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### Jesus Who?

Maybe you saw the recent Peter Jennings's two-hour Prime-time TV special on June 26 titled "The Search for Jesus." It was to focus on the historical evidence of Jesus' life and times. Jennings started the program with a statement of decent intentions. *"We tried to be respectful of what people believe. After all, all but the most skeptical believe that Jesus actually lived."* Jennings said the "Search for Jesus" was *"one of the most enriching experiences of my journalistic life ...as we have gone in search for what we can know about Jesus the man."*

Sounds hopeful, however immediately after, he began to assassinate the integrity of the Gospel accounts and the inerrancy of the Scriptures. This was through the help of the scholars of the *Jesus Seminar*. Speaking of the Gospel writers, Jennings stated, *"It is pretty much agreed they were not eye witnesses."* Agreed by whom? Those who have a bias, and an agenda! This is not the conclusion of any of the world's leading biblical scholars. But it is held by a select group of liberal rouge scholars whom he picked to interview. Jennings knew he would infuriate Christians who hold to the Scripture as infallible, so I don't think he is as innocent as we would want to believe.

Who were these scholars? The Jesus seminar gang of liberal thugs, who want everyone to disbelieve the Bible as a literal message from God our creator to His people. It became apparent that Jennings chose to include only their slanted view for his program. Many of these "self named" scholars gave the impression that they represent mainstream Christianity, but they have no idea what Christianity is, nor who Christ is. The Jesus Seminar are referred to as the 74 "scholars" representing the cutting edge of biblical scholarship. Much like the 70 of the Sanhedrin of Jesus' day. To be a scholar is more than having a degree from some school. I would add that it counts where the degree came from. None of these men received a degree from conservative Bible schools. Almost half of them come from liberal schools, Harvard, Claremont, and Vanderbilt, and that should tell it all.

The Jesus Seminar has received extensive coverage over the years in such periodicals as Time, Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, and again on the platform of network television deceiving millions with their "great" unbelief. What they do believe is that Christianity is founded on blind faith, not evidence.

Jennings "search for Jesus" intentionally ignored the testimony of eyewitnesses that have been accepted for nearly 2,000 years. The Apostle John wrote that they were witnesses

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seeing with their eyes and declaring what they heard to us (1 Jn.1:3). The Apostle Paul has encouraged the ancient people of the day to question those who were still alive about Jesus' resurrection (1 Cor.15). The Jesus Seminar does not. They stand in the place of the eyewitnesses to ruin everything they lived and died for. Paul argued if Christ has not rise from the dead, He and the other Apostles were liars, they have no faith and are the worst of all men for promoting a lie (1 Cor.15:12-19). That would be an accurate description of these alleged scholars today. These modern scholars are saying the Apostles were liars, but their lies had good intentions and affected change in people and the world for the better. That's their logic for you to digest. We should accept the influence of these men because they meant well. Could a lie give us the greatest standard of good in all of mankind's history? If this great influence for good was all made up, then maybe we can make up a better modern myth to improve ourselves. Maybe a myth like "the Jesus seminar is *telling the truth*." Paul writes about those who live in the end of time, 2 Thess. 2:10: "they will believe the lie because they did not receive the love of the truth," instead of believing the Bible they will believe in myths.

Jennings stated, "We relied on the historians and scholars." These scholars were Paula Fredrikson (Boston University.), John Dominic Crossan (DePaul University), Robert W. Funk (author and founder of the seminar) Marcus Borg (author, Oregon State University), Reverend N.T. Wright (author), Father Jerome Murphy O'Connor, and Marvin Meyer (author). United together they did as much damage as possible in 2 hours to Jesus' life, His ministry, His message, His miracles, and the gospel writers. We should not underestimate the influence of this program as it attracted over 16 1/2 million viewers, and ABC's website had well over 1 million hits. So anyone who was pursuing anything about Jesus and listened to these men had their search destroyed. This show is now being sold on video to further its influence.

