

**Chapter 1 : Answers In Action**

*"Honest to Jesus is far and away the best book about the goals and work of the contemporary Historical Jesus movement. Robert W. Funk is director of the Westar Institute, which sponsors an annual Jesus seminar in which scholars attempt to establish which events recorded in the gospels actually happened and which did not.*

Funk " had a long history as an academic. He earned a B. At the opening session of the Jesus Seminar in , Funk defined its mission as follows: He was not, in the judgment of the Seminar, the messiah of the end-times. These and other findings of the Seminar drew widespread attention throughout the s and s. Funk further influenced the course of biblical scholarship by insisting that Fellows of the Jesus Seminar communicate the results of biblical scholarship directly to the literate public. It was his attempt to replace Christianity with a Darwinian type scientific materialism. Albert Schweitzer " was a French-German theologian, philosopher and mission doctor who received the Nobel Prize for Peace in Schweitzer summed up his findings in *The Quest* this way " The Jesus of Nazareth who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the kingdom of God, who founded the kingdom of heaven upon earth and died to give his work its final consecration never existed. He is a figure designed by rationalism, endowed with life by liberalism, and clothed by modern theology in a historical garb " Whatever the definite solution may be, the historical Jesus whom research will depict, on the basis of the problems which have been recognized and admitted, can never render modern theology the services which it claimed from its own semi-historical, semi-modern Jesus. He will no longer be a Jesus Christ to whom the religion of the present can ascribe, according to its long-cherished custom, its own thoughts and ideas, as it did with the Jesus of its own making. Nor will he be a figure who by a popular historical treatment can be made as sympathetic and universally intelligible to the multitude. With the specific characteristics of his notions and his actions, the historical Jesus will be to our times a stranger and an enigma. It was launched about , the same time the United States was being founded. Its progress is marked by milestones, landmark developments that represent the transition from one stage to another. The axioms that govern the current consensus emerged over that span of time. Rethinking the Historical Jesus. Vaage " Galilean Upstarts: And it has attempted to do so by rigorous adherence to the milestones sketched above. Of course, like our predecessors, the Fellows of the Seminar are acutely aware that some of their work is tentative and will require modification. At some future generation, it will be decided whether we succeeded sufficiently to be awarded a place in a new history of the milestones of the quest. Westar is a non-profit, public-benefit research and educational organization that bridges the gap between scholarship about religion and the perception of religion in popular culture. In pursuit of its mission: Westar conducts collaborative, cumulative research in the academic study of religion, addressing issues, questions, and controversies that are important both to the academic community and to the general public. Westar communicates the results of its research in non-technical terms, equipping the general public with tools to critically evaluate competing claims in the public discussion of religion.

**Chapter 2 : The University of the Holy Land :: Demythologizing Jesus (of Talpiot)**

*Robert W. Funk is director of the Westar Free shipping over \$ Buy a cheap copy of Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New book by Robert W. Funk. Honest to Jesus is far and away the best book about the goals and work of the contemporary Historical Jesus movement.*

