



January 18, 2026

K.N.O.W. Series: Overcame/Offers

Acts 5:30–32 (ESV) 30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. 31 God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

What accounts for the Christian church in the first century?

- Centuries old Jewish traditions of Sabbath and worship change overnight into Sunday morning celebrations and sharing bread and wine and worshipping a man as God.
- The something that happened is the very heart of the message of these first believers.

Our series: We can really KNOW Jesus.

- He is King.
- He was Nailed to a cross.
- He Overcame death. He Offers the same to us.
- We Worship him as Lord.

The Bible study for bullet point #3 (there will be two parts to #3):

Peter on Pentecost:

Acts 2:23 **23** this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. **24** God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Also **Acts 2:32** **32** This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.

Peter/John heal lame man at temple:

Acts 3:15 **15** and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.

Peter/John before Jewish religious leaders:

Acts 4:10 by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well.

All the apostles sharing their experience:

Acts 4:33 **33** And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Apostles before the Jewish council:

Acts 5:30-32 **30** The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. **31** God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. **32** And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

Peter to Gentiles:

Acts 10:40-41 **40** but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, **41** not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

Paul to synagogue in Antioch:

Acts 13:30-31 **30** But God raised him from the dead, **31** and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people.

Paul in Thessalonica:

Acts 17:2-3 he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, **3** explaining and proving that it was

necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.”

Paul in Athens:

Acts 17:31 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

Paul before Agrippa:

Acts 26:23 I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: 23 that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

In every message about Jesus is that **He Overcame death**

Is that possible?

- If you believe in God, then on some level you believe that all we see in the world was created by this creator. Why would resurrection be any harder for him than creation?
- Do you not believe in God? If you believe that randomness accounts for everything we see, then you’ve just conceded *that everything is possible*. That includes the resurrection.
- No matter what your worldview, it’s impossible to say that the resurrection is impossible.

Can I trust these witnesses?

- Are these real eyewitness accounts of what actually happened?
- I think we can trust that these accounts are true, because...

An alternate story was fabricated.

- Matthew writes that after Jesus rose, some of the guards that were at Jesus’ tomb went to the Jewish priests and told them what had happened. Here’s what the Jewish authorities did:
- *“they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers 13 and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ 14 And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” 15 So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day. Matthew 28:12-15*

- If you're trying to make up a story to show the world that Jesus rose from the dead, *you don't include in the story a perfectly plausible theory that counters your own made up story.*
- Matthew, by simply recording this fact, proves that there was an empty tomb. If there wasn't an empty tomb, this counter theory would never have been needed. Matthew never would have written it. So we can trust Matthew.
- From the beginning, Matthew tells us there were counter arguments to the empty tomb. The church in Jerusalem could never have survived in the face of these counter arguments, unless the tomb was actually empty. So, again, we can trust Matthew.

The first eyewitnesses.

- The first people to see Jesus, in all four gospel accounts, were women.
- It tells us that it has to be true. Why?
- If you're making this story up, you would never write it that way. If the Jesus story was a fabricated lie, the lie never in a million years would have made the first witnesses women.
- They would have made the story read so that it was credible. Credible witnesses would have been just about anyone other than women.
- The only real explanation for why the gospel accounts were written this way, was that the first witnesses were, in fact, women. And what they saw was a resurrected Jesus.
- There are other first witnesses: Paul says, only 30 years later, and Matthew says, only 40-45 years later: *We have people you can go talk to about this.*
- If it never happened, these first believers could never have appealed to these other witnesses.

Some doubted.

- *"When they saw him they worshipped him, but some doubted"* (Matthew 28:17)
- *"After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive."* (Acts 1:3)
- Jesus had to spend lots of time convincing his disciples and giving them proof that he really was resurrected.
- It means it's the last thing they expected.
- It means they were not gullible guppies, but level headed skeptics.
- It means the resurrection is true. We think, *if he shows himself to me then I'll believe.* It's never even a thought that I **wouldn't believe** if he did that! But that's what happened to them. He showed up, **and still some doubted.**
- These first witnesses are absolutely telling the truth. Who would know that it was even possible to still doubt after seeing the risen Lord other than people who had actually seen the risen Lord, and still doubted?

The future of the church.

- Jesus gave a mission: *"go into all the world and teach people, lead them to follow me"* And they did! They were pretty successful in carrying out his mission.

- Historians are baffled by this. There's never been any movement like this, with this much success, without the aid of physical force.
- People who study the early church give us three reasons why they were so successful.
- **Christians died extremely well.**
- **Christians were unbelievably compassionate.**
- **Christians were absolutely inclusive.**
- These do explain *how*, but they don't explain *why*. Why did they die well? Why were they compassionate? Why were they so accepting and inclusive?
- It's the resurrection of Jesus. It's the only explanation for why the church survived at all.

Because Jesus Overcame death, **He Offers us the same**

Peter: **Acts 2:37-39 - 37** Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" **38** And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Peter/John - **Acts 3:26 - 26** God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."

Peter/John - **Acts 4:12 - 12** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Peter - **Acts 5:31 - 31** God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

Peter - **Acts 10:43 - 43** To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Paul - **Acts 13:38 - 38** Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, **39** and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.

The Offer is stated mostly as the forgiveness of sin.

- But it's also referred to as freedom, as refreshing, as salvation, as blessing.
- It is that you can be forgiven of sin and be right with God.
- ***That means death is dead.***

"If sin is paid for, and righteousness is provided, and justice is satisfied, nothing can keep

Christ or his people in the grave.” —John Piper:

Father, we thank you today for the work you did raising back to life what was dead in the body of Jesus. We see that, and we have hope that you can take the dead parts of us, even before we’re ever lowered into the grave, and make them alive again too. We have a strong, victorious, Savior who is alive...and in his name we pray this thanks. Amen.