

Bold Predictions

1. Jesus repeatedly _____ His death and resurrection.
2. Predicting something _____ leaves no wiggle room for pretenders.
3. The question of whether Jesus predicted His death and resurrection is _____ related to whether He was raised from the dead.
4. What is Historicity? The quality of being part of history instead of being a historical myth, legend, or fiction (its factual status).

Marks of Historicity

A. Multiple Attestation.

- An event is more likely to be _____ when it is reported by multiple independent sources.
- Scholars don't consider _____ in the Gospels to be from four independent sources (Matthew & Luke drew some material from Mark).

B. Early Attestation.

- The closer in _____ a source is to the event, the more credibility historians give it.

C. Embarrassment.

- When people _____ stories, they usually don't include material that causes them to look bad.
- If something embarrassing is _____, historians consider it more likely to be true.

Four Prediction Texts

1. Jesus' words after Peter's Confession.

- Matt. 16:21-25; Mark 8:31-35; Luke 9:22-24)
- It is multiply attested.
- It meets the criteria for embarrassment.

2. Jesus' Conversation with the Disciples passing through Galilee

- Matt. 17:22-23; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:44-55
- Scholars believe these words came from an earlier source, and Mark is usually considered to be the earliest written Gospel.

3. The Last Super

- Matt. 26:21-32; Mark 14:18-28; Luke 22:15-20 (and 1 Cor. 11:24-25)
- This is multiply attested (scholars believe Mark and Luke had independent sources)
- Paul wrote 1 Corinthians years before Mark and Luke wrote their Gospels.

4. Jesus' Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane

- Matt. 26:36-48; Mark 14:32-40; Luke 22:39-46)
- The nature of this account would have been embarrassing to the early church – it wouldn't inspire others to take up their own cross and follow Jesus.

5. Other Scriptures.

- Mark 10:45 – Jesus says He will give His life as, “a ransom for many.”
- Luke 13:32-33 – Jesus implies He will die in Jerusalem, as prophets do.
- John 3:13-14, 8:28, 12:32-34 – Jesus tells the disciples not to share about the transfiguration until the Son of Man has “been raised from the dead.”
- Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19 – Jesus tells the parable of the tenants, which foretells His death, resurrection and vindication.
- Matt. 11:38-40, 16:2-4; Luke 11:29-30 – Jesus says He will be in the “heart of the earth” for 3 days and 3 nights just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for that amount of time.
- John 2:18-22 (and Matt. 26:61-62; Mark 14:58, 15:29) – Jesus speaks of Himself as a temple that will be destroyed but raised again in 3 days.

What Were They Expecting?

6. They had a very _____ idea for what would happen to the Messiah.
7. Most Jews believed in a _____ resurrection of the righteous, not individuals.
8. Many things made sense only in _____.

Key Points

- (a) Historians use criteria such as multiple attestation, early attestation, and embarrassment to help determine the historicity of reported events.
- (b) Four prediction texts that exhibit specific marks of historicity include (1) Jesus's words after Peter's confession, (2) Jesus's conversation with the disciples while passing through Galilee, (3) the Last Supper, and (4) Jesus's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane.
- (c) The historical support we have for at least some of Jesus's predictions lends credibility to the others.
- (d) Despite Jesus' predictions, the disciples were confused leading up to the crucifixion and shocked when the risen Jesus appeared to them. This is most likely because they had very different expectations for what would happen to the Messiah.

How do we talk to our Kids about this?

Opener

- If a friend predicted they were going to throw a ball in the next ten seconds, then they did so, would you be impressed with their prediction? Why or why not?
 - *(No, because they could choose to fulfill that prediction.)*
- If a friend predicted there would be a car accident in the world tomorrow, then there was one, would you be impressed with that prediction? Why or why not?
 - *(No, because car accidents regularly happen, so there was an extremely high chance the prediction would come true in the chain of normal events.)*

Going Further

- According to the Gospels, Jesus predicted his resurrection multiple times. How is that different from the two kinds of predictions we just talked about?
 - *(A resurrection is a miracle—something extraordinary God would have to cause—so no mere human could simply choose to make it happen.)*
- If Jesus predicted His resurrection and wasn't resurrected, what would that have told his followers?
 - *(He wasn't God, because He had been wrong.)*
- Because the Gospels were written years after Jesus's death, some people think that the early Christian church invented Jesus's predictions. But read Mark 8:27–33. Historians point out that the early church wouldn't have wanted to invent this account. Why do you think that is?
 - *(Discuss the criteria of embarrassment and how it applies here. Explain the other two and that multiple prediction texts have these marks of historicity. For deeper discussion, look up several prediction texts listed in this chapter.)*
- When the risen Jesus first appeared to the disciples, they were shocked. If Jesus really had predicted his resurrection, why do you think they were still so surprised?
 - *(Read Mark 9:30–32. The disciples didn't fully understand what Jesus had meant until after the resurrection had taken place.)*

Application

- An atheist blogger wrote, "I believe that the only reason that conservative Christians believe [Jesus predicted his death and resurrection, and it wasn't later invented] is because conservative Christians so desperately want these 'prophecies' to be true. In any other situation, not involving their faith, I would bet they would never believe any prediction written in a book published years after the event predicted had already taken place." How would you respond?

Bold Predictions

1. Jesus repeatedly predicted His death and resurrection.
2. Predicting something miraculous leaves no wiggle room for pretenders.
3. The question of whether Jesus predicted His death and resurrection is closely related to whether He was raised from the dead.
4. What is Historicity? The quality of being part of history instead of being a historical myth, legend, or fiction (its factual status).

Marks of Historicity

A. Multiple Attestation.

- An event is more likely to be historical when it is reported by multiple independent sources.
- Scholars don't consider everything in the Gospels to be from four independent sources (Matthew & Luke drew some material from Mark).

B. Early Attestation.

- The closer in time a source is to the event, the more credibility historians give it.

C. Embarrassment.

- When people invent stories, they usually don't include material that causes them to look bad.
- If something embarrassing is included, historians consider it more likely to be true.

What Were They Expecting?

6. They had a very different idea for what would happen to the Messiah.
7. Most Jews believed in a general resurrection of the righteous, not individuals.
8. Many things made sense only in retrospect.

Key Points

- (a) Historians use criteria such as multiple attestation, early attestation, and embarrassment to help determine the historicity of reported events.
- (b) Four prediction texts that exhibit specific marks of historicity include (1) Jesus's words after Peter's confession, (2) Jesus's conversation with the disciples while passing through Galilee, (3) the Last Supper, and (4) Jesus's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane.
- (c) The historical support we have for at least some of Jesus's predictions lends credibility to the others.
- (d) Despite Jesus' predictions, the disciples were confused leading up to the crucifixion and shocked when the risen Jesus appeared to them. This is most likely because they had very different expectations for what would happen to the Messiah.

How do we talk to our Kids about this?

Opener

- If a friend predicted they were going to throw a ball in the next ten seconds, then they did so, would you be impressed with their prediction? Why or why not?
 - *(No, because they could choose to fulfill that prediction.)*
- If a friend predicted there would be a car accident in the world tomorrow, then there was one, would you be impressed with that prediction? Why or why not?
 - *(No, because car accidents regularly happen, so there was an extremely high chance the prediction would come true in the chain of normal events.)*