

SEEING CHRIST YET ALIVE and merely seized, the Apostles had fled; and after His death were they likely to speak boldly in His behalf, unless He had risen again? And how should these things be reasonable? For that they were neither willing nor able to feign a resurrection that did not take place, is plain from hence: He discoursed to them much of a resurrection, and continually said, as indeed the Pharisees who went to Pilate themselves stated, “After three days I rise again.” If therefore He rose not again, it is quite clear that the Apostles (having been deceived and made enemies to an entire nation for His sake, and come to be without home and without city) would have abhorred Him, and would not have been willing to invest Him with such glory; as having been deceived, and having fallen into the utmost dangers on His account. For that they would not even have been able, unless the resurrection had been true, to feign it, this does not so much as need reasoning. For in what were they confident? In the shrewdness of their reasonings? Nay, of all men they were the most unlearned. But in the abundance of their possessions? Nay, they had neither staff nor shoes. But in the distinction of their race? Nay, they were mean, and of mean ancestors. But in the greatness of their country? Nay, they were of obscure places. But in their own numbers? Nay, they were not more than eleven, and scattered abroad. But in their Master’s promises? *What kind of promises?* For if He were not risen again, neither would His promises be likely to be trusted by them. And how should they endure a frantic people? For if the chief of them endured not the speech of a woman, keeping the door, and if all the rest too, on seeing Him bound, were scattered abroad, how should they have thought to run to the ends of the earth, and plant a feigned tale of a resurrection? For if Peter stood not a woman’s threat, and they not so much as the sight of bonds, how were they able to stand against kings, and rulers, and nations, where there were swords, and gridirons, and furnaces, and ten thousand deaths day by day, unless they had the benefit of the power and grace of Him who rose again? Such miracles and so many were done, and none of these things did the Jews regard, but crucified Him, who had done them, and were they likely to believe these men at their mere word about a resurrection? These things are not, they are not so, but the might of Him Who rose again brought them to pass.

Saint John Chrysostom, *Homily LXXXIX on the Gospel of Saint Matthew*, 27:62–64
Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Volume X

PEARLS FROM THE HOLY FATHERS BRIGHT MONDAY 2012