



EASTER
AT THE CREEK

**When Jesus said, “It is finished,”
his followers believed
every word of it.**

Without faith

Without hope

Without a leader

Without a Savior and Messiah

Early on the first day of the week,
while it was still dark, **Mary**
Magdalene went to the tomb...

John 20:1 NIV

Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have **seen** the Lord!”

John 20:18 NIV

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors **locked** for **fear** of the Jewish leaders,

John 20:19 NIV

Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”

John 20:19 NIV

After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they **saw** the Lord.

John 20:20 NIV

The first Christians were Christian not because of what they believed about Jesus but because they **saw** a resurrected Jesus.

Now **Thomas** (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

John 20:24 NIV

So the other disciples told him,
“We have **seen** the Lord!”

John 20:25 NIV

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I **will not** believe.”

John 20:25 NIV

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was **with them.**

John 20:26 NIV

Though the doors were **locked**,
Jesus came and stood among
them and said, “Peace be with
you!”

John 20:26 NIV

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. **Stop doubting and believe.**”

John 20:27 NIV

Thomas said to him, “My **Lord** and
my **God!**”

John 20:28 NIV

Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; **blessed** are those who have **not seen** and yet have **believed.**”

John 20:29 NIV

Faith begins with facts.

*Of course the doubt as to whether
Jesus really existed is unfounded
and not worth refutation.*

Rudolf Bultmann

Despite the enormous range of opinion, there are several points on which virtually all scholars of antiquity agree. Jesus was a Jewish man, known to be a preacher and teacher, who was crucified (A Roman form of execution) in Jerusalem during the reign of the Roman emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea.

Bart Ehrman

It is undisputable that some of the followers of Jesus came to think that he had been raised from the dead, and that something had to have happened to make them think so.

Bart Ehrman

It is a historical fact that some of Jesus' followers came to believe that he had been raised from the dead soon after his execution.

Bart Ehrman

*All that historical criticism can establish
is that the first disciples came to
believe the resurrection.*

Rudolf Bultmann

That Jesus' followers (and later Paul) had resurrection experiences is, in my judgment, a fact. What the reality was that gave rise to the experiences I do not know.

E.P. Sanders

Finally we know that after his death his followers experienced what they described as the 'resurrection': the appearance of a living but transformed person who had actually died. They believed this, they lived it, and they died for it.

E.P. Sanders

I know in their own terms, what they saw was the raised Jesus. That's what they say, and then all the historic evidence we have afterwards attests to their conviction that that's what they saw.

I'm not saying that they really did see the raised Jesus... I don't know what they saw.

*But I do know as an historian,
that they must have seen something.*

Paula Frederickson

The disciples thought that they had witnessed Jesus' appearances, which, however they are explained, "is a fact upon which both believer and unbeliever may agree."

Reginald Fuller

THE FACTS OF HISTORY:

1. Jesus was a real person who died on a cross & was buried.
2. Upon His death, the disciples felt hopeless and despondent.

THE FACTS OF HISTORY:

3. Jesus' tomb was empty and no one ever produced His body.

4. Jesus' followers believed they saw Him resurrected from the dead.

THE FACTS OF HISTORY:

5. Jesus followers were transformed because of what they experienced.

6. Jesus followers were willing to die for their belief.

Faith begins with facts.

**Faith begins with facts,
but it ends in trust.**

REASONS TO BELIEVE:

1. The Early Testimony
2. The Eyewitness Testimony
3. The Embarrassing Testimony
4. The Excruciating Testimony
5. The Extrabiblical Testimony

Jesus performed many other **signs** in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

John 20:30 NIV

But these are written that you may **believe** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have **life** in his name.

John 20:31 NIV

For the first followers of Jesus,
the first Easter was about what
they said they saw.

For the rest of us, it's a matter of
what we believe they saw.