Then, when the votes were in, they were given numerical value and averaged, so that each saying of Jesus ended up with a red, pink, gray, or black color. These results were published in *The Five Gospels*, with verses printed in the appropriate colors. The translation is the so-called Scholars Version made by members of the Jesus Seminar. You can see words in red surely Jesus, pink probably Jesus, gray maybe Jesus, but probably not, and black not Jesus. For one thing, it completely masks significant disagreement among Fellows in the Seminar. If, for example, a certain saying of Jesus received relatively similar numbers of red, pink, gray, and black votes, then the correct conclusion would be that there is no scholarly consensus at all, and it would be important for people outside of the Seminar to know this. But, in fact, the saying would get a gray vote, suggesting that the Seminar as a whole had major doubts about whether it originated with Jesus or not. The reader would be led to believe that there was scholarly agreement when in fact such harmony was nowhere to be found. See *The Five Gospels*, p. Concerning the parable of the two sons in Matthew. So, even though a solid majority of the Fellows believed that the parable was probably or certainly from Jesus, the parable is colored in gray. The power of the minority voting with black beads could obscure the judgment of the majority. Yet this shortcoming seemed consonant with the methodological skepticism that was a working principle of the Seminar: On the surface, the voting scheme of the Seminar appeared to be fairly objective. Robert Funk himself chose the Fellows of the Seminar, virtually guaranteeing the results he wanted at the outset. But then, even when a majority of the skeptically-minded Fellows believed that a saying of Jesus was certainly or probably from Jesus Himself, a minority could skew the result by voting black. And because the vote was secret, there was no way for anybody to hold the black-bead voters accountable. The average person would be led to believe that the Seminar as a whole held that a saying was probably not from Jesus, even though the truth was that 1 there was a wide diversity of opinion, and 2 the majority of Fellows considered the saying to be probably or certainly from Jesus. It suggested a degree of scholarly consensus that was often nowhere to be found. It precluded the kind of accountability that is common in academia. And it pressed certain sayings into the gray and black realm even when the majority of Fellows had regarded them as red or pink. The best thing about the beady voting method, however, was that it captured the imagination of the press. At first glance, the red, pink, gray, and black bead system seemed innocuous enough, though perhaps a little silly. But upon deeper inspection, it was fraught with shortcomings. So this was one of my first unhappy surprises as I investigated the Jesus Seminar. The next surprise was perhaps even more startling and disheartening. Now I fully expected to find the sorts of approaches that were familiar to me because of my academic work at Harvard. Supposedly historical elements in these narratives must therefore be demonstrated to be so. In fact many highly regarded scholars at highly respected academic institutions do not make these assumptions about the gospel narratives. What shocked me was how the Jesus Seminar proposed to evaluate the authenticity of the sayings of Jesus. Rules of evidence are standards by which evidence is presented and evaluated in a court of law. A photo of *The Five Gospels*. This is how scholarship proceeds, with rules or practices that help scholars to evaluate evidence carefully and objectively. But when I first read the rules adopted by the Jesus Seminar, I was astounded. To put the matter bluntly: Many of their rules completely beg the question. Instead, they make assumptions that utterly presuppose the very thing the Seminar is supposedly trying to discover, how and what Jesus actually said. Let me provide a couple of examples. They explain how the gospel writers attribute certain sayings to Jesus that he did not actually say. These were meant to be rules that guided inquiry. But in fact they look much more like results of inquiry, not the rules of evidence. It is possible, after evaluating the evidence, to conclude that the gospel writers put sayings on the lips of Jesus. As I mentioned in a previous post, this is an example of where the Jesus Seminar uses the scholarly tool known as the criterion of dissimilarity, though with a reckless abandon that boggles the mind. Let me supply an example