Jennings reporting ignored many qualified scholars that were available for such a program. Reputable scholars that could prove the Scripture's trustworthiness in various areas! Why weren't scholars who could defend the historical, archaeological, and manuscript evidence interviewed? Was it Jennings or someone else that was afraid of their defense of the Scriptures that would topple the liberal agenda? Instead he relied upon certain "scholars" who don't believe the Bible, and elevate themselves as a panel of adjudicators over the Bible, leaving scraps that would not build up the faith of an ant. They had no intention of standing for God's word.

Why did Jennings avoid the other (conservative) Scholars? Because they are able produce the overwhelming evidence for the truthfulness of the Bible? And they would have no show nor get their view across. Which makes one question if they are really after the truth? Jennings, by not allowing opposing views to be heard proved it was not balanced or fair reporting, but an example of inferior journalism. I think Jennings owes the public another program with those from the other side.

I'm sure there are those who would agree with this program and make the mistake of saying, "finally the truth has come out." After all if Jesus can be taken down a few notches to just a man with good intentions we can all accept that. If He had no supernatural acts and the accounts are deemed as mythical legends to preserve a great man, it would fit perfectly with all the other religions teachers. And we would not longer be able to justify any real differences, he would a teacher in line with all the other teachers of religion, and we can all come together as one. Isn't this what the UN and the media's goal is? The Jesus Seminar is a group that has been funded partly by Norman Lear. They have spent their time year after year attacking Jesus' divinity and undermine His integrity, it is usually around Christmas time is when they are featured in the Magazines.

These so-called “biblical scholars” of the Jesus Seminar are the favorites that the media continues to seek to satisfy their questions of the bible. After all if they can disprove publicly what Christianity teaches, their conscience will be able to sleep better at night. From this programs absurd presentation, millions were convinced that the Bible is a collection of myths, no different than Peter Pan. TThese scholars gave the impression that anyone with the minimum amount of intelligence couldn’t possibly believe the Bible as an accurate record and from God. In this they fulfill the Scripture “For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?” (Rom.11:34) “Do not boast and *lie against the truth*. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic” (James 3:14-15).

Some of the greatest minds in history (no less equal to modern scholars) claimed that the Bible offers irrefutable proof of its authorship being divine. Many had respect for the Holy bible. To listen to the Jesus seminar is to reject some of the greatest and influential men of American history. These are only a few.

Patrick Henry----“There is a Book worth all other books which were ever printed.”

Abraham Lincoln----“This great book... is the best gift God has given to man...”

John Quincy Adams----“Great is my veneration for the Bible.”

Charles Dickens---- “The New Testament is the best book the world has ever known or will know.’

Daniel Webster---- one of the greatest minds of recent centuries, believed in Christ's virgin birth, His deity, miracles, His dying for our sins and the resurrection.

Cecil B. DeMille---'After more than 60 years of almost daily reading of the Bible, I never fail to find it always new and marvelously in tune with the changing needs every day.”

A. M. Sullivan observed, “The cynic who ignores, ridicules, or denies the Bible, spurning its spiritual rewards and aesthetic excitement, contributes to his own moral anemia.”

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) said, “Only two things are certain: the Universe and human stupidity; and I'm not certain about the Universe.” Einstein realized there was an intelligence that created what we see and not see. Some are still blind to this and think their intelligence eclipses what has already been made. As the saying goes if you're too open minded, your brains will fall out.

The apostle Paul who was one the most schooled and learned men of his time stated, “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Cor. 2:14-16) Whose the WE? Believers. The Jesus seminar seems to want to be the mentors of Scripture showing they do not have the mind of Christ (humility or understanding).

If you go to unbelievers who have never taken the time to look at the archeological, historical or manuscript evidence, would you get a fair portrayal? Would you go to a car mechanic that doesn’t believe there is a difference in cars or parts and have him fix your car. Or ask him detailed questions? What I would like to know is where is the outcry about this influence from famous people that the public knows. I would like to hear from Billy Graham or any of the TV evangelists go public on this. Hank Hannegraaf, Jack Van Impe and James Dobson spoke out against it (Probably some others I did not hear about). We should have an immediate collective response to counter this nonsense. This is a spiritual battle that needs

the truth set forth publicly, as peoples eternal destiny is at stake. Jennings owes the public a chance to hear the other side.

