

Debate over resurrection continues

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did Judaism, which believed in bodily resurrection but as a communal experience at the end of days. Nor did the Jews make resurrection part of their definition for the messiah, yet that's what the earliest Jewish Christians said regarding Jesus.

In the New Testament Gospels' depiction, the risen Jesus was no ghost, disembodied spirit or vision. Jesus did not have a merely resuscitated corpse but a body with

uncanny new properties, yet a physical body nonetheless.

Wright says only one explanation suffices from all this and it's "rock solid." The discovery that Jesus' tomb was empty, plus his various physical appearances, provide the only plausible explanation for the rise of the early Christian faith as we know it.

Since no other alternative is adequate, Wright concludes that the traditional Christian belief remains the truth, "however unlikely."

Crossan's response is a disappointment because he doesn't attack Wright's challenge head-on, nor fully explain why he's skeptical. His basic approach is that even if the empty tomb and appearances occurred as the New Testament reports (which he doubts in other writings), this would merely mean Jesus

arose in the sense that God exalted him, not that his body was resurrected. Whether something literally happened isn't important, he thinks, but

rather the spiritual meaning of Jesus' ongoing presence

Crossan asks whether those early Christians took the Resurrection literally or, as he sees it, as a spiritual metaphor. "The honest answer must be, I do not have the faintest idea, nor does anyone else."

Christian intellectuals have been debating this for the past 200 years, Crossan says, "and we have reached an impasse; nobody is persuading anyone else." It's a perfect-

ly nice debate but, as he sees it, the thing that matters is the message that God has begun a new kingdom and people can participate in a new creation.

In the back-and-forth that follows, Wright makes the helpful suggestion that the difference between them is not "literal" versus "metaphorical" resurrection but the New Testament's

"concrete" or bodily concept versus Crossan's "abstract" understanding.

Crossan thinks the empty tomb is historically questionable and thus that Mark simply "made up" this report and later Gospels picked up the claim.

Wright's ready response, "I don't think anyone could have made up these stories, actually."

Holy Ghost Boot Camp at Ramada Ltd.

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and in Truth: Music in African American Worship," is taken from her 2004 book published by Westminster John Knox Press. Costen will trace the African roots of liturgical and musical practices used through contemporary music in worship.

The event is part of the Faith Seeking Understanding series of public lectures sponsored by Union-PSCE at Charlotte, the North Carolina campus of Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education. A reception and book sale will follow the lecture at the church. For more information, call Susan Hickok at (704) 337-2450.

Trinity Park's Annual Choir Celebration will be held at 4 p.m.

Guest speaker for the event is the Rev. Ernest Jeffries, pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church, Davidson. The church is located at 9115 Trinity Road.

April 27
Kingdom of God Christian Fellowship Ministries will host its sixth annual women's conference through Saturday Services begin nightly at 7 p.m. with a Saturday morning seminar at 10 a.m. The free event will be held at 4837 South Tryon St. For more information call (704) 713-4862.

April 29
Addie L. Robinson Ministries of Philadelphia will host a Holy Ghost Boot Camp Spiritual Warfare Conference at the Ramada Limited, located at 7900 Nations Ford Road at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. For more information call (215) 574-7888 or log on to www.addierobinson.com.

May 6
Seigle Avenue First Church of God Girls in Action for Christ presents the first Mother and Daughter Luncheon, "Empowering Another Generation." The event runs from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at

the Bette Rae Thomas Recreation Center, 2921 Tuckasee Road. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. For more information, call (704) 537-4690.

May 15
True Way Church of God in Christ will host its annual Men's Conference through May 17.

The church is located at 2931 James Road.

May 27
Tickets for JoyFest '06, a Gospel showcase of praise and song, are on sale.

The concert at the Paladium Amphitheatre at Paramount's Carwinds features Deitrick Haddon. Also appearing are Tye Tribbett & Greater Anointing, Cross Movement and Serenity.

Advance ticket purchases and discount tickets for Season Pass members are available through Ticketmaster by calling (704) 522-8500, by log-

ging on to www.ticketmaster.com or at any Ticketmaster outlet. Discounted tickets for groups of 15 or more, including a group picnic option, are available by calling Paramount's Carwinds at 1-800-888-4FUN (4386). All prices are slightly higher on the day of the events.

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