from The Five Gospels. This same sentence appears in a similar form in Luke 6: A similar saying also appears in the Gospel of Thomas The Jesus Seminar holds, quite tendentiously, I might add, that the Gospel of Thomas is the oldest and most reliable of the gospels see p. So, according to their own reasoning, we have in Matthew This would lead one believe that Jesus actually said it, or at least probably. The saying is printed in gray in The Five Gospels p. The saying has the ring of a proverb, like the one found in Prov As a proverb, it could have entered the tradition at almost any point. A few Fellows thought Jesus could have uttered this proverb, but the preponderance of votes were gray and black. There was no analysis of whether Jesus could have said this, whether it made sense in light of his other sayings, or whether the antiquity of the evidence in Q and Thomas mattered. The Seminar applied one of its rules, and the saying was rejected. And this is to be seen as objective, careful scholarship? There is no testing of a thesis with evidence because the contrary evidence is simply discarded. Only that which fits the thesis is accepted. All of this is especially ironic because the Jesus Seminar assumes that Jesus was a sage, rather like other sages of his day p. Yet when a saying of Jesus sounds like something that a first century sage might have said, the Seminar rejects it on the basis that it could have been said by any sage. So, though Jesus was a sage, according to the Seminar, when he says something that sounds like a sage, that saying is to be rejected. This is a bizarre form of circularity, more of a Catch, actually. Yes, it would make sense, unless one approaches the gospels with such excessive skepticism that it blinds one from seeing the evidence with any historical objectivity. What can I say about the presumption of the Jesus Seminar in claiming to help people discover what Jesus really said? Let me conclude with a bit of common wisdom. You can decide whether I really wrote this, or whether some hacker added to this post: Even before the Seminar examined the purported sayings of Jesus, it had already assumed much of what it would eventually conclude. For example, one rule states: No, this is not a meeting of the Jesus Seminar. It just looks like it. This makes plenty of sense, and is a good rule by which to weigh the sayings of Jesus. Now you must remember that these are not set forth as the conclusions of an objective process of evaluation. These are the starting points, the assumptions made by the Seminar by which it will evaluate the sayings of Jesus. Once again, the circularity of this process is so obvious as to be almost laughable. I am well aware that many critical scholars believe this to be true as a result of their study. I suppose a Seminar Fellow could argue that this rule of evidence is merely an implication of the previous one: How do the Fellows know this prior to examining the actual sayings of Jesus? As a rule, the sage is self-effacing, modest, unostentatious. The second argument at least refers to Jesus, and not to movie characters from American society two millennia after Jesus. Jesus taught that the last will be first and the first will be last. He admonished his followers to be servants of everyone. He urged humility as the cardinal virtue by both word and example. Given these terms, it is difficult to imagine Jesus making claims for himself “I am the Son of God, I am the expected One, the Anointed” unless, of course, he thought that nothing he said applied to himself. When it comes to making up rules of evidence, Funk and Hoover have a rich, almost unlimited imaginations, but I guess their creativity stops when they think about Jesus Himself. The superficiality and literalness of their argument are almost silly. Since Jesus interpreted messianic claims as a call to self-sacrifice and servanthood see, for example, Mark But this is just one more example of a blantly obvious do-si-do. Oral Tradition and the Sayings of Jesus Before I get back to the Seminar and its rules, however, I should say something about oral tradition and the sayings of Jesus. Most scholars, even the most conservative, believe that the New Testament gospels and Thomas too, if you want to include it were written no earlier than twenty years after the death of Jesus. Most would date the writing of Matthew, Luke, John, and Thomas to more than forty years after Jesus passed from the scene. So the historian wonders how the gospel writers had access, if indeed they did have access, to the sayings of Jesus. What happened between the time Jesus said something and the time it, or something like it, was written down for posterity? This is what Luke, writing anywhere from 70 to 90 A. Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed. So before anything was written down about Jesus, his sayings and descriptions of his actions were passed down

orally. Oral Tradition according to the Jesus Seminar The Jesus Seminar rightly addresses the question of oral tradition and its reliability. And it rightly formulates rules for evaluating the evidence of the gospels in light of the fact that it had been passed on orally. Sometimes oral traditions can be quite interesting. We know that the oral memory best retains sayings and anecdotes that are short, provocative, memorable “ and oft-repeated.

**Chapter 3 : Download PDF: A Credible Jesus by Robert W. Funk Free Book PDF**

*/ Edward F. Beutner --Jesus of Nazareth: a glimpse / Robert W. Funk --The reappearance of parables / Bernard Brandon Scott. Series Title: Jesus Seminar guides, v.*