Jennings searched for Jesus, but what did he find? Not the Jesus of Scripture. But instead a collection of men who intentionally deny almost all that the bible teaches, and then tell the world what Jesus was really like. They claim to be Christian, but they are the 21st century Christian. One who can pick and choose the lessons and principles and apply them without believing in what Jesus said about himself, sin, man or history, amazing. These are the opinions of men who viewed the Bible as strictly a human document, filled with inconsistencies and error because its origin according to them is from men who wrote it far after Jesus' time. This was not a fair reporting in any shape or form but was an intentional slam on Christianity. Which seems to be all the more popular way to go today.

In the show on ABC, Jennings said that when Jesus was baptized by John, that Jesus was the only one who saw Heaven open up, the Spirit descend and hear the voice of God. Jennings should read the bible from the one who witnessed this event. In John 1:32-34 John gives testimony of seeing the Spirit descending like a dove from Heaven and lighting upon Jesus (Mt. 3:16). If Jesus was the only one that saw Heaven open up, hear the voice of God and the Spirit, then John was not being truthful and lied breaking the Old Testament law and Jesus' own teachings? This kind of challenge was consistent in the show and went on ad nauseum.

In the interviews they gave their opinion of the abundant "errors" in the Bible. Why interview such men? There is a reason, to make others unbelief as great as theirs. The Jesus Seminar "Scholars" do not start with historical evidence and they make no attempt to prove anything except by their own presuppositions. We heard Jennings say over and over again such things like, "Not as the Gospels indicate, but..." But what! As the Jesus seminar says! Who are they? Were they there? Imagine seeing a story in the newspaper today and every newspaper in the country carried the same story, and all agreed on its content. It changed the way people lived and conducted their lives. 200 years from now some people get together and say we don't believe this story happened this way and we are going to challenge all the eyewitnesses and those who said they wrote it. In fact we don't believe the journalists wrote it, someone else did 30 years after they died. *This is exactly what they are proposing for people to believe.*

One scholar researched all the writings of the church teachings in the 2nd and 3rd centuries and found the entire New Testament with the exception of 11 verses. Ignatius who lived 70-110 A.D. quoted 15 of the books of the New Testament (he knew who wrote them). If all the manuscripts of the New Testament were destroyed, you could reproduce all but a mere eleven verses of the New Testament from these quotes from the early Church Fathers writings. But they seem to think this does not matter as proof and purposely ignore it.

These were outright assaults on the person of Jesus and the creeds of Christianity. But what can one expect with Robert Funk of "The Jesus Seminar" who suggested that the virgin birth never took place. His replacement view- Jesus may have been the illegitimate son of Mary and the virgin birth was probably a cover up for a Roman soldiers rape of Mary. (Where are all the Catholics to protest this one?)

Another point that bothers me was the emphasis often made on Jesus' help for the poor which in some ways sounded more like the intentions of Maitreya the new age Christ than the Jesus of the Scriptures.

These scholars were given free reign to refute the Gospel accounts, without anyone else offering any evidence in defense of the gospel writers positions. It is only their opinion that the Bible couldn't really mean what it says it means, not because of any solid evidence but because they don't want it to. After all they are regarded to be the modern intelligentsia of

our age. I find it interesting that when Christians say Christ is God in the flesh and He is the only way it becomes prejudice and bigotry to other religions, soon to be labeled a hate crime. But when people of notoriety in the media attack the Bible and Jesus there is no public outcry, it is acceptable. People find no prejudice or hate in it and accept what they say as the truth.

These so-called scholars reconstructed Jesus through their own imagination and dismissed the person that the Scriptures portray. This band of rogue scholars claimed that Jesus was a political figure, bent on the overthrow of Rome and the establishment of the kingdom of God in Israel. This is the very opposite of what Jesus intended. "Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone (John 6:14-15). There was the danger of a revolutionary attempt to make Jesus king, he would have no part of it. In Jesus' own words in the Bible, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm" (John 18:36). But then they don't believe Jesus said these words, how do they know this? They voted on it.

