

disciples were depressed and discouraged. They were not in the mood of expectancy which is a mood so necessary for subjective visions. In fact, the disciples were in a sad, unexpectant mood. The Gospel of Luke records that the reports of the women seemed to the disciples as "idle tales." In a specific way the Gospel of John gives an example of the incredulity of the disciples with Thomas as typical of such a state. Since they were not expecting the resurrection, the disciples had to be convinced of the reality of Jesus' resurrection. In order to convince them of His resurrection Jesus appeared to them on various occasions and held extended intercourse with them. These appearances took place both in Jerusalem and in Galilee.

Most important of all, Jesus after His resurrection appeared not only to individuals but also to groups of persons. We can imagine an individual having a vision of a person raised from the dead, but hardly large groups of people, for example, the above five hundred brethren at once mentioned by the apostle Paul. How could so many people have the same vision?

Over against the vision theory we have the testimony of the New Testament and the Christian Church. The Christian Church does not rest on visions; Christianity was not founded on an illusion. Christianity and the Christian Church rest upon the mighty fact of the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the grave. The early disciples believed this fact, and held this conviction because Jesus had risen and had appeared to them. As Dr. Milligan so well says, "We may believe that the Church of Christ has not grounded her life and hope for eighteen centuries upon a delusion; and, in the face of either denial or scorn, we may assert that our words are those of truth and soberness, when we proclaim that He who died upon the cross rose on the third morning from the grave." ("The Resurrection of Our Lord" - p. 119)