While the program touted itself as an objective investigation into the nature of the Jesus of history, it was really little more than a propaganda piece for the radical assertions of the self-proclaimed Jesus Seminar. In June and July of , we addressed the modernistic claims of this irresponsible group in our print journal, *Christian Courier*. Due to the timeliness of this theme, we are happy to reproduce that material here. Since , a panel of liberal theologians has been meeting periodically in an attempt to determine the historicity of the New Testament. Thus, the Jesus Seminar proposes a radical reassessment of Christ and his teaching, and a redefinition of the New Testament canon that collection of twenty-seven books that has been recognized for some nineteen centuries as the body of divinely inspired documents from the apostolic age. This committee lusts for national prominence. Is there anyone more contemptible than he who despises the Son of God, and yet who hopes to achieve some sense of historical prominence by attacking him? There are three aspects of the project that we will address: First, there is the identity of Christ. Divorced from the alleged myths that the early church supposedly imposed upon him, who was the real Jesus? Second, the Jesus Seminar proposes, with its literary surgery, to expunge from the Gospel accounts all of those sayings of the Lord which are not authentic. By what authority do they assume this role? They will remove some material and add additional writings. They will give the world a new New Testament. What justification is there for such a high-handed procedure? The only way this question can be answered responsibly is by giving consideration to the Gospel records of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and related biblical data. But these radicals do not accept the Gospel accounts as valid history, nor do they believe that the documents were authored by the men whose names they bear. They then compiled these traditions to illustrate the on-going theological influence of Jesus Christ. That descriptive is a senseless contradiction. Since Christianity is a religion built on history, if its history is terrible, its theology must be equally deplorable. According to the Jesus Seminar, Christ was an illiterate Jewish peasant who became a spellbinding preacher. He likely was buried in a shallow grave, and his corpse may have been eaten by dogs Watson, This surely is a new Jesus, but it is a Jesus of fanatical fantasy, not historical fact. But let us analyze the reckless charges of the anti-Jesus seminar. First, both Matthew and Luke testify to the fact of the virgin birth of Christ foretold in Isaiah 7: There may even be corroboration for the narrative from a hostile source. The Jewish Talmud charges that Christ was born out of wedlock, Mary having been seduced by a man named Pandera. Bruce Metzger of Princeton Theological Seminary contends: The defamatory account of his birth seems to reflect a knowledge of the Christian tradition that Jesus was the son of the virgin Mary, the Greek word for virgin, *parthenos*, being distorted into the name Pandera [or Panthera] , The Jewish scholar Joseph Klausner has conceded this point as well , Second, Jesus was not illiterate. His contemporaries were amazed at his brilliant instruction cf. Westcott has shown that the meaning of this passage is this: Third, there is unequivocal testimony in the New Testament that Jesus performed miracles nearly forty specific signs are catalogued. The miracles of Christ are not rejected by modernists due to a lack of credible evidence; rather, the repudiation results from a rationalistic prejudice against the possibility of supernatural phenomena. In sentiment, it is atheistic. If that testimony is not accepted, then no opinion at all can be ventured. The fact is, the Old Testament prophets foretold his divine nature Isaiah 9: Who are these modem detractors, twenty centuries removed from the actual circumstances, who dispute with those who shed blood in defense of their knowledge of the character of Jesus Christ? Fifth, Christianity would never have survived the ravages of first-century hostilities had not the bodily resurrection of Jesus been an undeniable fact. There is even some archaeological evidence which hints of the resurrection of Christ. A stone slab, believed to have been set up in Nazareth ca. The Greek text it contains prohibits, under the penalty of death, the unauthorized removal of bodies from their tombs. Presumably, the injunction was commissioned by Claudius Caesar, who was attempting to inoculate against the commencement of other religions that might claim that their founder was raised from the dead, when in reality the body had been removed from the tomb

cf. And the baseless theory that his corpse was consumed by dogs is but another admission that the body is missing! In their sessions, therefore, these ladies and gentlemen have determined to separate the wheat from the chaff, as it were, and so present to society the actual words of the Lord. In this procedure they employ a color-coded system, as they vote on what Christ truly may, or may not, have said. If a saying is perceived as undoubtedly genuine, the passage is set in red type. If the words are probably those of Jesus, the color pink is used. Gray is employed for sayings that the Lord likely did not utter, though the ideas may have been close to his. Finally, black is used to indicate those things which are foreign to both the thoughts and words of Jesus, as perceived by these exorcists. Hoover, and The Jesus Seminar. How has the Jesus Seminar arrived at these conclusions? Textual criticism is the science of restoring, as nearly as possible, the original text of the Bible. In the case of the New Testament, the evidence is derived principally from three combined sources: In addition, there are approximately ten thousand versions translations of the New Testament in ancient languages. The disputed portion would amount to about one half of one page of the Greek Testament Thiessen , It is reckless abandon of the highest degree to virtually ignore these textual sources and principles, and attempt to fashion a new record of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ out of motives that are strictly rationalistic. The process described by them is lengthy and tedious, not to mention arbitrary and confusing. We will merely call attention to some of the principles they utilize. First, there is a repudiation of the concept of the miraculous. Anything in the Gospels that is supernatural is not history. The seminar applauds David F. This is bigoted rationalism at its worst. Again, it exudes the spirit of atheism. Second, and similar to the above, predictive prophecy is assumed to be impossible. Accordingly, anything in the Gospel records that portrays Jesus as predicting a future event e. Third, the panel rejects the notion that the New Testament is inspired of God. Here is an example of their reasoning: But surely the inspired writers could emphasize different aspects of the life and teaching of the Lord with no necessary inherent conflict. Are the Gospel writers responsible for the inaccurate modern assessments of their productions? The New Testament, to the Jesus Seminar, is thus simply a collection of ancient literary fragments. Since, then, the Christ of the Gospels is portrayed as being antagonistic to the Jewish leaders, and as one who performed miracles before the multitudes, etc. And so the Lord that Christians have come to love—the miracle-working, confrontational Christ—must be deleted from the biblical narratives. This is sheer subjectivism, runs counter to valid textual evidence, and is less-than-worthless speculation! Fifth, these theorists divide the sources both Gospel accounts, imagined sources, and non-canonical works like the Gospel of Thomas into chronological strata. For example, Mark is early, Matthew and Luke come later, and John is last of all, etc. Older sayings and sayings that are found in greater frequency and in different sources are assumed to be more authentic. The rationalistic concept is based upon the assumption of non-inspiration. Sixth, some sayings are omitted because they seem to be out of chronological sequence. In spite of the fact that this saying, or one similar, is found in three independent sources cf. Christ had not died, the critics argue, thus it does not make sense that the real Jesus would have used the symbol of the cross at this point Crumm , 11A. So according to these cut-and-paste scholars, it must have been added by later Christian writers. This reflects woefully flawed reasoning. In response we note: It would have been perfectly natural for the Lord to have borrowed imagery from that circumstance to illustrate the persecution that was in store for his followers. This seminar quibble, as with the others, is bereft of merit. For further study on this theme, see The Jesus Seminar, Part 2.

