They are all zealous for the law,



Spread of Christianity to AD 325 – dark blue
Spread of Christianity to AD 600 all blue

Sunday as a day of worship.

Mat 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

Act 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.

1Co 16:2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.

In Italian, Sunday is called "Domenica", which also means "Lord's Day" (from Latin "Dies Dominica"). One finds similar cognates in French, where the name is "Dimanche", as well as Romanian ("Duminică") and Spanish and Portuguese ("Domingo").

Justin Martyr (b100 AD, d 165AD), in the mid 2nd century, mentions the "memoirs of the apostles" were read on "the day called that of the sun" (Sunday) alongside the "writings of the prophets."

Jerome (b 347, d 420), declared: "If pagans call [the Lord's Day] [...] the 'day of the sun,' we willingly agree, for today the light of the world is raised, today is revealed the sun of justice with healing in his rays."

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Do you believe the evidence?

Act 22:16 And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.'