

"Resurrection of Jesus" accounts (NRSV)

Incident	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1. Women at Tomb	Mary Magdalene & Other Mary	Mary Magdalene, Mary (Mother of James) & Salome	Mary Magdalene, Mary (Mother of James), Joanna & other women	Mary Magdalene
2. Guards at the tomb	Yes	No mention	No mention	No mention
3. Time of women's visit	Day was dawning	Early; Sun had risen	Early dawn	Still dark
4. Reason for visit	To see the tomb	Anoint the body (John states body already anointed) ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾	Anoint the body (John states body already anointed) ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾	No reason given
5. Stone rolled away	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
6. Earthquake	Yes; Rolls away stone.	No mention	No mention	No mention
7. Angels/men seen at the tomb	One angel outside sitting on rolled away stone. ⁽⁶⁾	Young man already inside sitting on the right side. ⁽⁶⁾	Two men suddenly appear standing inside BEFORE visit by Disciples. Later text has women saying they were "angels" ⁽⁶⁾⁽¹¹⁾	Two angels, already inside, sitting at the head & feet of where Jesus had laid AFTER visit by Disciples. ⁽⁶⁾
8. Did women/woman enter tomb?	Yes. Told to tell Disciples Jesus would meet them in Galilee. ⁽⁴⁾	Yes. Told to tell Disciples Jesus would meet them in Galilee. ⁽⁴⁾	Yes. Not told where the Disciples would meet Jesus. Disciples doubted women. ⁽⁴⁾	No. Not told where the Disciples would meet Jesus. ⁽⁴⁾
9. Did Disciple(s) visit tomb?	No mention	No mention (Said nothing to anyone) [End of Gospel]	Yes (Peter). Later text says "some" went to the tomb ⁽¹¹⁾	Yes (Peter & Beloved Disciple ["BD"])
10. Did Disciple(s) enter tomb?	No mention		No. Peter looked in and was amazed	Yes. "BD" looked in. Peter went in, then followed by "BD".
11. What did Disciple(s) see?	No mention ⁽¹²⁾	⁽¹²⁾	Linen cloths. ⁽¹²⁾	Rolled linen cloths & cloth that covered Jesus' head ⁽¹²⁾
12. Did women/woman meet Jesus?	Yes, near tomb whilst leaving to tell Disciples; GRABBED FEET & worshipped ⁽⁵⁾		No (Just the two men in dazzling clothes)	Yes, near tomb on return from telling disciples . Told NOT TO TOUCH ⁽⁵⁾
13. What did Jesus say to women/woman?	"Greetings". then "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me"			"Woman why are you weeping?". Then "Mary" & then "Do not hold onto me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father, but go to my brothers and say to them 'I am ascending to my Father & your Father, to my god & your god' "
14. Where was 1st Jesus appearance to Disciples?	On a mountain in Galilee (some doubted). Given "Great Commission". [End of Gospel] ⁽¹⁾		On the road to Emmaus to Cleopas & another Disciple. Then to all ELEVEN Disciples in room in Jerusalem on the same day. Told to remain in Jerusalem until Pentecost. ⁽¹⁾	In a locked room in Jerusalem to TEN Disciples (ie. minus Thomas) on same day as resurrection. ⁽¹⁾
15. Where was 2nd Jesus appearance to Disciples?			No mention	A week later in locked room to <u>all</u> Disciples. Thomas examines Jesus' wounds ⁽¹⁾
16. Where was 3rd Jesus appearance to Disciples?			No mention	At Sea of Tiberias to seven Disciples. ⁽¹⁾
17. When & where did Ascension happen?	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Immediately after meeting Disciples in room. Ascension at Bethany. [End of Gospel] ⁽⁷⁾	Not mentioned [End of Gospel]

There are many contradictions, scientific impossibilities and anachronisms in the New Testament (NT); Too many to list here. I have concentrated on the "Resurrection" since it is probably the most important event within Christian theology. According to Paul, if the Resurrection had not occurred, then Christians' faith is in vain. In this case, one would expect the Resurrection to be the most well corroborated event in the NT, but, as you can see by the above discrepancies, this is certainly NOT the case. If contradictions exist between texts, this means at least one (& maybe more) is incorrect. If a text can be incorrect on one point, how many other events were recorded incorrectly? We have no extra-biblical contemporary documents that confirm any events in the Gospels. We have no "Gospel of Jesus", so we only have what the, non-eyewitness, Gospel writers reported Jesus as saying. The four Gospels are

anonymous; The "authorship" of these writings were added in the 2nd Century and was merely speculation by the early Church. The gospels were written in Greek, but it is generally agreed that Jesus & the Disciples spoke Aramaic.