### *Who are They?*

The Jesus Seminar first began their meeting in 1985 where they numbered two hundred; it has shrunk to about 40 participants. Their quest for authentic statements was resolved by voting- using different color beads. In the book *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* they presented their final results of the words that Jesus said. Red indicates passages that "are considered by the Seminar to be close to what Jesus actually said." Pink sayings "less certainly originated with Jesus." Gray passages "are not his, though they contain ideas that are close to his own." Black passages, which are the majority throughout the gospels, "have been embellished or created by his followers, or borrowed from common lore." Some of their methodology that was used for identifying Jesus "authentic" statements were- a direct quote must be short and "punchy" (As if he did not speak for long periods of time). A thought must run against the social and religious grain of the day (Jesus did not disagree with everything said or done). Any prophecy or miracle was immediately deemed invalid (His whole ministry was accompanied by miracles and prophecy). The Jesus seminar clearly has an anti- supernatural bias, they cannot believe in Jesus or a God who created the world out of nothing. The reasoning is that this was all recorded prior to our scientific age. While there are some of their scholars who believe that Jesus actually did perform *some miracles*; it is dismissed as something mystical and beyond explanation. By holding to a "naturalistic" worldview Jesus is stripped of anything supernatural, and any statements that uphold His divinity. Therefore his followers came to their own conclusions completely isolated from anything He said or did. They make Jesus into a psychologist who relieved people of their fears, phobias, someone who made life's burden of pain easier to live with. When it came to prayer only two words of the Lord's Prayer were deemed authentic, "Our Father."

Talk about straining a gnat and swallowing a camel! I guess I can't quote that because it's not in the Bible either!

They have tried to find what they call "a historical Jesus," following in the footsteps of 19th century higher criticism. After six years of meetings they cannot say *with any certainty* that Jesus said anything recorded in any of the Gospels. This is scholarship? Instead of going into the historical accounts of the Bible the Jesus Seminar scholars have cast lots to determine whether what is attributed to Jesus in the Bible are his words or not. By the time they were done they were left with only about 18% of what they currently consider *authentic* statements of Jesus. I guess now we can vote not only for a political office but what God has said. Wasn't that the devil's line to Eve, He voted

that God did not say they would die if they ate of the tree, He was very convincing. Their lot is cast as well.

They come to these conclusions because the gospels were not written by eyewitnesses but written well into the 2nd century.

The fact is that not all the liberal scholars side with their view. John A.T. Robertson, re-dates the New Testament documents much earlier than most modern liberal scholars. Robertson argued in *Redating the New Testament* that the entire New Testament could have been completed before 70 A.D., which keeps it in the period of the eyewitnesses.

One of the experts Jennings picked to interview was John Dominic Crossan, co-founder of the Jesus Seminar and a former Catholic priest. Crossan's views as he concludes that of Jesus are that He never claimed deity and his followers later deified Him. He concludes that Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, His burial and resurrection are "pure fiction" and "wishful thinking." Is there anything left after this? The resurrection which He has also solved, by proposing that the body of Christ was eaten on the cross by scavenging animals. How absurd when the Romans were watching over him to make sure he was dead and watched Joseph of Arimethea take Jesus' body away for burial. They even were sent to guard the tomb he was placed in. They rehash claims that have been part of "higher criticism" for over a century, they were refuted then and certainly do no better today, except for the naive. These are all natural assumptions of unspiritual men whose minds are darkened to God's word.

The day after the Jennings program Crossan joined a moderator on the web to discuss the program.

He was asked why the program "did not include more 'conservative' scholars. Was Peter Jennings' report one-sided?" Crossan answered, "*we have always heard the other [conservative] side namely, that everything in the New Testament Bible that can be taken literally must be taken literally. So it was necessary to make a distinction between historical questions and theological questions, both of which are equally valid, but different.*" Is this true? How many TV programs have interviewed those who hold the Christian faith in a true historical and Scriptural manner? Not only do they misrepresent the Bible but they revise what actually took place. He went on to state, "For example, if I was addressing very conservative scholars, I would ask them this very simple, basic question: Do you or do you not agree with the historical conclusion of the vast majority of contemporary scholars - that Matthew and Luke used as their primary source the Gospel of Mark? That, for example, is basic for me. In other words, as a believing Christian, I consider it that God inspires Matthew and Luke to copy and to change Mark for their new times and new places."

