

Church History



Church History

- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1st-3rd centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4th-5th centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6th-10th centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11th-13th centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14th-15th centuries
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16th century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17th-18th centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19th century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20th century
- *The Postmodern Age* AD 21st century



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- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17th-18th centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19th century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20th century
 - *Modern Empire-Building*
 - *Post-War Religion*
 - *Conflicts of the “Greatest Generation”*
 - *The New Conservatism*
 - *Backlash to the New Conservatism*
 - *Modern Religion (part 2)*



The Modern Age

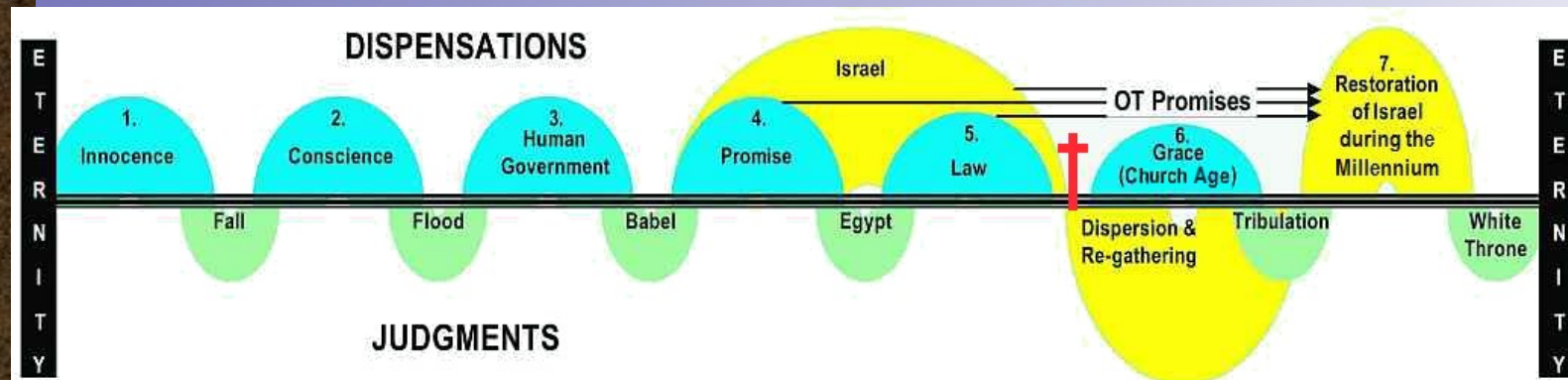
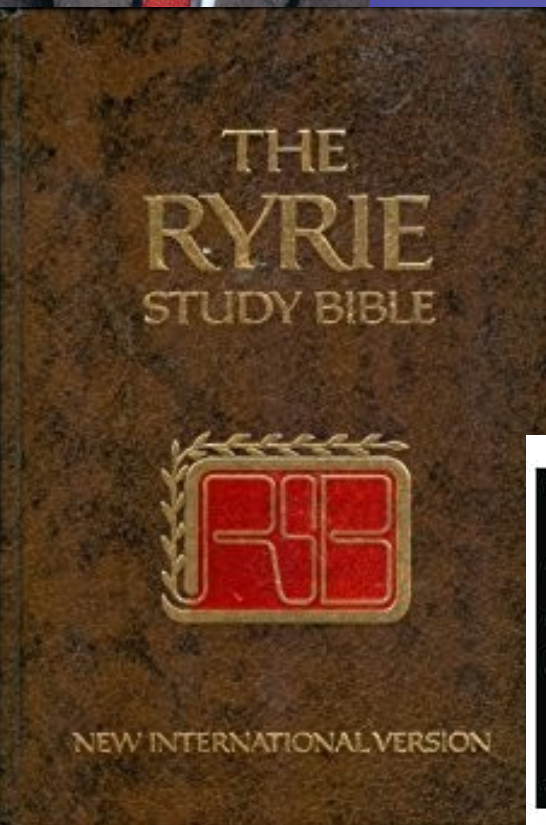
- The “modern” church began to take shape 1978 *The Ryrie Study Bible* was published



- Charles Ryrie served for years as a systematic theology professor at the conservative Dallas Theological Seminary

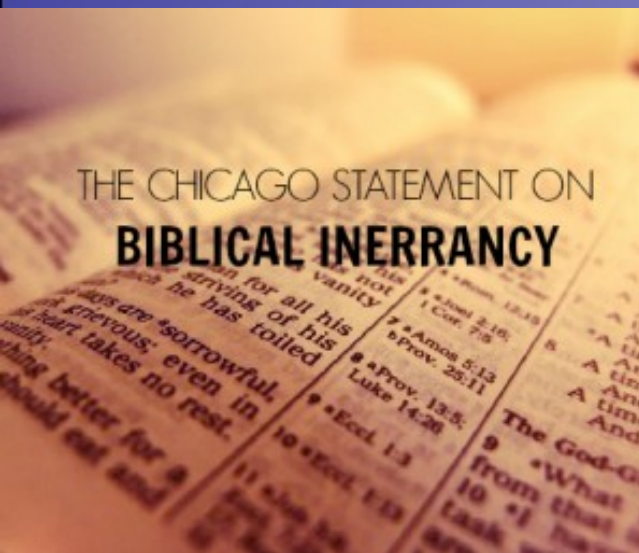
- In 1978, he compiled more than 10,000 of his explanatory notes into a single NIV Study Bible that came at Scripture from an unapologetically Dispensationalist theological perspective

- In response to the more liberal scholarly books that were coming out in the mid-1970s, the modern Evangelical church now had its first solidly conservative NIV Study Bible—which has since sold more than 2.6 million copies



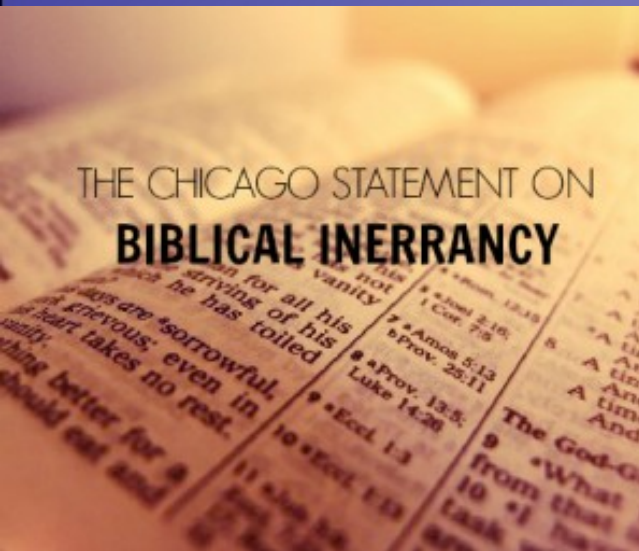
The Modern Age

- The “modern” church began to take shape
 - 1978 *The Ryrie Study Bible* was published
 - The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy
 - In support of Evangelical conservatism, more than 200 leaders came together to draft and sign the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (arguing, “We see it as our timely duty to make this affirmation in the face of current lapses from the truth of inerrancy among our fellow Christians and misunderstanding of this doctrine in the world at large”)



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 - Remember the basic terminology that we've discussed in this class—
 - “Inerrancy” refers to the doctrine that the Bible as it was originally written was without errors (i.e.; when God inspired it through Bible writers such as Paul or Isaiah)
 - “Infallibility” refers to the doctrine that the Bible as it was originally written was trustworthy in its personal and spiritual direction for life (i.e.; it wouldn't lead you astray)
 - There are those who hold to one but not the other—that the Bible does various errors, but will never actually lead you wrong (though there are logical problems in those generalizations—could you picture putting faith in the absolute infallibility of a map you knew contained errors?)