**Chapter 4 : The Paula Gordon Show**

*The Once and Future Jesus [John Shelby Spong, Marcus Borg, Robert W. Funk, John Dominic Crossan, Karen King, Lloyd Geering, Gerd Luedemann, Thomas Sheehan, Walter Wink] on [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com) \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers.*

At the end of the interview, the Pope told him he hoped his next project would be about the life of Jesus. Two weeks later, while dining with an RAI executive, Grade told him he intended their companies to prepare such a film. The notion of making a six-hour television film on the life of Jesus Christ was proposed by an enobled British Jew, with the golden blessing of an American automobile corporation. The project struck some as blasphemous, others as ecumenical. Lord Grade, who was then Sir Lew Grade, presided over a massive press conference in the Holy City, Rome, and said all that was available to be said "namely, that there would be this film, that Zeffirelli would direct it, and that Burgess would write it. Fired by this announcement, the Romans laid on a great, as it were, First Supper, which the Chief Rabbi of Rome attended, as well as various cricket-playing British ecclesiastics. Sir Lew Grade was made a Cavaliere of the Republic. The Pope was noticeably absent. The director, however, insisted on including it, and Friedlander tried to teach child actor Lorenzo Monet to read a short portion of the Pentateuch in Hebrew. Monet, however, mumbled it and the director was not satisfied in the film, boy Jesus reads mostly in English. The synagogue scenes were shot with extras from the Jewish community in the island of Djerba. Zeffirelli decided to avoid recording sound altogether in many parts, and simply send the principal actors to dub their own characters in the studio later. The first actor thought of was Dustin Hoffman, and Al Pacino was also a candidate. However, the filmmakers feared that their looks would not match the popular perception of Jesus held by the American public. Paul Harvey and Edward J. The couple married shortly before production began. This effect was a deliberate decision by Franco Zeffirelli. Perhaps more than any other Jesus film. It was originally released as a three-tape VHS edition in the early s under the Magnetic Video label. The Carlton video two tapes featured a heavily abridged print running for minutes. Although the Granada DVD is credited as the unedited print, it runs for minutes and misses out two scenes - a private meeting between Judas Iscariot and Zerah, and the opening betrayal sequence during the Last Supper. This is the version that is broadcast most often. The Region 1 DVD is the original broadcast. The Dutch DVD release also Carlton Region 2 has a running time of minutes the minute running time stated on the cover is a misprint. The version they used was the extended four-part edition, totalling eight hours with advertising. Additional footage was added for a re-run and broadcast in four two-hour instalments. In the s and , the film was re-broadcast on NBC in three instalments of two- and three-hour episodes, released on VHS and DVD as one complete presentation with one set of credits. It was broadcast in five episodes, one shown every week until 25 April. In both countries, the first part was aired on 3 April and the second on Easter, 10 April Bill Bright, because they felt the TV movie had to have the resurrection of Jesus Christ to be true to the Gospel account. Zeffirelli had told an interviewer from Modern Screen that the film would portray Jesus as "an ordinary man" gentle, fragile, simple". Having never seen the film, Jones denounced it as "blasphemy. Sacrificing its investment, GM backed out of its sponsorship. Their financial support allowed the mini-series to be screened after a simulated resurrection was added at the suggestion of Dr. Ted Baehr, a theologian and media pundit, who was friends with the producer, Vincenzo Labella, and acquainted with the protesters. The scenes showed the empty tomb, with flashbacks to Jesus discussing his death and resurrection. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. April Learn how and when to remove this template message Although the film has been received as generally faithful to the Gospel sources, and more comprehensive than previous film versions, Zeffirelli and his screenwriters found it necessary to take some liberties with the scriptures for purposes of brevity and narrative continuity. Some of these deviations have a basis in time-honoured, extra-Biblical traditions e. Other deviations were invented for the script: Perhaps the greatest liberties taken in the screenplay are interpretations of the motivation of Judas Iscariot in betraying Jesus to the authorities prior to his arrest and execution. The film introduces a number of fictional characters.

