



To provide Christians
with reliable scholarly
evidence in support of
the historical basis of
the faith

To equip them to
share that faith with
confidence

Bible and Church Conference

Westminster Chapel, London
Saturday June 20th 2009



Bible & Church

www.bibleandchurch.com

Conference Context

Society is being bombarded with misinformation about the Bible. It has allegedly been corrupted by power-hungry Christians who are charged with having omitted books they did not like. They changed the original message of Jesus.

When these wide-spread claims are made in the media, most Christians don't know how to respond or what to say in support of the trustworthiness of the New Testament. Some have their faith shaken.

- 'The four gospels that made it into the official canon were chosen, more or less arbitrarily, out of a large sample of at least a dozen including the Gospels of Thomas, Peter, Nicodemus, Philip, Bartholomew and Mary Magdalene.' (Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 121)
- 'For a long time, there was incandescent debate over which of the "Gospels" should be regarded as divinely inspired.' (Christopher Hitchens, *God is Not Great*, p. 113)

This day conference brings together experts who will:

- Expose false claims about the New Testament
- Show how the New Testament can be trusted
- Equip ordinary Christians to share their faith with confidence

Program: Admission is free but a Free-will offering will be taken to help with expenses. A donation of £5 would be appreciated.



10:30 – 11:35 am

Have we got the history right? *Dr Peter J. Williams*

- How early were core Christian beliefs established?
- Are early Christian records legend, myth or fabrication?
- How easy would it have been for fabricated accounts of Jesus to be circulated?

Christian records provide challenging evidence that they contain high-quality eyewitness testimony, exactly as one would expect if they are basically historical. Even the very nature of the Christian message makes it very unlikely that it would be made up.

Dr Peter (P.J.) Williams PhD is Warden of Tyndale House and was educated at Cambridge University in the study of ancient languages related to the Bible. Before coming to Tyndale House as Warden in 2007 Peter was a Senior Lecturer in New Testament and Deputy Head of the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy at Aberdeen University.

“Not many scholars can speak competently across as many technical fields as can Pete.” - Prof Don Carson.



12:00 – 1:05 pm

Have we got the text right? *Dr Dirk Jongkind*

- What is the evidence for the New Testament text?
- Has the Bible been deliberately corrupted or changed through the passage of time?
- What can we know about the people who handed down the New Testament?

Lunch Break

For maps of local restaurants visit www.bibleandchurch.com

No food allowed in the main auditorium. Water only.

Dr Dirk Jongkind is a Dutch biblical scholar who finished his PhD at Cambridge University on Codex Sinaiticus, the oldest complete copy of the New Testament. Employed by the British Library to carry out research on Codex Sinaiticus he also published *Scribal Habits in Codex Sinaiticus* (2007).

Currently he is the Research Fellow in New Testament Text and Language at Tyndale House and the John W. Laing Fellow at St Edmund's College, Cambridge.



2:15 – 3:20 pm

Have we got Jesus right? *Dr Simon J. Gathercole*

- Why have we only got four gospels in the New Testament?
- Are there significant differences between the New Testament gospels and the ‘other gospels’?
- What are the gospels of Mary, Thomas and Judas all about?

We will see research evidence that finds the ‘other gospels’ unreliable as compared with the four gospels both in their picture of history and the message of Jesus. If you want reliable real pictures of Jesus read the New Testament.

3:45 – 4:45 pm

“Your Turn!” Q&A from the floor – Panel Discussion with Speakers

Dr Simon Gathercole is Editor of the *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. Studying Classics and Theology at Cambridge University he completed his doctorate at Durham University.

Now a Lecturer in New Testament at the University of Cambridge and Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge Simon has published several books including - *The Gospel of Judas: Rewriting Early Christianity* (Oxford University Press). Simon is writing a commentary on the Gospel of Thomas.



Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6BS

Westminster Chapel is easily accessible by bus and tube and is within a short walk from the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace. The main entrance is on the corner of Buckingham Gate and Castle Lane.

Take the tube: St James's Park (District and Circle lines) or Victoria (District, Circle and Victoria lines)

Take the bus: 11, 24, 148 and 211 routes all have stops on nearby Victoria Street

Take the car: On weekends, subject to some restrictions, there is free parking on surrounding streets

Take the bike: We have parking for bicycles onsite and there is parking for motorcycles on nearby Spenser Street



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For more information about the Bible and Church Conference visit
www.bibleandchurch.com
or email: June20@bibleandchurch.com

Who are we?

Tyndale House is a division of the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF), a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales No. 387932.

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