The Modern Age

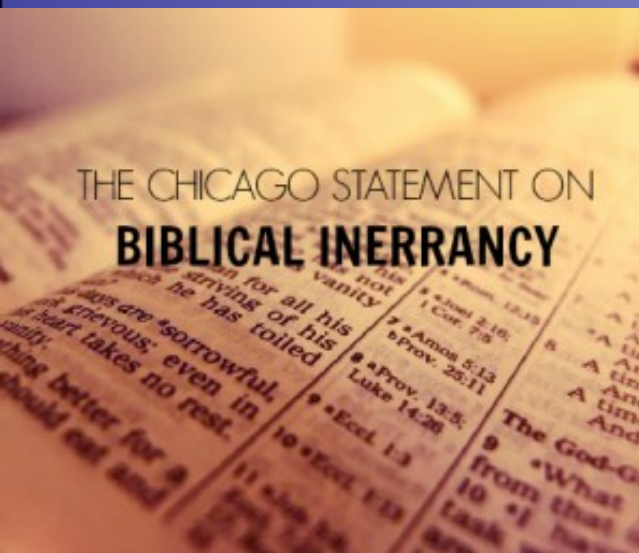
- Funky little teaching moment—
 - The Chicago Statement was designed as Articles comprised of couplets of affirmations and denials—
 - We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.
 - We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.
 - We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.
 - We deny that the Bible is merely a *witness* to revelation, or only *becomes* revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

The Modern Age

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
 - The Chicago Statement was designed as Articles comprised of couplets of affirmations and denials—
 - We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.
 - We deny that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.
 - We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from falsehood, fraud, or deceit.
 - We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science... We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

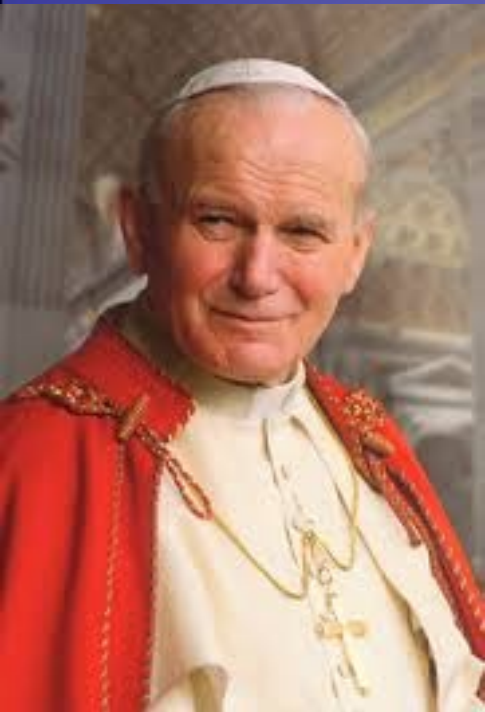
The Modern Age

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
 - The Chicago Statement was designed as Articles comprised of couplets of affirmations and denials
 - In all, there were 19 of these Articles, and the statement was signed by Evangelical leaders such as Carl F.H. Henry, Bill Bright, Hal Lindsey, R.C. Sproul, Josh McDowell, John MacArthur, D.A. Carson, Charles Ryrie, J.I. Packer, and many more
(NOTE: The Catholic Church had created something similar with their 1965 *Dei Verbum*, but its ambiguous wording led to some question about its actual stance—
 - The Second Vatican Council wrote, “the books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach that truth which God, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to the Sacred Scriptures”—so is that arguing for *inerrancy*, or for *infallibility*, or for *both*?)



The Modern Age

- The “modern” church began to take shape
 - 1978 *The Ryrie Study Bible* was published
 - The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy
 - New Pope John Paul II issued reforms
 - Cardinal Karol Józef Wojtyła became the first Polish Pope in 1978—the first non-*Italian* Pope since 1523
 - In some ways, he was quite conservative from a Catholic point of view
(for instance, he consistently preached against sexual sins such as homosexuality, abortion, remarriage after divorce, contraception, and even sex between married non-Catholics)
(he also decried the desire for the ordination of women, arguing that it was against God's clear, Biblical order for the genders)



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- In some ways, he was quite conservative from a Catholic point of view, but in other ways, he was decidedly “progressive” in the eyes of many Catholic leaders—even *liberal*

(for instance, at his inauguration, the cardinals are all supposed to come up and kiss his ring but when his old friend, Polish Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński came up, John Paul stopped him and hugged him instead)

(to some, this was an expression of warmth and humanity, but to others—especially the traditionalist Italian leaders—it was a personal slap in the face that they believed besmirched the dignity of the office)



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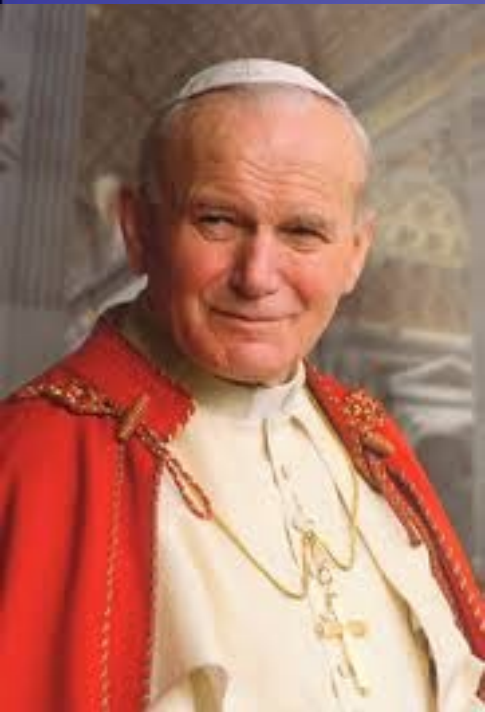
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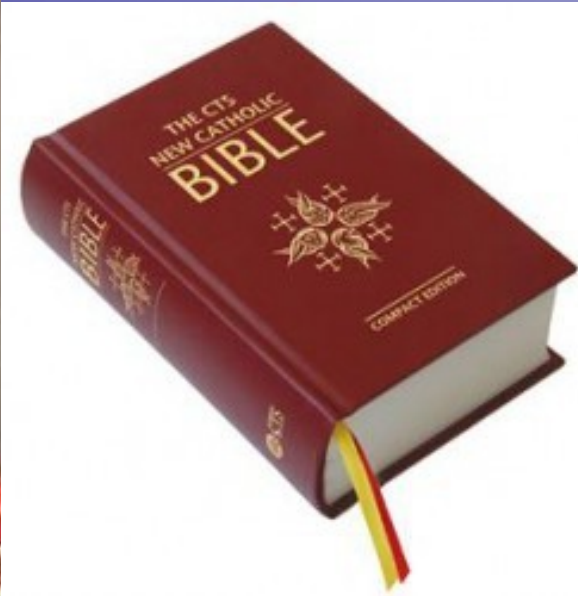
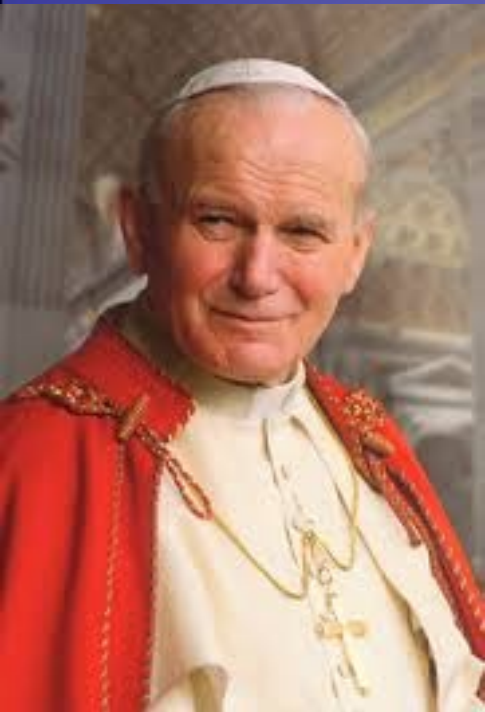
(for instance, at his inauguration, the cardinals are all supposed to come up and kiss his ring but when his old friend, Polish Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński came up, John Paul stopped him and hugged him instead)

(John Paul was also met with many of the same criticisms whenever he would give Papal addresses in his native Polish, instead of in Latin or Italian)



The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - But perhaps the most controversial actions of John Paul's young Papacy involved his desire to see lay Catholics grow in their faith through personal study
 - In a move that made conservative Catholics livid and conservative Protestants excited, the Pope actually *encouraged* Catholics to own and read the Bible for themselves
(NOTE: Several Catholic Church leaders denounced the action, arguing that it would lead to people leaving the Church in droves after deciding their own theologies)



