

John Dominic Crossan
Questions for Lecture Four:
Resurrection and Community:

What is the Function of Your Church?

Chapter 1:

1. Why is asking about metaphorical vs. literal thinking in the first century a false question? What is a better first century question?
2. What does “belief” have to do with Crossan’s categories of “operational” and “programmatically”?

Chapter 2:

1. What is Crossan’s suggested strategy for conversation with literalists?
2. If Jesus can do *anything*, what does that say about what he chooses to do? How is that different from *how* he does them?
3. Describe the “impossibility option” and the “uniqueness option.” Why are they invalid pre-Enlightenment arguments?
4. What is the proper first century response to any claim of transcendence or divinity?
5. How is the post-Enlightenment “game” easier than the pre-Enlightenment “game”?
6. How is Crossan’s experience of “comparative resurrection theology” similar to what Paul must have experienced in the first century?

Chapter 3:

1. Why was the idea of an afterlife not even entertained by Judaism for the thousand years before Jesus?
2. What is the foundation of Deuteronomistic theology?
3. What happened in 167 B.C.E. that has any bearing on the idea of bodily resurrection?

Chapter 4: The problem of martyrdom

1. If God is just, how do you account for the death of faithful martyrs?
2. The “first” death of Eleazar is an example of the “noble death” scenario. Explain.
3. The “second” death of Eleazar is the first example of substitutionary atonement. Explain.
4. Describe how the Maccabean story of the mother with the seven sons portrays bodily resurrection.

Chapter 5:

1. What is the first order of business when “God’s great clean-up of the world” begins?

2. How can the Pharisees and the Saducees have such widely differing takes on the notion of bodily resurrection?

Chapter 6:

1. If you're hearing someone in the first century speak of the resurrection of Jesus, what are they communicating?
2. How is resuscitation different from resurrection?
3. How is apparition different from hallucination?
4. How is "exaltation" different from resurrection?
5. What is the "general" resurrection?

Chapter 7:

1. How is resurrection theology the same as Kingdom theology but with different language?

Chapter 8:

1. How might Paul have gone about describing the benefits of Christianity to potential believers?
2. Paul's argument for Christianity was not theological, but practical. What was it?
3. It's not a question of taking the stories of resurrection literally or metaphorically, but operationally and programmatically. What's the difference?

WRAP-UP QUESTIONS:

1. What do you find most helpful so far from the material? Least helpful?
2. What implications does this material have for the wider Church? For your local fellowship? For you personally?