

“The Real Jesus”

2 Cor 11:3-4

Introduction:

A. U.S. News and World Report recently had an article titled “The Real Jesus.”

1. A subtitle read, “Somewhere between Mel Gibson’s Jesus and the Biblical Jesus.”

2. Article purported to show that modern historians have debunked the “traditional” Jesus.

B. Many books have joined the search for “the real Jesus.”

C. In searching for the real Jesus, let’s notice many places where people look and the Jesus they find.

Discussion:

I. The Popular Press

A. A Jesus who was zealous reformer of the Jewish system of his day.

B. A Jesus who did not intend to start a new religious movement.

C. A Jesus who was much later deified by his “fanatical” followers.

II. Religious Modernism

A. A non-miraculous Jesus – every “miracle” given a natural explanation.

1. Modernist look for natural explanations for all Biblical miracles.

2. Modernism’s Jesus was not born of a “virgin”, but merely a “young woman” (cf. Isa. 7:14 rsv)

3. Modernism’s Jesus was not truly raised, only his cause was resurrected.

B. The “son of God”, but only in the sense we are all sons of God.

III. Dramatic productions

A. These productions (plays, skits and movies) either must embellish or distort Bible truth.

1. Any Jesus production has to fill time and space with imaginary words and action.

2. A “Christmas” play must have a definite number of wise men – Bible infinite.

3. A “Passion” play must give Jesus a definite appearance – Bible infinite.

B. The Bible emphasizes the words and deeds of Jesus – not appearance and dramatic effects of drama.

C. How can one produce a one or two hour production based on so little Bible text without additions?

1. A passion play or movie takes two hours to say something similar to two verses (John 19:17-18)

2. Does the warning against adding to the word not apply to appearance and acts or only to words? (Deut.

29:29; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9-11)

IV. Denominational Dogma

A. A Jesus that saves anyone who believes (cf. John 12:42)

B. A Jesus receives sinners “as they are, where they are.” (cf. John 8:11)

C. A Jesus that leaves man to worship as he pleases and choose the church of his choice (cf. Matt. 15:9)

D. A Jesus to all loving and never condemning (cf. Matthew 23)

V. Apostolic Writings

A. The Jesus whose life was a miracle.

1. His virgin birth (Matt. 1:18-25)

2. His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-8)

3. His many miracles between these (John 20:30, 31)

B. The Jesus who claimed to be God and proved it by his works (Mark 2:5-11)

C. The Jesus whose works and words were verified by competent witnesses (Lk. 1:1-2; 2 Pet. 1:16)

D. The Jesus who fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah (Luke 24:44-48)

E. The Jesus who has all authority and expects our total obedience and commitment (Matt. 28:18-20)

F. The Jesus who established his church/kingdom on the day of Pentecost (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2)

Conclusion:

A. If you want to find the real Jesus, you must look in the right place.

B. The real Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15)