The Oxford Annotated Bible states "**Neither the Evangelists nor their first readers engaged in historical analysis. Their aim was to confirm the Christian faith. Scholars generally agree that the Gospels were written forty to sixty years after the death of Jesus. Thus they do not represent eyewitness or contemporary accounts of Jesus' life or teachings**". We have no "Originals" of any of the NT documents, only copies of copies with many differences. Our earliest complete books date to around the 4th Century. Earlier than this we have just fragments & part manuscripts. It is generally agreed that Paul was the earliest writer in the NT (c. 50 CE, approx 20 years after the crucifixion). Paul has no mention of an empty tomb; Just Jesus was "buried"; Mark has the first mention of a tomb (written c.70 CE).

It is widely believed that Matthew & Luke share a lot Mark's material. The original manuscripts of Mark end at Chapter 16 verse 8 (Frightened women run from the tomb and tell no-one). Hence Mark has no post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. This means that Matthew & Luke have their own independent versions of these appearances.

Notes:

1. Luke & John contradict Matthew re. the Disciples visiting Galilee to first see Jesus. Matthew has the Disciples' one & only sighting of Jesus on a mountain in Galilee. Luke has Jesus' one & only meeting with all **Eleven** Disciples in a room in Jerusalem & specifically tells them NOT to leave Jerusalem until "clothed in power from on high" (ie Pentecost). John has the 1st sighting of Jesus by **Ten** Disciples in a locked room in Jerusalem, followed by two more appearances to them; 2nd in Jerusalem to **Eleven** and 3rd at the Sea of Tiberias to Seven (This appearance specifically noted as the 3rd, hence no opportunity to visit a mountain in Galilee prior to these three appearances).
2. Mark & Luke have the women going to the tomb to anoint the body, but John says that Joseph of Arimathea & Nicodemus had already anointed the body. Matthew, Mark & Luke say the women witnessed the burial, so they would have seen Joseph & Nicodemus anoint the body had those two done so.
3. Assuming the women had gone to anoint the body, how did they expect to gain access to the body with the stone in position, and guards barring the entrance? (Note: Only Matthew mentions guards at the tomb)
4. Why was stone rolled away if Jesus could enter locked rooms? Maybe for some-one to remove the body?
5. Why did Matthew have the women grabbing Jesus' feet at seeing him after his resurrection, but, in John, Mary Magdalene was told by Jesus not to touch him?
6. The women in Luke see two men inside the tomb **BEFORE** Peter inspects the empty tomb, but John says that Mary Magdalene saw two angels inside the tomb **AFTER** Peter & Beloved Disciple had inspected the tomb.
7. The ascension of Jesus is only mentioned in Luke, apparently on the same day as his resurrection (contradicted in Acts [supposedly also written by "Luke"] which says Jesus remained on earth for forty days).
8. How did the chief priests and Pharisees know that Jesus would be resurrected after 3 days when the Disciples didn't seem to understand this? Who witnessed this meeting when guards were sent to secure the tomb?
9. Who witnessed the meeting between the guards and the chief priests when a bribe was suggested?
10. In Paul's Corinthians 15:3 it states that the first witness to an appearance of the resurrected Jesus was Cephas (Peter), but according to the Gospel accounts the first witness(es) would be Mary Magdalene & the other Mary, Mary Magdalene alone, or Cleopas & another un-named Disciple, not Peter. Paul mentions Jesus appearing to "**The Twelve**" but if Judas Iscariot was no longer amongst the Disciples, there would be only **eleven** of them left for Jesus to appear to, not twelve.
11. Luke contradicts himself in 4 places during this Resurrection account :-
 - a) Early text states the women meet 2 **men** inside the tomb, but later text says the Disciples were told by the women that they met 2 **angels** there.
 - b) Early text states that only Peter went to inspect the empty tomb, but later text has "some" (ie more than one) Disciples going to the tomb.
 - c) Early text has Jesus' body being wrapped in a **cloth**, but later, the Disciples see **cloths** in the empty tomb.
 - d) Cleopas & un-named disciple meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus. The un-named disciple could not be Simon (Peter) or Simon the Zealot as the two disciples tell the **eleven** (which presumably would include both) in Jerusalem, about this meeting. The text then states one of the disciples says "The Lord has risen and he has appeared to Simon", but there is no mention anywhere of Peter or Simon meeting Jesus. When & where did this meeting occur?
12. Matthew, Mark & Luke say Joseph wrapped Jesus' body in "a clean linen **cloth**" (ie one cloth), but John says "linen **cloths**, as per Jewish tradition. John has the Disciples, when inspecting the empty tomb, seeing a separate cloth that covered Jesus' head, & Luke mentions the Disciples seeing **cloths**.