Zerah is used primarily to supply Judas Iscariot with a motive for his treachery: Other invented characters include Quintillius, Yehuda and Amos. In the Bible, the only mention of Jesus in childhood is his trip to the temple in Jerusalem as a year-old. In the film, the boy Jesus is also portrayed at his bar mitzvah , which is interrupted by a raid of Roman soldiers plundering supplies. The boy Jesus is also portrayed as climbing a ladder and looking out over the landscape of Judea after Joseph makes the analogy of a ladder reaching to heaven. The Bible indicates that Mary Magdalene who is never actually said to be a prostitute is the woman from whom seven demons were cast out, while the ointment-bearing woman is Mary of Bethany , a sister of Lazarus John In the film, Nicodemus visits Jesus in the late afternoon, not at night as in John 3: Later in the mini-series, Jesus does give Simon the name of "Peter". The Apostle Thomas, prior to his calling, is depicted as a servant of Jairus, the synagogue leader whose year-old daughter Jesus raises from the dead. The meeting and dialogue between Jesus and Barabbas are made up. The Parable of the Prodigal Son Luke The Gospels do not record either a conflict or a particular friendship between Matthew and Simon Peter. In the film, Pontius Pilate, having convicted Jesus of treason, sentences Him to be crucified. The Gospels record that Pilate acquitted Jesus, but sentenced Him under pressure from the crowd. The Gospels and the film both relate an account of a Roman centurion who petitions Jesus to heal his sick servant. The film, but not the Gospels, presents the same officer portrayed by Ernest Borgnine as one of the soldiers standing at the foot of the Cross, where he sympathetically allows Mary to approach her son. In the Bible Judas is paid 30 pieces of silver for betraying Jesus. Full of remorse, he later gives the silver back to the priests Matthew In the film, Judas is given silver coins as an afterthought by Zerah; he does not return them and they are shown lying on the ground under the tree from which he hangs himself. The film depicts a scene that shows Joseph dying. The Gospels never mention anything about Joseph after the story of Jesus, as a boy, in the Temple. April Learn how and when to remove this template message The success of this miniseries led, in , to a kind of sequel, A. Although many of the same crew members worked on both series, the only key cast members to return were Tony Vogel, Ian McShane and James Mason, all playing different roles.

**Chapter 5 : The Jesus Seminar Revealed – Part Two – Faith & Self Defense**

*"In Honest to Jesus, Robert Funk, one of the preeminent biblical scholars of our time, embarks on a radical investigation into the transformation of Jesus the social rebel and iconoclast into Jesus the religious icon.*

