

the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. How easily the enemies of the new sect could have destroyed their faith if they had produced the body of Jesus!

(2.) By the friends of Jesus. But it is hard to see what object they could have in molesting the sacred clay. It was safely deposited in the tomb of a disciple. None of the eleven could furnish a more fitting resting place. And if they really took it away secretly, why was it that a searching party was not organized? The enemies of these humble disciples seemed to have the whole judiciary at their command, and could easily have traced the offence to the guilty parties if they really believed in the story of the theft. But we read of no investigation, nor do any of the disciples seem to have been apprehended, though they moved about Jerusalem with the utmost freedom during all those days. The fact that the grave was carefully sealed would seem to be enough to clear them from guilt. For Roman soldiers were not trained to sleep while on duty. And they must have been sound sleepers if the noise and disturbance necessarily involved in removing the body did not arouse even one of them. But why continue to charge the disciples with body-snatching when they themselves disclaim any connection with such a deed. They say the resurrection occurred otherwise; and their several narratives seem to suggest what there seems no good grounds for denying—that they were honest men, and utterly incapable of fabricating a deliberate falsehood, much less of seeking to perpetuate it. They tell us that the tomb was emptied.

(3.) By Jesus rising himself and going forth from it. This is the only alternative. How it was accomplished we know not. What power rolled back the stone we know not. We see effects but the causes are invisible. It is a time for observation, not for speculation. Omnipotence has accomplished greater feats than this. He who rolled the planets into their orbits could roll away that stone. He who gives life to the world could easily re-animate a lifeless body. Has the hand of the Creator lost its cunning? Able is He to make the rock