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 - In 1986, the Pope put together a commission composed of 12 bishops and cardinals in charge of compiling and publishing the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
(NOTE: A “catechism”—from the Greek *κατηχέω*, meaning “to teach orally”—is the traditional, interactive method of teaching young Catholics and new converts the doctrines of the Catholic Church through the use of stock questions and memorized answers—kind of like a “canned” Socratic method)
(NOTE²: Though catechism manuals had existed for centuries, the idea of a *comprehensive* one that was to be made available to *lay* people for personal reference created a huge controversy in the Church, and several cardinals loudly complained that it was a mistake)

Catechism of the Catholic Church



Libreria Editrice Vaticana



The Modern Age

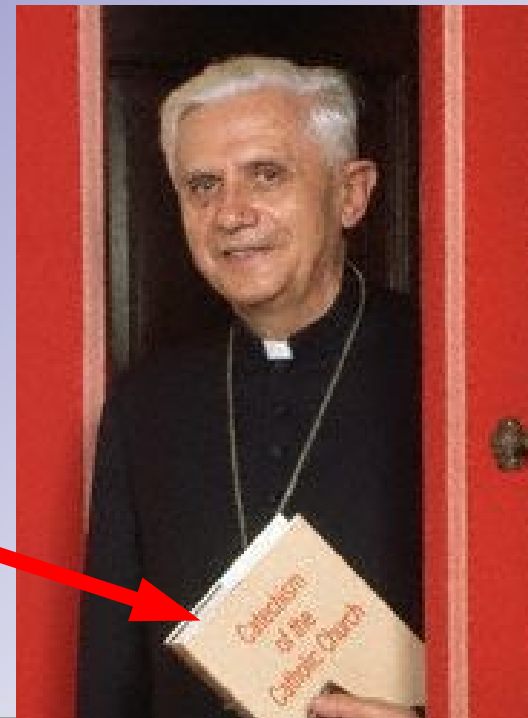
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 - Luckily, the Catechism commission was chaired by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who pushed it through with great gusto

Catechism
of the
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Libreria Editrice Vaticana

(Note the “product placement” of the Catechism from last week's lesson...)



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 - John Paul reigned as Pope for 27 years, travelling to more countries than any other Pope before him, and making significant differences in the socio-political world, as well as the church world
 - Within a decade of his death, he was canonized, and is now considered Pope Saint John Paul II...



The Modern Age

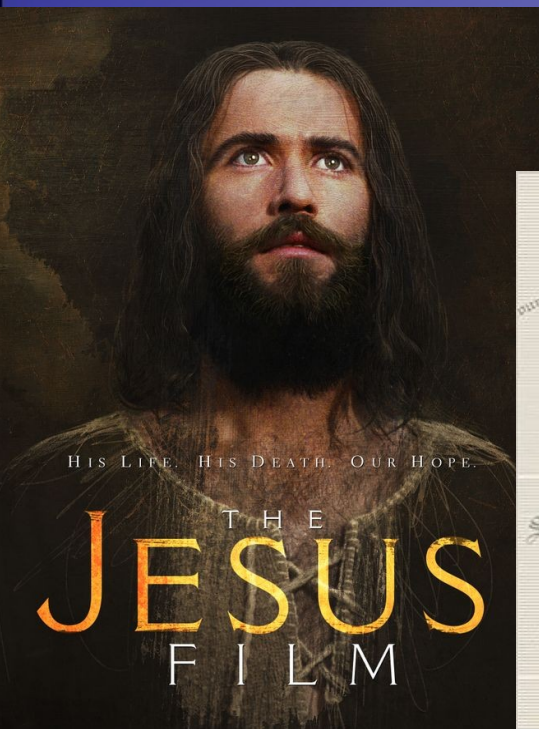
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- According to the *New York Times*, the most-watched movie of all time is... *The Jesus Film*
 - Financed primarily by Campus Crusade for Christ the movie was made for \$6 million, shot on location in Israel, and starred British actor Brian Deacon as Jesus, filming a script based as closely as possible on the Gospel of Luke
(chosen because of its completeness)

(using the Good News Translation as its text—chosen because of its familiarity, popularity, and easy comprehensibility)



Campus
Crusade
for Christ



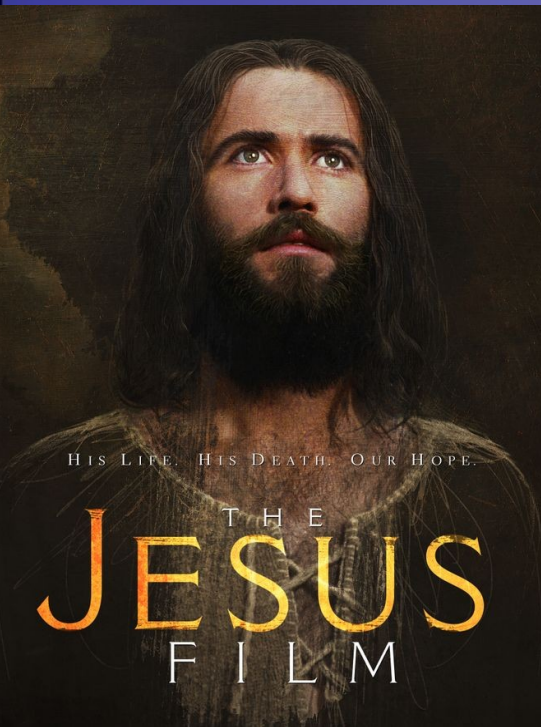
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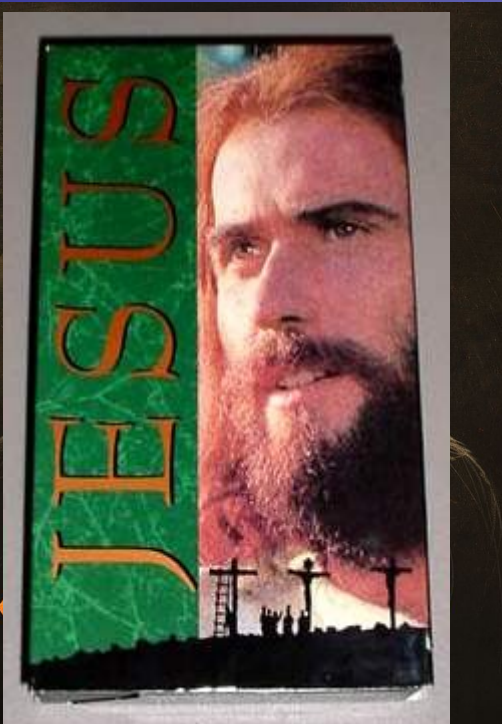
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 - The movie is so scrupulous in following the Gospel account that though some people find it movingly accurate, others—even devout Christians—find it kind of boring, since it lacks the plot and pacing of most modern movies



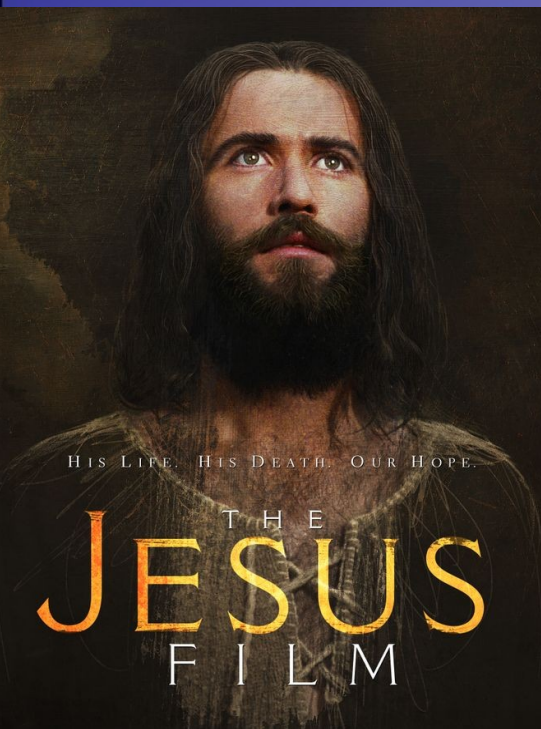
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 - Intended as an outreach tool more than just to be entertaining or informative, the movie was structured to make dubbing easier so that it could be translated into other languages
 - Since 1979, it has been translated into over 1,500 languages, and seen by upwards of five billion people—though the actual numbers are impossible to gauge
 - At the turn of the century, the project even worked to get a free VHS copy sent to every home in various ZIP codes—and our little church in Ohio sent out well over 100