Is what he is describing inspiration? He holds that Mark was first or stated by others a common source they all copied. They have concluded the date is much later than the time period of the apostles, (based on personal opinion and not historical evidence) so the writings cannot be trusted. However the evidence shows the Gospels should be dated early. We know that Paul was alive as recorded in the end of the Book of Acts. The apostle Paul died during the Nero's persecution in 64 A.D. This means Acts must have been written prior to A.D. 64. We further know that Luke traveled with Paul and wrote his Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts that began with the church at Pentecost (approximately 30-33 ad) and followed the life of two main apostles Paul and Peter. Luke wrote his gospel before Acts, which places the dates just where true scholars have stated 60-65 A.D.

W. F. Albright, one of the greatest Biblical archaeologist, states, "We can already say emphatically that there is no longer any solid basis for dating any book of the New Testament after a.d. 80, two full generations before the date between 130 and 150 given by the more radical New Testament critics of today." (William F. Albright, *Recent Discoveries in Bible*

*Lands*, New York, Funk and Wagnall's, 1955, p. 136). B.B Warfield states, "If we compare the present state of the text of the New Testament with that of no matter what other ancient work, we must...declare it marvelously exact." F.F. Bruce testifies to the accuracy of its historical details. The place names, the geography, the titles of the various public figures are all remarkable in their accuracy and could only have been produced by someone who genuinely was an eye witness of the events, or who had access to those who were.

The Jesus Seminar spearheads the view that is dubbed the "the Synoptic Problem." This is found in the fact that the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke have a number of very similar and some different accounts recorded. The assumption is that they either copied each other or from an unnamed, undiscovered text called "Q" (Q is for Quelle, the German word for "source"). The common relationship of the gospels find their origin in one document that has never been found, called "Q." Many propose Mark's gospel was first, and Matthew and Luke are rewritten versions of Mark. (John's gospel is whole other story having 92% unique material). It makes more sense that Matthew was written to the Jews was first (His theme was Jesus the messiah the King of the Jews) since the gentiles were not being saved until years later (Acts 10) and Mark is written to the Gentiles (His theme was Jesus the Messiah-Servant, redeemer). The four Gospels comprise about 46 percent of the New Testament, so if one does damage to the eyewitness accounts the veracity of the rest falls down as well.

The Q theory is a recent development in New Testament studies, the main promoters today are liberals. If one does a comparison there are many sayings in Matthew and Luke that are NOT in Mark, nor in each other. Matthew and Luke have more to the Christ's life story than Mark and sometimes vice versa, each added depth to the teaching of Jesus. They all covered different aspects of his life and present a greater depth together. They propose that the Q sayings are also to be found in the Gospel of Thomas. Thomas is supposed to be similar to what Q was. Luke begins his gospel record by stating his goal: "Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative ... it seemed good to me also ... to write an orderly account for you." Luke was aware of other written (and oral) sources based on eyewitnesses and he used some of these sources to compile his gospel. His concern was to take all the accurate information and put it together in a sequential order (Luke 1:1-4).

Sir William Ramsay, one of the greatest archaeologists who ever lived wrote of Luke the author of the gospel and the book of Acts stating, "Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy, this author should, be placed along with the very greatest of historians. Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness."

No such historical testimony for the existence of a "Q" document it has ever been found. Neither is there a total agreement of what sayings should be in "Q." The majority of historical evidence does not point to Mark (dictated by Peter) as being the first Gospel written.

