

WHO SAW JESUS ALIVE?

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The Corinthian Creed, which can be traced to the immediate aftermath of Jesus' death, states that more than 500 people personally witnessed Jesus being alive again after His crucifixion.¹

120 people assembled to worship Jesus² before the public witness of the church had begun;³ we can safely assume that undertake such great risk, most if not all of these people were eyewitnesses.

People sometimes look at these claims with skepticism because most of these people are essentially anonymous at this point. However, we are able to identify some of these eyewitnesses by name.

Named as Eyewitnesses

The New Testament explicitly identifies seventeen people by name as having been eyewitnesses to the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus:

- (1) **Mary Magdalene** encountered Jesus outside the empty tomb.⁴
- (2) **Mary, the wife of Clopas** encountered Jesus along the road near Jerusalem.⁵

- (3) **Salome** encountered Jesus along the road near Jerusalem.⁶
- (4) **Joanna** encountered Jesus along the road near Jerusalem.⁷
- (5) **Cleopas** encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus⁸ and with the group of ten disciples.⁹
- (6) **Peter (Simon, Cephas)** encountered Jesus individually,¹⁰ with nine others,¹¹ with ten others,¹² at the Sea of Galilee,¹³ on a mountain in Galilee,¹⁴ and at the ascension.¹⁵
- (7) **Andrew** encountered Jesus with nine others,¹⁶ with ten others,¹⁷ on a mountain in Galilee,¹⁸ and at the ascension.¹⁹
- (8) **James, the son of Zebedee** encountered Jesus with nine others,²⁰ with ten others,²¹ at the Sea of Galilee,²² on a

¹ I Corinthians 15:6.

² Acts 1:15.

³ Acts 2.

⁴ John 20:11-18. See also Mark 16:9-11.

⁵ Matthew 28:9-10. See also Mark 16:1.

⁶ Matthew 28:9-10. See also Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10.

⁷ Matthew 28:9-10. See also Luke 24:10; .

⁸ Luke 24:13-35. See also Mark 16:12-13.

⁹ Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25. See also Mark 16:14.

¹⁰ Luke 24:33-34; I Corinthians 15:5.

¹¹ Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25. See also Mark 16:14.

¹² John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

¹³ John 21:1-23.

¹⁴ Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

¹⁵ Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:4-12. See also Mark 16:19-20.

¹⁶ Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25. See also Mark 16:14.

¹⁷ John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

¹⁸ Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

¹⁹ Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:4-12. See also Mark 16:19-20.

²⁰ Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25. See also Mark 16:14.

²¹ John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

²² John 21:1-23.

mountain in Galilee,²³ and at the ascension.²⁴

- (9) **John** encountered Jesus with nine others,²⁵ with ten others,²⁶ at the Sea of Galilee,²⁷ on a mountain in Galilee,²⁸ and at the ascension.²⁹
- (10) **Philip** encountered Jesus with nine others,³⁰ with ten others,³¹ on a mountain in Galilee,³² and at the ascension.³³
- (11) **Bartholomew (Nathanael)** encountered Jesus with nine others,³⁴ with ten others,³⁵ at the Sea of Galilee,³⁶ on a mountain in Galilee,³⁷ and at the ascension.³⁸
- (12) **Matthew (Levi)** encountered Jesus with nine others,³⁹ with ten others,⁴⁰ on a mountain in Galilee,⁴¹ and at the ascension.⁴²

(13) **James, the son of Alphaeus** encountered Jesus with nine others,⁴³ with ten others,⁴⁴ on a mountain in Galilee,⁴⁵ and at the ascension.⁴⁶

(14) **Thaddaeus (Judas, Lebbaeus)** encountered Jesus with nine others,⁴⁷ with ten others,⁴⁸ on a mountain in Galilee,⁴⁹ and at the ascension.⁵⁰

(15) **Simon the Zealot** encountered Jesus with nine others,⁵¹ with ten others,⁵² on a mountain in Galilee,⁵³ and at the ascension.⁵⁴

(16) **Thomas** encountered Jesus with ten others,⁵⁵ at the Sea of Galilee,⁵⁶ on a mountain in Galilee,⁵⁷ and at the ascension.⁵⁸

²³ Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

²⁴ Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:4-12. See also Mark 16:19-20.

²⁵ Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25. See also Mark 16:14.

²⁶ John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

²⁷ John 21:1-23.

²⁸ Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

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³¹ John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

³² Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

³³ Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:4-12. See also Mark 16:19-20.

³⁴ Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25. See also Mark 16:14.

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⁴⁴ John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

⁴⁵ Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

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⁵² John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

⁵³ Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

⁵⁴ Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:4-12. See also Mark 16:19-20.

⁵⁵ John 20:26-29; I Corinthians 15:15.

⁵⁶ John 21:1-23.

⁵⁷ Matthew 28:16-20; I Corinthians 15:6. See also Mark 16:15-18.

⁵⁸ Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:4-12. See also Mark 16:19-20.

- (17) **James, the brother of Jesus** encountered Jesus individually⁵⁹ and at the ascension.⁶⁰

Present at the Ascension

Furthermore, the Luke mentions four others who were present for the Ascension and joined with the church in Jerusalem afterward,⁶¹ implying they all saw Jesus alive:

- (1) **Mary, the mother of Jesus**
- (2) **Joseph, the brother of Jesus**
- (3) **Simeon, the brother of Jesus**
- (4) **Jude, the brother of Jesus**

James, the brother of Jesus was also included in this group, but he was already named in the first group.

Qualified as Apostles

Finally, the Luke and Paul refer to at least six other men as apostles. One of the qualifications for apostleship was that one had been an eyewitness to Jesus' resurrection.⁶² Therefore, we can conclude that these men saw Jesus alive after the crucifixion.

- (1) **Matthias**⁶³
- (2) **Justus (Barsabbas, Joseph)**⁶⁴
- (3) **Barnabas**⁶⁵
- (4) **Silas**⁶⁶
- (5) **Timothy**⁶⁷
- (6) **Apollos**⁶⁸

Why do I exclude other known names from this list? Paul, for example, is not included in this list because his own testimony acknowledges that Jesus' appearance to him took place after the ascension.⁶⁹ Jesus'

appearance to him, while powerful enough to convince him, is qualitatively different from the personal, bodily appearances made to others prior to the ascension.

Likewise, at least two other potential names are omitted here. Andronicus and Junia, have been counted by some as apostles because a few English translations of Romans 16:7 could be interpreted to suggest they were well known apostles (e.g., King James Version, New International Version, New Revised Standard Version). However, other translations clarify that they were merely well known to the apostles (e.g., *Christian Standard Bible*, *English Standard Version*, *New American Standard Bible*).

Conclusion

This gives us a list of at least 27 named eyewitnesses; we know there were more, but these are the ones whose names have not been lost to history. These people (and others) were on the record in the First Century as having seen Jesus alive. They were available to be questioned, and they were willing to die for what they saw. The fact that there were so many eyewitnesses named during their lifetimes, coupled with the fact the resurrection story survived First Century scrutiny, is powerful evidence for the truth of Jesus' bodily resurrection.

⁵⁹ I Corinthians 5:7.

⁶⁰ Acts 1:1-14.

⁶¹ Acts 1:12-14.

⁶² Acts 1:22.

⁶³ Acts 1:23-26.

⁶⁴ Acts 1:23-26.

⁶⁵ Acts 14:14.

⁶⁶ I Thessalonians 1:1; 2:6.

⁶⁷ I Thessalonians 1:1; 2:6.

⁶⁸ I Corinthians 4:6-9.

⁶⁹ Acts 9.