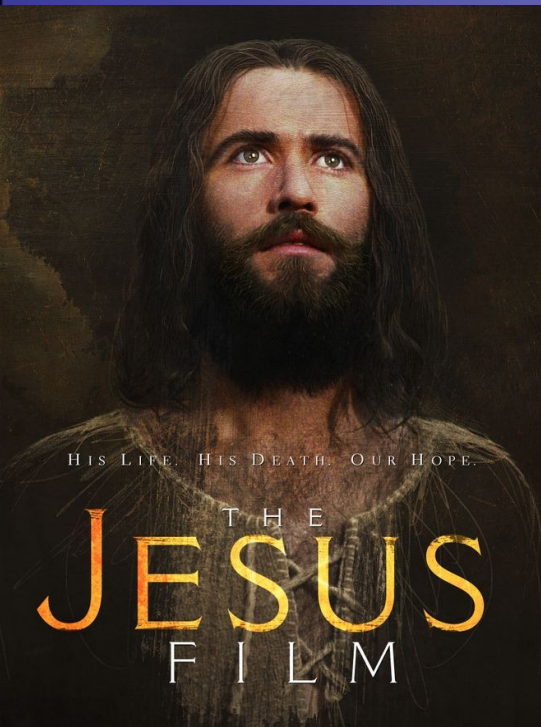
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 - In 2003, after the end of the Iraq War, the project worked to get the film taken into and shared with newly-opened Iraq, complete with a new introduction to help Muslims connect Jesus with the Prophet 'Isa of the Qur'an



The Modern Age

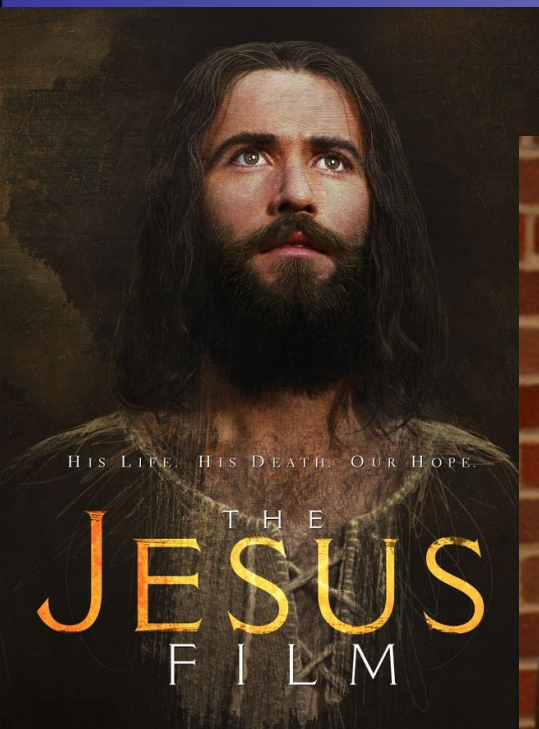
- Funky little teaching moment—
 - Unfortunately, that was met with a great deal of uproar—mostly from non-Muslims in other nations, who saw this as yet another example of American imperialism invading sovereign Iraqi culture
 - After the 2004 broadcast on the BBC, the network posted thousands of comments from viewers on its website, including these:
 - “Just because you support Jesus doesn't mean everyone else has to. I wouldn't impose it on the people in Iraq. There will be a backlash. You shouldn't preach your religion—it only causes problems.”
 - “Yet another attempt by the Christian church to indoctrinate people over to them and steal their money under the pretence that they are offering salvation.”
 - “These people are so arrogant! It really annoys me when anyone thinks their religion is better than someone else's. Why don't these Christians convert to another religion first, just to see how insulting it is, before they go around giving the 'natives' the 'benefit' of their religion?”
 - “Trying to subliminate the dominant religion in another country is, if nothing else, an insult to the sensibilities and belief systems of its indigenous people. It's exactly what starts wars in the first place.”



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 - After the 2004 broadcast on the BBC, the network posted thousands of comments from viewers on its website, including these
 - Even Evangelical Robert Pyne, a theologian at Dallas Theological Seminary, argued that such a “visible Christian presence” right after the Iraq War would send the wrong message, indelibly intertwining Christianity and Americanism in the minds of Iraqis

“We're the ones who think we have to do it, and want to do everything ourselves—those are images of the ugly American. We may need to get over that to truly distance ourselves, as Christians, from what is perceived around the world as a national agenda...”



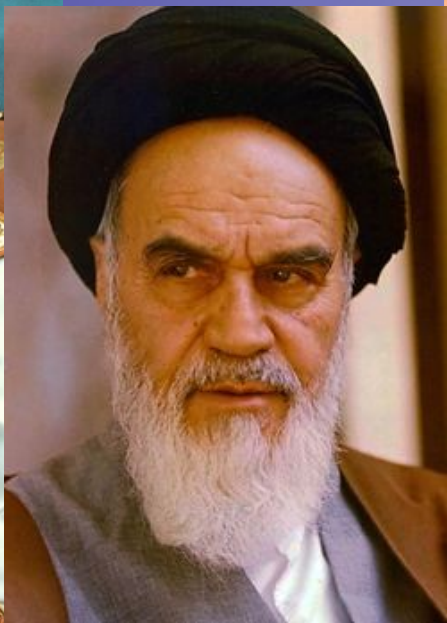
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The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - The Shah (emperor) had worked to Westernize Iran and had thus developed positive relationships with Western nations such as America and Britain
 - But he was also a dictator, and—especially by the end of his reign—not very nice about it
 - Islamic militants led by Sayyid Ruhollah Khomeini overthrew the Shah and established a strict Muslim rule (NOTE: Khomeini was given the title “Ayatollah” [آیت‌الله], meaning “sign of Allah”—the exalted role of being the supreme authority for Islamic law and theology)



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 - As part of that overthrow, the revolutionaries took Western diplomats in Iran hostage, including several American citizens, until the escaped Shah was returned (they were released in 1981, after 444 days)



The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - The Shah (emperor) had worked to Westernize Iran
 - The Soviet Union sent in troops to support the new Communist government they'd created in Afghanistan and were opposed by the militant Islamic *Mujahideen* (*mujāhidīn* [مجاهدين], from "*jihād*" [جهاد], meaning "one engaged in a struggle")



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 - Because they were standing against Communism, the Mujahideen were supported, supplied, and trained by the United States
 - The CIA provided more than \$40 billion in support as well as training young Muslim militants such as Osama bin Laden to help take up the cause



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 - President Ahmed al-Bakr settled the Iraqi economy but his Vice President (and cousin), Saddam Hussein led a coup that took over the government
 - Since al-Bakr had become increasingly socialist over the years, the United States (quietly, tacitly) supported both Hussein and the coup



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 - Seeing an opportunity—and fearing increasing Muslim extremism—Hussein invaded Iran in 1980
(NOTE: This invasion was supported by both the US and the USSR—but can you tell me *why*?)



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 - So much of the anti-American Muslim extremism that we're *currently* dealing with started in 1979...