Does it make sense that men and women would be willing to die because they dared to spread the message of a Jesus who never claimed to be the Messiah and who was never raised from the dead? A sage is not a threat. A crucified, risen, returning Christ is. A Jesus who spent his time spinning parables and Japanese koans. The Jesus Seminar assumptions would require the assumption that someone, about a generation removed from the events in question, radically transformed the authentic information about Jesus that was circulating at that time, superimposed a body of material four times as large, fabricated almost entirely out of whole cloth, while the church suffered sufficient collective amnesia to accept the transformation as legitimate. It is not good history to ignore the massive weight of manuscript evidence attesting to the validity of the Bible. It is ludicrous to raise the Gospel of Thomas, for which there is only one known manuscript, to the level of the other four gospels, which were copied and distributed throughout Africa, Asia and Europe and for which scholars have collected hundreds of ancient manuscripts. To put it metaphorically, the Seminar has performed a forcible epispasm on the historical Jesus, a surgical procedure removing the marks of his circumcision. In robbing Jesus of his Jewishness, the Jesus Seminar has finally robbed him of his religion. Scholars of religion have rightly come to be suspicious of theologically driven scholarship. We should be equally suspicious of a-theologically driven scholarship, or any ideologically driven scholarship, political or otherwise. Who would want to crucify a laconic sage, even one whose discourse is "distinctive"? The Jesus Seminar is a clarion call to enlightenment. It is for those who prefer facts to fancies, history to histrionics, science to superstition" Robert Funk, founder. Jesus was perhaps the first stand-up Jewish comic. Starting a new religion would have been the farthest thing from his mind" Robert Funk, founder. Douglas and Gary R. In Defense of Miracles: Ancient Evidence for the Life of Christ. Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus. Zondervan Publishing House, The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will give them a change of heart leading to a knowledge of the truth II Timothy 2:

**Chapter 6 : Robert Walter Funk, In Memoriam - Westar Institute**

- *Robert Walter Funk, founder of the Jesus Seminar and one of the most influential New Testament scholars of his generation, died on Saturday, September 3, at his home in Santa Rosa, California, following a brief illness.*

Moo and Leon Morris[ edit ] D. Moo and Leon Morris. Zondervan Publishing House, Both April 7, A. Meier, A Marginal Jew, Doubleday, , vol. He was dead by the evening of Friday, April 7, He was about thirty-six years old. Eisenbrauns, [ edit ] This work is a set of essays in honor of Jack Finegan on the chronology of the life of Jesus. Martin[ edit ] Director of the Academy for Scriptural Knowledge, Alhambra, California "I believe that there are seven historical and biblical factors that show the reasonableness of a 3 or 2 BC birth for Jesus. Or did you mean 2 BCE? Dankenbring[ edit ] Long article [ click here ] "February, or late winter, just before spring, in 4 B. A quick search afterward shows that he is a Herbert W. No evidence of his credentials found - perhaps it is just plagiarism. He is author of the highly praised The Jesus Quest: The belief that he was born in AD 1 only came into existence in the sixth century AD when a monk His birth-date should be reassigned to 6 or 5 or 4 BC, though some prefer 11 or 7 [25]. And the text of the note [25]: Smallwood, Greece and Rome, April , pp. Luke, however, describes Jesus as "about thirty years old" when John bptized him "in the fifteenth year of Tiberius" -i. Luke adds that "in thjose days there went out a decree of Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. Tertullian records a census of Judea by Saturninus, govornon of Syria B. Funk and the Jesus Seminar[ edit ] Robert W. We also have the name of Herod Antipas, tetrarch from 4 B. Robertson[ edit ] An older, but well respected scholar. A definite allusion by Luke to a series of censuses instituted by Augustus, the second of which is mentioned by him in Ac 5: This second one is described by Josephus and it was supposed by some that Luke confused the two. The one in Ac 5: This is in the time of Augustus. The first would then be B. If it was delayed a couple of years in Palestine by Herod the Great for obvious reasons, that would make the birth of Christ about B. Here again Luke has been attacked on the ground that Quirinius was only governor of Syria once and that was A. But Ramsay has proven by inscriptions that Quirinius was twice in Syria and that Luke is correct here also. See summary of the facts in my Luke the Historian in the Light of Research, pp. A few points, that perhaps everyone knows or perhaps not. There is no independent historical account of such an action by Herod - but there are of Herod killing TWO of his own sons older than 2. If Herod died 4 BC, and lived for about 2 years after the massacre, then this supposed massacre would have taken place about 6 BC. If there is some reason for killing babies as old as 2, then taking everything at face value Jesus could already have been 2 hence born 8 BC -- JimWae There is a ton more, of course. Can you help with documenting the conclusions of Biblical Scholars and Historians above? We can then use the data to establish the ranges that scholars use. What of the fact that the census when Quirinius was govonor of Syria happened several years after Herod the Great died? This is something that continues to bug me. La Talk TCF We actually have very little documentation of anything in the 1st Century or before. The old adage applies here: Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Archive 44 is open. Apparently, taking everything at face value, God does not want us to know the year-- JimWae As for the rest, God only knowsâ€”and I mean that literally.