The gospel of Thomas (called the fifth gospel) has been categorized as unmistakably Gnostic. It is later written and challenges the revealed record of the other gospels. When carefully examined alongside the other gospels and writings it hardly is recognizable as the Words of Christ. There are some similar and exact phrases, but there are others that are so far off that one can only conclude that someone took it upon themselves to add their own flair to it. Here are some examples:

*Jesus said: If those who lead you say unto you: Behold, the Kingdom is in heaven, then the birds of the heaven will be before you. If they say unto you: It is in the sea, then the fish will be before you. But the Kingdom is within you, and it is outside of you. When you know yourselves, then shall you be known, and you shall know that you are the sons of the living Father. But if ye do not know yourselves, then you are in poverty, and you are poverty.*

Jesus said: *Blessed is the lion which the man shall eat, and the lion become man; and cursed is the man whom the lion shall eat, and the lion become man.*

Jesus said to his disciples: *Make a comparison to me, and tell me whom I am like. Simon Peter said to him: Thou art like a righteous angel. Matthew said to him: Thou art like a wise man of understanding. Thomas said to him: Master, my mouth will no wise suffer that I say whom thou art like. Jesus said: I am not thy master, because thou hast drunk, thou hast become drunk from the bubbling spring which I have measured out. And he took him, went aside, and spoke to him three words. Now when Thomas came to his companions, they asked him: What did Jesus say unto thee? Thomas said to them: If I tell you one of the words which he said to me, you will take up stones and throw them me; and a fire will come out of the stones and burn you up.*

In the true Gospel of Mt. 16:16 Peter says the confession, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God." In the Gospel of Thomas the living Jesus confesses that the disciples are Christ's.

Jesus said to his disciples: *"Make me a comparison; tell me what I am like." Simon Peter said to him: 'you are like a righteous angel.' Matthew said to him: 'you are like a man who is a wise philosopher.' Thomas [represented as the true Gnostic] said to him: "Master, my mouth will not be capable of saying what you are like." Jesus said [to Thomas]: "I am not your master, because you drank from the bubbling stream which I have measured out."*

Thomas comes to comprehend that he is the spiritual equal of Jesus, his identical twin brother, no less. Thomas is thus the true apostle whom every true Gnostic must follow. And he took him, went aside, and spoke to him three words. Now when Thomas came to his companions, they asked him: What did Jesus say unto thee? Thomas said to them: If I tell you one of the words which he said to me, you will take up stones and throw them me; and a fire will come out of the stones and burn you up.

Simon Peter said to them: *"Let Mary go away from us, for women are not worthy of life." Jesus said: "Lo, I shall lead her, so that I may make her a male, that she too may become a living spirit, resembling you males. For every woman who makes herself a male will enter the kingdom of heaven"*

*Jesus said: I am the light that is over them all. I am the All; the All has come forth from me, and the All has attained unto me. Cleave a (piece of) wood: I am there. Raise up the stone, and ye shall find me there.*

*Jesus said: The man aged in his days will not hesitate ask a little child of seven days about the place of life, and he shall live. For there are many first who shall be last, and they shall become a single one.*

*"Jesus said: No prophet is acceptable in his village; a physician does not heal those who know him."* This is not what he said, this is mix of two scriptures. What Jesus said was, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house." (Mk.6:4)

Yes there are some similar words and phrases but a closer look will have one reject the authenticity of them. For the whole meaning does not coincide with the other 4 gospels teaching. And we should not forget that Jesus was often quoting the Old Testament to reaffirm His teaching and person. However, It is the gospel of Thomas they use as the criteria for all the other gospels. Despite the evidence that no early church pastors ever quoted from its pages.



These scholars intention is to deconstruct these myths so that the “real” Jesus may be seen (Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*, p. 1-7).

Seminar member Dr. Marcus Borg of Oregon State University has stated of Jesus, “We’re making him a Buddha-like figure, not just another philosopher but a really big one.” This is supposed to be an improvement on the apostle’s view according to them. After all if He is God we might have to listen and obey what he says.

If one is left with only 18% of Jesus' statements (their own choosing), this means Jesus never said 82% of the other sayings. That is a whole lot of living cut out! In addition they claim Jesus never warned of “wolves in sheep's clothing” (Matthew 7:15). What a setup for their innocence. Ever hear of the story of little red riding hood, its quite applicable.