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The Middle East exploded in turmoil

1983 *The Gospel of Judas* was discovered

- Sold by a “grey market” dealer in Geneva, the *Gospel of Judas* was a 3rd-4th century manuscript, written in Coptic, in which we learn that Judas was only following Christ's personal directives when he betrayed Him—Jesus *made* Judas do it

- Jesus had taught Judas special, Gnostic truths that no one else—including the other disciples—ever understood

(for instance, all matter is evil and all spirit is good, so doing anything that focuses on the tangible flesh—including taking communion—is inherently bad to do... which is why Jesus had to die and *transcend* this physical form)

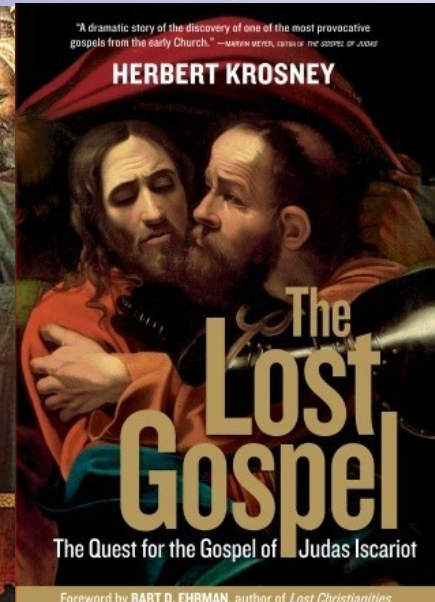
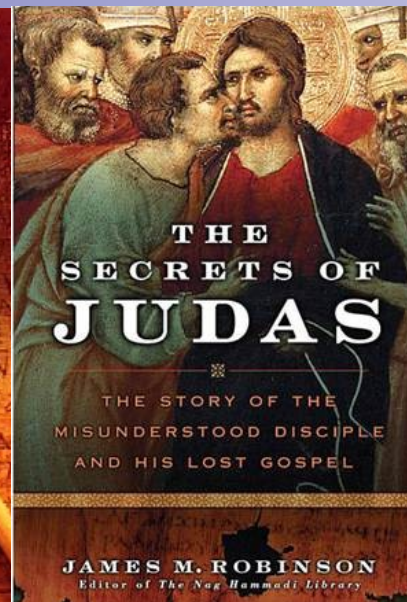
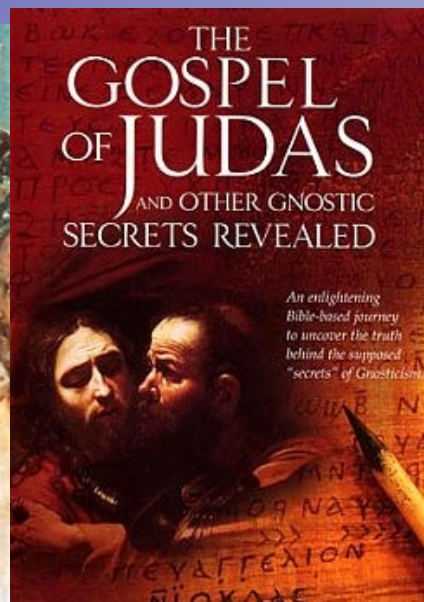
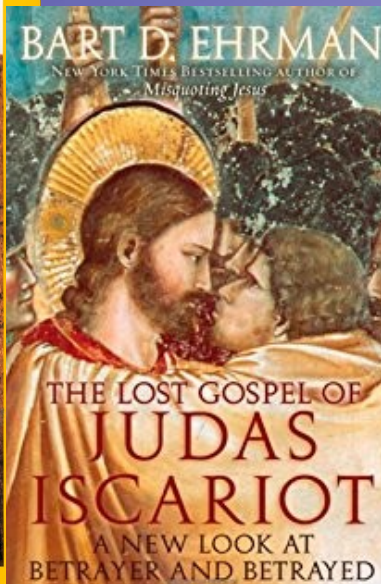


The Gospel of
Judas

20th
CENTURY

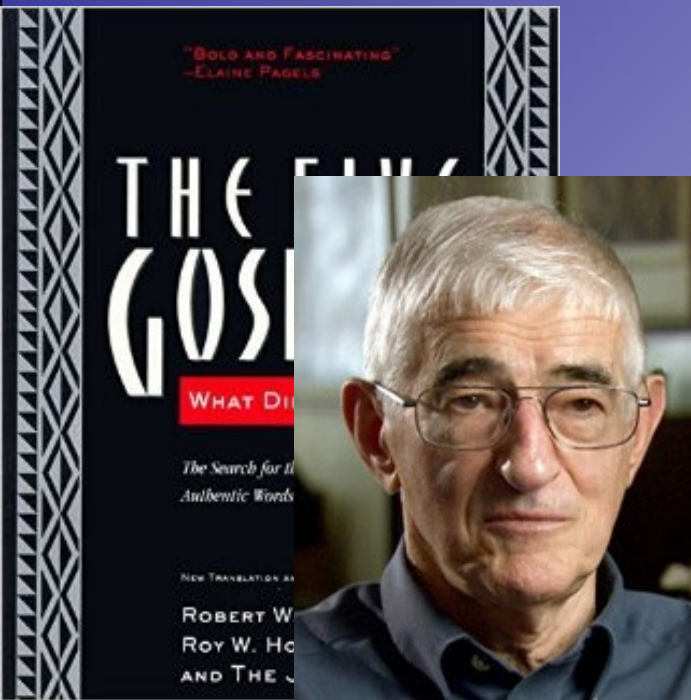
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- Funky little teaching moment—
 - The world quickly became enamored with the *Gospel of Judas*, declaring it to be an amazing new look into the “real” world of Jesus Christ, showing us that the early church was different from what the *Bible* says
 - Of course, we already *knew* about the early Gnostics no scholar seriously thought that *Judas* wrote the book it was dated to be from 2-3 centuries after *Judas died* written in a language that didn't really *become* a written language until 1-2 centuries after the church had begun—but people love novelty, and we love to think that we understand things that other people around us don't... kinda like the *Gnostics* liked to think...



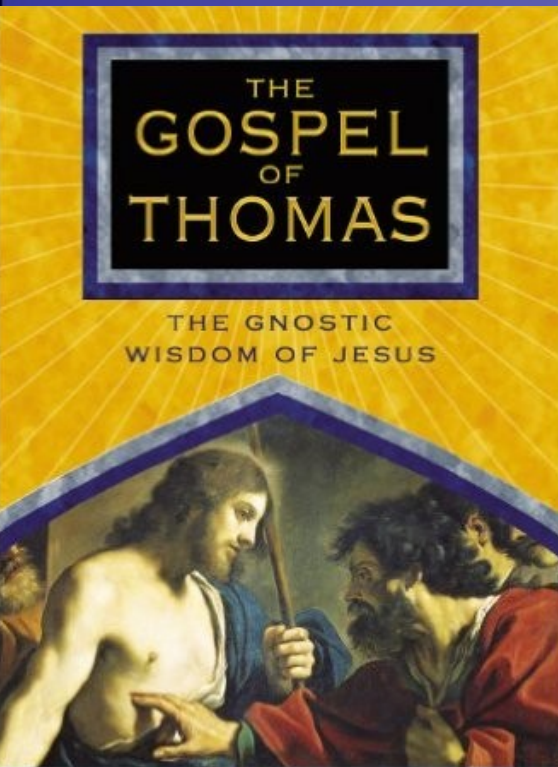
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 - 1983 *The Gospel of Judas* was discovered
 - 1985 *The Five Gospels* was published
 - If you'll remember, the Jesus Seminar (a group founded by former Catholic priest John Dominic Crossan, comprised of 150 scholars who approached the Bible from a decidedly liberal perspective—they put the “burden of proof” on anyone who would attempt to argue for the historicity of Bible passages)



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- If you'll remember, the Jesus Seminar used non-canonical gospels such as the Gospel of Thomas as the basis for judging the Biblical ones
 - Thus, they attempted to ascertain just what Jesus *actually* said and did, vs. what conservatives have always just *accepted* from the Bible



The Age of Revolution

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
 - If you'll remember, their methods of deciding that were skewed, at best
 - Using red and black colored beads, they voted to figure out the most accurate sayings of Jesus, based on assumptions that they made regarding source biases—
 - *Self-references*—if Jesus ever speaks about Himself in a verse (i.e.; “I am the way, the truth, and the life”), then it's clearly not authentic, because the real Jesus never did that sort of thing



"BOLD AND FASCINATING"
—ELAINE PAGELS

The Voting of the Jesus Seminar

- **Red—Jesus undoubtedly said this or something very like it.**
- **Pink—Jesus probably or might have said something like this.**
- **Gray—Jesus did not say this, but the ideas are close to His own.**
- **Black—Jesus did not say this; it represents a later tradition.**

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 - *Self-references*
 - *Community issues*—if Jesus ever speaks about issues that the Church would end up facing in everyday ecclesiology, then it's clearly not authentic, because it's obviously a later Church writer, putting his own words in Christ's mouth



The Voting of the Jesus Seminar

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 - *Self-references*
 - *Community issues*
 - *Theological conformity*—if Jesus ever speaks about stuff that, say, Paul also speaks about, then it's clearly not authentic, because it's obviously a later writer trying to harmonize Jesus with Paul (NOTE: This applies to pretty much anything that Jesus says about Church life, or that agrees with the early Church Fathers, or that agrees with secular authorities like Rome—Jesus was, by definition, a rebel... so anything He says that in any way *isn't* perceivedly rebellious against everything else must clearly not be authentic)



The Voting of the Jesus Seminar

- **Red**—Jesus undoubtedly said this or something very like it.
- **Pink**—Jesus probably or might have said something like this.
- **Gray**—Jesus did not say this, but the ideas are close to His own.
- **Black**—Jesus did not say this; it represents a later tradition.