## Chapter 7 : Honest to Jesus by Robert W. Funk

*The Search for the Authentic Deeds. Robert W. Funk and the Jesus Seminar. For those who believe the Bible to be the word of God a 16% historical accuracy rate may seem ridiculously low.*

Is there Room for Jesus in Christianity? Funk was executive secretary, then president of the prestigious Society for Biblical Literature. He founded The Jesus Seminar in 1984. Until his death in September, 1992, Dr. Funk was Director of the Westar Institute. In addition to being a scholar, teacher, and gifted linguist, Dr. Funk has written more than a dozen books, including *The Five Gospels: Jesus for a New Millennium*. This Jesus is a far cry from the icon created for a variety of theological and political reasons by the institutionalized Christian Church, according to Dr. Funk. The Jesus Seminar which Dr. Funk founded before the Jesus Seminar could answer their fundamental questions about the historical Jesus -- "What did the historical Jesus say? He made up new stories, laughed at human foibles, saw us as we really are. He made people uncomfortable. Funk sees humans everywhere in the world transforming how we understand the Universe and our place in it. The Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution collapsed that cosmic shelter. Science is revealing an open-ended universe with an oncoming future, unknown and unknowable, not fixed or predetermined. We have internal compasses we can trust when we choose to be honest, give up lying and dissembling. The real Jesus is just such a person, a social critic, dissident and sage. Funk traces the roots of The Jesus Seminar. He founded it in 1984 when he discovered no inventory of the words of Jesus existed. The work which Dr. Funk thought could be accomplished in two weekends has taken over a decade of rigorous work, scouring records which are thin, "but better than records for most individuals who lived in the Hellenistic world. He describes the modern revolutionary transition sparked by the combination of the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. Academics are also adrift. No rules -- Jesus was absolutely against rules. The traces of the historic Jesus the scholars found were very revolutionary. Funk also talks about apostles who "marketed" Jesus, especially the apostle Paul. Funk describes the world wide transformation he says has been going on for several centuries as "deep, sweeping changes to cultural images and metaphors. Those who hold to them feel a dissonance is so great we have to make adjustments. Funk describes his own spiritual quest, living through this time of turmoil, looking for something he can endorse, making no promises for his results. Is there a role for Jesus in Christianity? Funk describes the waves of turmoil which accompanied increasing knowledge about the roots of the Gospels in particular. He was a sage, a wisdom teacher, in the old Jewish tradition, neither a lawyer, nor a prophet. Funk and the scholars were surprised to discover, "Easter and the apocalypse have nothing to do with Jesus. Funk gives a glimpse of the "whole vision required to begin to see the door through which Jesus invited people into an alternative view of life and realities. No myths, just observations on the world he knew. Funk describes Jesus as a "listener. We came to the conclusion the words of the Golden Rule are not appropriate on the lips of Jesus for whom neighbor, not self, is the measure of all things. He died for that principle. He was an iconoclast. Funk describes the open-ended universe he believes Jesus called his followers to embrace, a universe full of discomfort and excitement, where the future is unknown and unknowable. Funk names many sages available to modern humans, in addition to an internal compass he believes is trustworthy "when we choose to be honest, give up lying to ourselves and dissembling.

## Chapter 8 : Excerpt from the Introduction of The Acts of Jesus - Westar Institute

*Robert Funk's book HONEST TO JESUS ( 1984 edition) is the illuminating forerunner to JESUS OF NAZARETH ( 1992 edition in Dutch and edition in English). On page 10 in Funk's book he states in proposition number 8 the Herculean Call, "Give Jesus a Demotion."*

## Chapter 9 : Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium - Robert W. Funk - Google Books

*Jesus of Nazareth (Italian: Gesù di Nazareth) is a British-Italian television miniseries directed by Franco Zeffirelli and*

*co-written by Zeffirelli, Anthony Burgess, and Suso Cecchi d'Amico which dramatises the birth, life, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.*