Leader of the Jesus Seminar Marcus Borg makes it clear “*I would argue that the truth of Easter does not depend on whether there was an empty tomb, or whether anything happened to the body of Jesus. ... I do not see the Christian tradition as exclusively true, or the Bible as the unique and infallible revelation of God. ... It makes no historical sense to say, ‘Jesus was killed for the sins of the world.’ ... I am one of those Christians who does not believe in the virgin birth, nor in the star of Bethlehem, nor in the journeys of the wisemen, nor in the shepherds coming to the manger, as facts of history*” (Marcus Borg, Jesus Seminar, *Bible Review*, December 1992).

Well said, in other words all he has is the title of a Christian but does not believe what Christians believe or practiced. He has an empty profession, a said faith with no power. This is our modern scholars who know so much more than then the eyewitnesses.

Here are some more statements that reflect their scholarship said by the main representative of the Jesus seminar: Robert W. Funk, Architect and Founder of the Jesus Seminar, in a Keynote Address to the Jesus Seminar Fellows in the spring of 1994. Says that Jesus was “a secular sage who satirized the pious and championed the poor ... Jesus was perhaps the first stand-up Jewish comic. Starting a new religion would have been the farthest thing from his mind” (Robert Funk).

*“Jesus did not ask us to believe that his death was a blood sacrifice, that he was going to die for our sins.”*

**BIBLE-** Hear Jesus’ own words, Matt 26:28:”For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Mk.14:24) John the baptizer introduced him as “the LAMB that takes away the sins of the world.” Christ fulfilled the blood that was shed for atonement taught in the Old Testament. Luke 9:22: “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

*“Jesus did not ask us to believe that he was the messiah. He certainly never suggested that he was the second person of the trinity. In fact, he rarely referred to himself at all.”*

**BIBLE** -John 1:41: “He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). John 4:25-26: The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.” Mt.16:16: “Peter said thou art the Christ (Messiah the Son of the living God.)”

*“Jesus did not call upon people to repent, or fast, or observe the sabbath. He did not threaten with hell or promise heaven.”*

**BIBLE** -Matt 4:17: “From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. “Mark 1:15 “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Matt 11:20 : “Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent.”

To say Jesus as a Jew did not observe the Sabbath is too ridiculous a statement to address.

*“Jesus did not ask us to believe that he would be raised from the dead.”*

**BIBLE** -Many times Jesus said he would die and raise. In Matt. 17:22-23 Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, 23 “and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” Jesus said I am the resurrection and the life”, John 20:8-9: “Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. “Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said” (John 2:22).

*“Jesus did not ask us to believe that he was born of a virgin.”*

This one they almost have an argument for except for the fact the angel announced this to Mary and Matthew his follower and Luke who compiled the testimony, records the event which gives credence to his unnatural birth.

**BIBLE** -Matt 1:21-23: “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” “So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” The Scripture tells us that a virgin will conceive Isa.7:14 and a son will be give Isa.9:6.

*“Jesus did not regard scripture as infallible or even inspired.”*

**BIBLE** -Jesus declares that “the scripture cannot be broken” (Jn.10:35). It can be disbelieved but God will see to it that every word will come to pass whether we like or not. “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words shall not pass away*” (Matthew 24:35). And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”( Luke 4:21)

“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:30-32 ) Jn.17:7 “His word is truth.” Because it was spoken from truth incarnate, God who cannot lie.

*They think Jesus never quoted the Old Testament,*

**BIBLE** - What did Jesus quote to the Devil at His temptation in the desert? Jesus said to him, “It is written”, three times. 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God “ (Matt 4:7) No wonder the Jesus seminar doesn't like the Bible. Actually almost every event Jesus fulfilled, He said “it is written showing that it is fulfilled in the Scriptures.” And “have you not read?” (Mt.12:3; 12:5; 19:4; 21:16; 22:31), obviously the Jesus seminar has not. Jesus said, “You err, not knowing the Scriptures.” The only Scripture they had was the Old Testament at the time, he put his stamp of approval on it all.

The Jesus Seminar asserts The Bible is filled with contradictions We can't know if Jesus rose from the dead or was the Son of God that the Lord's death was “a random act,” like a traffic

fatality. However, Isaiah clearly explained that the Messiah would be tortured and murdered like a sinner (Is. 53), and would be despised and rejected by his own.