The Age of Revolution

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
 - If you'll remember, their methods of deciding that were skewed, at best
 - Using red and black colored beads, they voted to figure out the most accurate sayings of Jesus, based on assumptions that they made regarding source biases—
 - *Self-references*
 - *Community issues*
 - *Theological conformity*
 - *Theological nonconformity*—if Jesus ever speaks about stuff that is only found in one Gospel, then it's clearly not authentic, because it's obviously just that Gospel writer making his own point



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 - *Framing sequences*—if Jesus ever speaks to introduce even stuff that we've decided that He *actually did* say, then it's clearly not authentic (it's obviously just there to make the story run smoother)



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 - *Framing sequences*
 - *Logical extrapolations*—if anything logically depends on *inauthentic* stuff, then it's clearly not authentic



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 - *Logical extrapolations*

- So here's a good example of how the Bible probably *should* be read today...

"BOLD AND FASCINATING"
—ELAINE PAGELS

Our Father in the heavens,
your name be revered.
¹⁰Impose your imperial rule,
enact your will on earth as you have in heaven.
¹¹Provide us with the bread we need for the day.
¹²Forgive our debts
to the extent that we have forgiven those in debt to us.
¹³And please don't subject us to test after test,
but rescue us from the evil one.

The Modern Age

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1978 *The Ryrie Study Bible* was published
The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy
New Pope John Paul II issued reforms

1979 The most-watched movie of all time premiered
The Middle East exploded in turmoil

1983 *The Gospel of Judas* was discovered

1985 *The Five Gospels* was published

1986 Peter Popoff was caught in a scandal

- Without formal credentials from any church, he began a televangelist ministry on television offering faith healing and prosperity prayers, telling people to fling their crucial medications onto the stage and just trust God for healing

- But in 1986, a group of skeptics exposed the ministry as a total fraud

- Many “healed” people were plants, faking their illnesses or pretending to be wheelchair-bound and to show his “prophetic” power, his wife and an assistant fed him information from off-stage about the audience members through an earpiece, based on cards that people had filled out in advance



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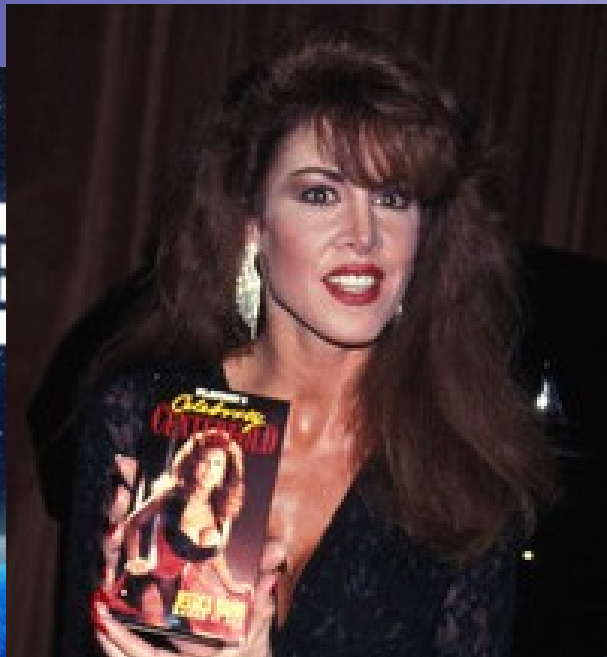
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- Amazingly, even after repeatedly being outed as a fraud, Popoff's ministry keeps re-inventing itself and today, he sends people “miracle spring water” from Chernobyl, “prayer bracelets” that he's personally blessed, “Aaron's breastplate medallions,” etc.—for a nominal contribution and Popoff personally makes *millions*



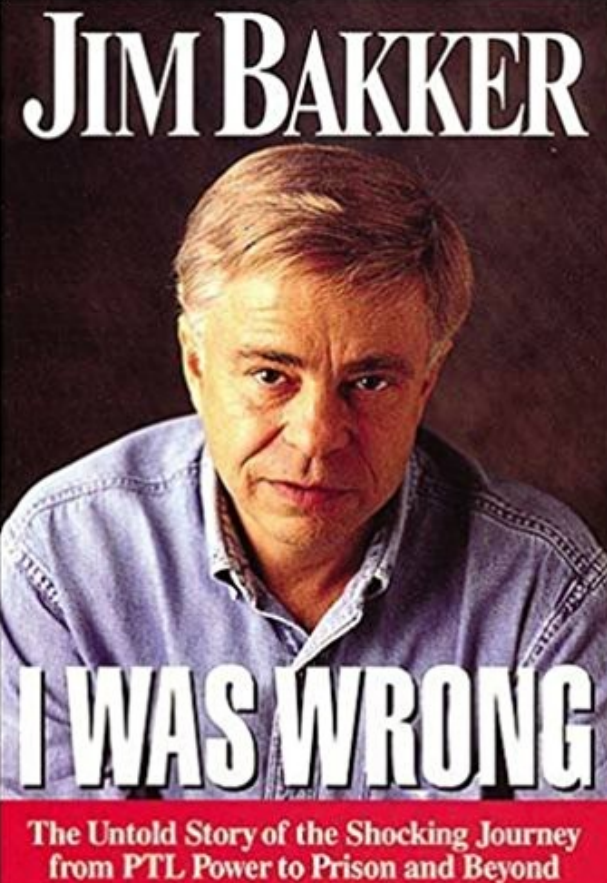
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- Funky little teaching moment—
 - But that only started off the firestorm of televangelist scandals that struck in the 1980s:
 - 1987 Televangelist Jim Bakker fell
 - The scandal that caught most people's attention was the allegation that he and another preacher had raped secretary Jessica Hahn, then tried to pay her off to keep her silent
(NOTE: Hahn then spun that notoriety into fame with lurid appearances in *Playboy*, MTV videos, *Married With Children*, shock-jock Howard Stern's programs, etc.)



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 - But what got him removed from his ministry were his financial misdealings—embezzlement, mail fraud, etc.—for which he spent five years in prison (where he wrote the apologetic book, *I Was Wrong*, repudiating his former prosperity theology)



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 - 1987 Televangelist Jim Bakker fell
 - 1988 Baptist pastor Terry Smith fell
 - The pastor of Canyon Creek Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas, Smith was caught shoplifting at his local grocery store
 - The story became even seedier when it was leaked to the press that he was shoplifting *condoms* at his local grocery store, for use in his extramarital affairs with church members who had come to him for counselling...
 - Even after being publicly outed on *Inside Edition*, Smith now pastors Victory Baptist Church in Rowlett, Texas—18 miles away from Richardson



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 - By the 1980s, his television ministry was being carried by over 3,000 stations every week
 - In 1986, a crusading Swaggart exposed fellow Assemblies of God minister Marvin Gorman for having multiple affairs, leading to Gorman being defrocked
 - In 1987, Swaggart was one of the most vocal critics (second only to Jerry Falwell) of Jim Bakker and his sex scandal with Jessica Hahn arguing that pastors must be *paragons* of virtue, and that the church should defrock all those who would besmirch the dignity of the office



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 - In 1988, a bitter Gorman blackmailed Swaggart with photos of him with a prostitute at a local motel, demanding that Swaggart get him reinstated as an Assemblies of God pastor
(NOTE: It is a matter of intense debate as to whether or not Gorman actually set Swaggart up to be photographed with the prostitute—whose own testimony about the incident was dubious and inconsistent)



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 - Swaggart publicly and tearfully apologized to his congregation—and his viewing audience—saying, “I have sinned against you,” but not going into details about the nature of his sin
 - The sincerity of his confession led the A.G. to simply suspend his license so that he could accept counselling before re-entering ministry but three months later, he was preaching again, disregarding the A.G.'s authority which was when they defrocked him



