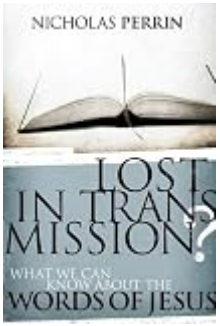
LOST IN TRANSMISSION

Posted on August 4, 2008 by Eddie

Category: Reviews

This is an excellent book; it's part refutation of Ehrman's *Misquoting Jesus* and part personal spiritual journey. The two themes in the book are woven together well and the constant changing from discussions of post-modernism and the nature of the canon to autobiographical stories keeps the narrative flowing and interesting.



The subject matter is wide ranging covering the historicity of Jesus, the reasons why we have four (and only four) Gospels and whether or not the whole translation process means that we can't trust the Scriptures. It isn't an entirely comfortable book, if you want cast iron proof that the Bible is true then you won't find it here.

> *The notion that we believe the Bible to be God's Word on certain proofs is not a biblical notion; it is a notion of fundamentalism inherited from the scientific age. The one who thinks that the Bible can be proved as God's Word will undoubtedly be disappointed... The revealed Word of God, precisely because it is a personal revelation from a personal God, can be neither proved nor disproved as divine. It is objectively inspired because it is from God. Our subjective impressions and inquiries regarding Scripture may leave us with certain tensions, but they cannot be the basis on which we determine the Word of God. (p.190)*

For Perrin, it is how we relate to Christ which will be the ultimate arbiter of how we relate to Scripture. You cannot discuss the Bible as a historic object without confronting the claims of Jesus regarding the Kingdom of God. Regarding Jesus; Perrin writes:

> *... anyone seeking to deny the historical Jesus is attempting something that is at once too difficult and too easy. It is too difficult in that the evidence for the existence of Jesus is so strong; were we to reject it, it would ultimately mean either glaring inconsistencies between our approach to Jesus history and our approach to other kids of history or that virtually nothing can be said about history at all. the denial of Jesus is too easy in that it relieves us from the labour of tackling a much thornier question: who was Jesus. Intellectual abdication and methodological inconsistency, or intellectual abdication and a minimalism amounting to nihilism:... all deniers of the historical Jesus must take (their) pick. (p.22)*

The story of the book is more or less bracketed by two songs. It starts with a consideration of John Lennon's *Imagine*; that hymn to the scientific age which offers us no way to the perfect world it describes. It ends with the Doors *Break on through to the other side.* Perrin doesn't know what Jim Morrison meant by the lyrics, but he knows that it is only by breaking out of the intellectual sterility

of modernism and post-modernism and coming to terms with Christ that there is any hope for the world.

If time allows, I might return to this one and blog it chapter by chapter. In the meantime, get over to Amazon and order yourself a copy. It is great stuff and you really do need to read it. Take my word for it. Lost In Transmission?: What We Can Know About the Words of Jesus.

Perfect holiday reading (even for a rainy camping trip).