The last several things Jesus said were referring to OT Scripture. As he rode into Jerusalem the last time-John 12:14-16 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt." His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

At his arrest- Mark 14:27-28: Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered. "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

After he rose from the dead- Luke 24:46: Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day"

Dr. D.A. Carson, New Testament professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, comments that "one of the most striking features of the press releases of (Funk's) Westar Institute is that "the words "scholars" and "scholarly" are almost always attached to the opinions of the Jesus Seminar and detached from (the opinions of) all others" (Christianity Today, 25 April 1994, p. 30). These men are not scholars and it would be evident to even a child in grade school that they do not barely believe a word they read. Just because someone studies the Bible doesn't make them a scholar, especially if you don't believe 90% of what it says. Imagine a doctor practicing medicine and does not believe almost all that he is taught. Who would want to go to him and trust him with their life? If a Doctor made as many mistakes and errors as they did in this program, they wouldn't be called doctors they would have their license revoked. They would be called charlatans. You wouldn't go to a car mechanic if he practiced his trade as these so called Scholars practice their research!

### **There are Several Historical Accounts Outside the Bible**

As far as the proposition of the Jesus seminars inaccuracy of the bibles history, there are many that wrote otherwise. Those that were not followers simply recorded the history of their time. Flavius Josephus: This 1st century Jewish historian who was commander of the Jewish forces in Galilee in A.D. 66 wrote: "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ, and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principle men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him." (*Antiquities*.xviii.33).

Roman historians, Tacitus, Suetonius, Lucian of Samosata and Pliny the Younger,' all confer with the Christian belief recorded in the New Testament.

Cornelius Tacitus: This Roman historian and Governor to Asia (A.D. 112) alluded to the death of Christ and the presence of Christians in Rome (*Annals* XV.44).

Letter Of Mara Bar-Serapion: A British Museum manuscript (written by a father to his son, sometime after 73 A.D.) states, "What advantage did the Athenians gain from putting Socrates to death? Famine and plague came upon them as judgment for their crime. What advantage did the men of Samos gain from burning Pythagoras? In a moment their land was covered with sand. What advantage did the Jews gain from executing their wise King?

Jennings was also asked why his program was “so lopsided in favor of those who reject the historical accuracy of the gospel accounts” and why his report “presented more speculation than fact.” He replied that “for those who take the Gospels as literal truth ...the real power lies precisely in the fact that Jesus' birth story,...fulfills the prophecies and proves He was the Messiah.” Exactly, so why ignore this proof.

Let me ask you, can you remember a profound event in your life? Maybe when you were married or having a child born. Can you remember what was said or what happened? Of course, some us can remember this like yesterday. Not only did the eyewitnesses live with Jesus for three years and knew him, what they saw and heard was life changing. But if that is not enough to remember accurately for Jesus said to them (John 15:26-27) “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. “ The Spirit testifies of the Son. But if someone comes along and throws out not just some but most of the words of the Spirit to the apostles so that we can have this testimony today, what spirit is this? Jesus said Jn.17:8 “I have given them your words you have given me.” These words were recorded, John says at the end of his letter so that we may believe and have eternal life.

Jennings at the end of the program summed up the life of Jesus. “He had a vision for a just world that he believed in so strongly he was willing to die for it -- and his vision transformed the world - miraculous.” Jesus did not die for his belief of a just world but for our sins. It's hard to understand that those with a background in Christianity can miss the whole point of his coming.

Christ's question still echoes down the corridors of time “Who do you say that I am?” The answer they did not like then, nor does it receive any of a warmer welcome today. Christianity is Christ. It is not a religion among other religions but a “relationship” with Jesus Christ who was God come to earth. Going to Church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you a car.

Paul who studied tenaciously in the schools of Academia of his day had this inspired word to say, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. “Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”(1 Cor. 1:18-2) The Jesus seminar and the liberal wing are no better off than those who did not understand then and opposed Christ. God is still making them look foolish.

Paul goes on 1 Cor. 1:25-29: “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.”

You think your so smart and can speak for God by radically changing or eliminating His words, just wait till you stand in front of Him and try explain your superior intelligence to His. What little or great influence you had on earth in your life will all fade away so very quickly before the one who brought all things into existence.

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