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 - In 1991, Swaggart was *again* found in the company of a prostitute and publicly called out
 - This time, however, he told his congregation—and his *new* television audience—that “The Lord told me it's flat none of your business”
 - He was asked to step down from the pulpit but today, continues preaching in various contexts and teaching the church's daily television Bible program



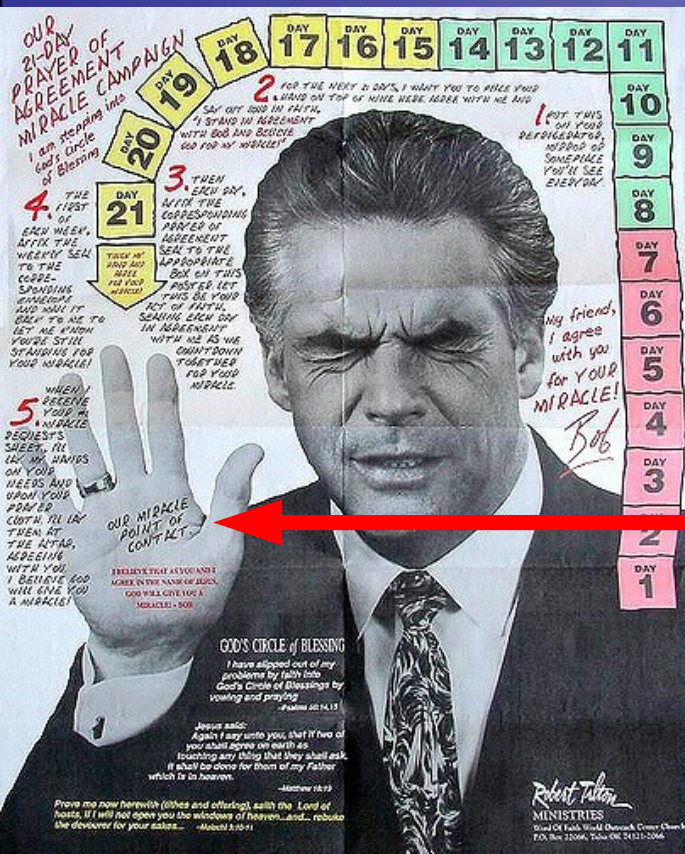
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 - Texas televangelist Bob Tilton was a dramatic practitioner of the “Word of Faith” movement (which preaches that you can “speak” God's promises into existence through your words and thus you should pray, “God, we *know* that you are going to give me a Maserati...” etc. —and if no Maserati appears, you either have unrepentant sin in your life, or you haven't given God enough of a “seed” of faith in your sacrificial giving for Him to use to bless you with)



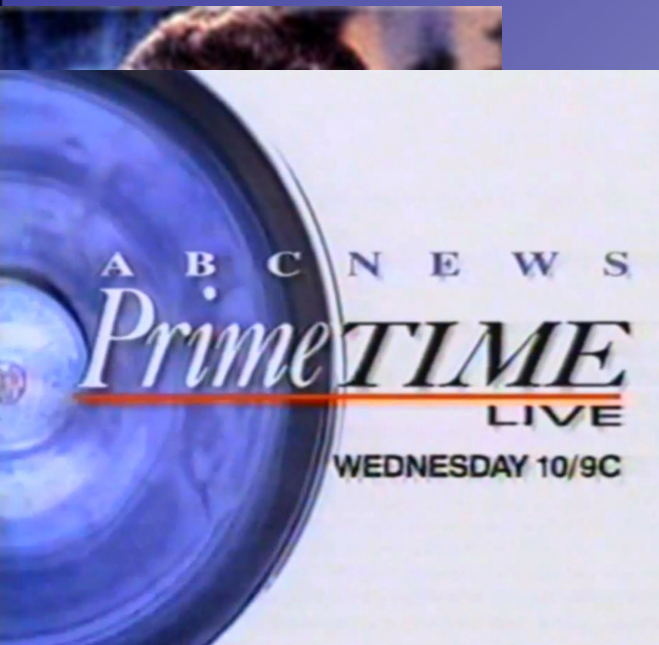
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 - Tilton would regularly break into speaking in tongues in mid-sentence, or claim to have a “word of knowledge” that someone watching has a pain in their side or cancer, etc. (and if they'd just pledge at least \$5,000, God would heal them)
 - Tilton also promised to personally pray over every prayer request sent in, and even sold posters that gave you directions on how to achieve a miracle within 21 days (and yes, if you placed your hand on Bob's hand on the poster, then his own anointed power would flow into your own life through that “miracle point of contact”)



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 - Tilton also promised to personally pray over every prayer request sent in, and even sold posters that gave you directions on how to achieve a miracle within 21 days
 - *Primetime Live* investigated Tilton and found that his mail service regularly just grabbed money from prayer request letters and then threw the letters away, unread
 - In fact, more than *five tons* of unread letters were found in one government investigation alone



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- Tilton was sued for fraud, lost his *Success-N-Life* television ministry, got divorced from his wife, and otherwise generally imploded
- However, today, Tilton continues with the *newest* incarnation of his television ministry and pastors the two-campus Word of Faith Family Church out of Miami and Las Vegas, grossing more than \$24 million per year



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 - But that only started off the firestorm of televangelist scandals that struck in the 1980s
 - **In the wake of generations of artificial formalism, followed by hippie-inspired simplicity, followed by slick megachurches and corrupt televangelists, Christians in the 1990s yearned for a new, deeper, more sincere form of Christianity**
 - So as the world entered into a new, *post-modern* age (one less interested in the structural traditions of the modern age—i.e.; everything from 1800 or so on, seeing it all as the failure of rationalism to answer the really *important* questions)

From modernity to post-modernity

Modern age

- production
- Community life
- Social class
- Family
- A belief in continuity and situation
- A role of education
- A one-way media
- Overt social control
- Nationhood
- Science aided progress and finding the truth

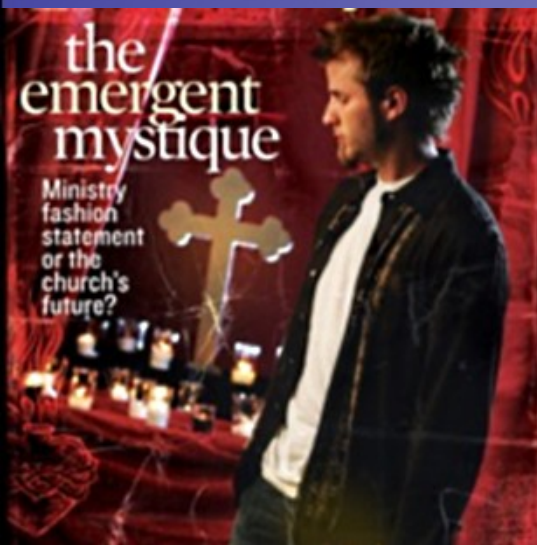
Post modern age

- consumption
- fragmentation (individualism)
- Identity from other sources
- Families (many options)
- Breakage with the past/tradition
- Education for what?
- Duality of media (choice/interchange)
- Covert control (CCTV etc)
- Global
- Science is only one source of knowledge – plurality of truths now



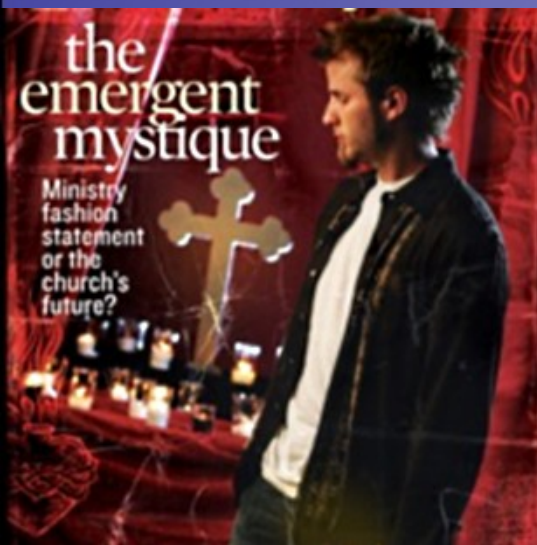
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 - So as the world entered into a new, *post-modern* age, a new “emergent” church was born—far less concerned about doctrines or traditions or truth statements, etc. and far more concerned about relationships and felt, mystical connections
 - Thus, “emergent” church worship is very informal and non-traditional in some ways
(pastors usually wear jeans, the services are participatory to the point of being conversational, they make use of multimedia and high-tech production services, etc.)



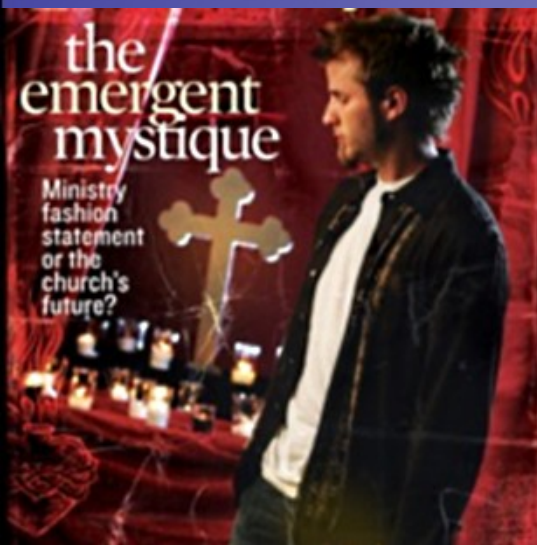
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(to get past intellectual rationalism and embrace a multi-sensory, mystical experience, many “emergent” pastors focus on liturgies, reciting the prayers of medieval mystics, sacraments as mystical conduits to God, etc.)



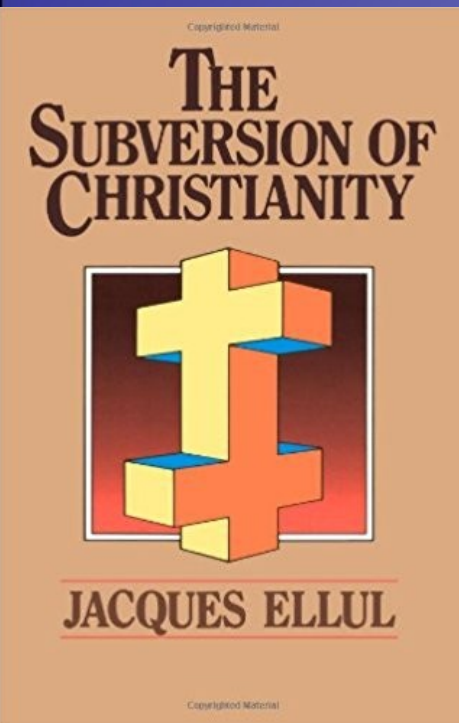
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 - Thus, “emergent” church worship is very informal and non-traditional in some ways and very formal and traditional in other ways
 - So within the “emergent” movement are trends toward *whole-church* involvement and genuine *personal* participation in a *holistic* worship of God as well as an abandonment of theology as a waste of time when you could be *really doing* something (leading to embracing more comfortable doctrines of universalism and perfectionism, and embracing alternative sexualities, etc. —because there is no Truth... just truths...)



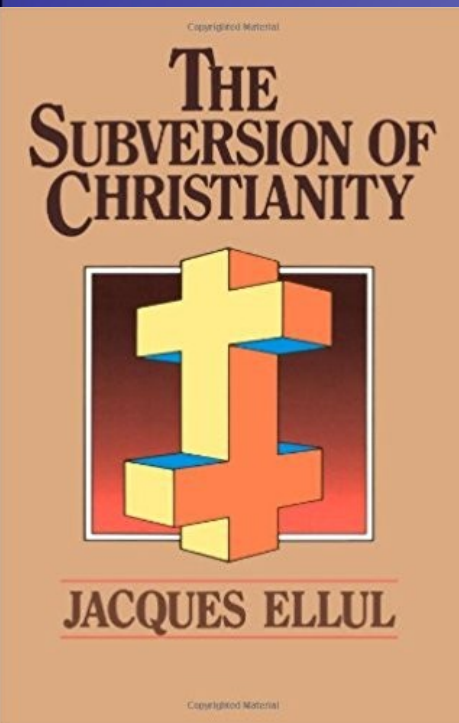
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- Funky little teaching moment—
 - T. S. Eliot once wrote, “Christianity is always adapting itself into something which can be believed.”
 - Beyond that, Jacques Ellul argued that there's a fundamental difference between *Christianity* and *Christianism*
(between developing and living in a relationship with Christ that changes your heart, and promoting a philosophy that dictates how *other* people are supposed to change their *behaviors*)



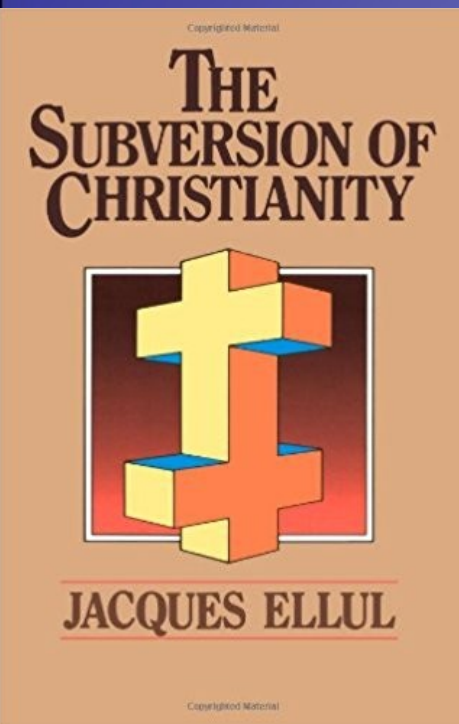
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(between expressing a living embassy *to* the world and trying to *control* the world for Jesus)



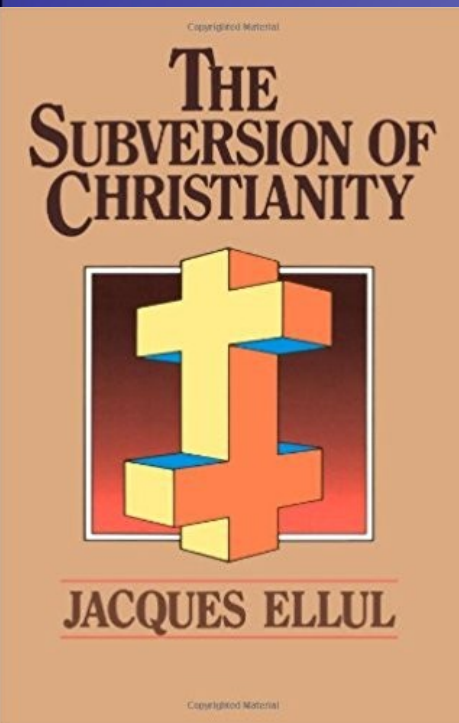
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 - But the church—being made up of fleshly people—tends to reinvent itself to look like its culture
 - In the Middle Ages, it became centralized, with large, ornate buildings with a throne at the center (cathedrals emulating palaces)
 - In the 1950s, it became focused on looking good on the outside and feeling comfortable with stable interpersonal structures (1950s Protestantism echoing 1950s America)
 - In the 1970s, it featured guitars and tie-dye at relaxed meetings on a beach for young people (Jesus people echoing hippies)
 - In the 1980s, it emphasized slick presentations on stage for people to watch and be entertained by (seeker-driven services reaching the MTV generation)
 - Today, our post-modern culture is spawning a post-modern, “emergent” church



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 - At every stage, we've argued that we were changing to be more *Biblical*, but we're often just letting the *culture* dictate our worship styles
(or, when we react *against* these changes, we tend to argue that we're *upholding* Biblical culture, when what we're really doing is simply upholding the *last* culture's church culture)



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 - At every stage, we've argued that we were changing to be more *Biblical*, but we're often just letting the *culture* dictate our worship styles
 - As Ellul argued, “The church lets itself be seduced, invaded, dominated by the ease with which it can now spread the gospel by force (another force than that of God) and use its influence to make the state, too, Christian. It is great acquiescence to the temptation Jesus himself resisted, for when Satan offers to give him all the kingdoms of the earth, Jesus refuses—but the church accepts.”
 - How can studying *history* help us *prevent* this?
 - What have *you* learned from studying history?

