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## Conspiracy Spinners

The popular culture has fallen in love with conspiracy. This has caught on in public life as well as the entertainment industry. We are all familiar with questions regarding the death of John F. Kennedy, the disappearance of Jimmy Hoffa and other things for which direct answers have not been forthcoming. In the gaps that emerge in these instances, scores of writers, journalists and filmmakers have rendered numerous theories filled with speculation and conjecture. Each of these are littered with some degree of truth and a fair degree of subjective interpretation that promotes the ideas of the authors. Many of these ideas apparently have more to do with personal exposure and gain at times than revealing truth. In each of these works the basis upon which the conclusions have been drawn may result in debate and controversy, but hardly ever brings anyone closer to a statement of reality. The idea that certain secret groups and societies control what the public knows has been demonstrated in recent films such as **National Treasure** and **The DaVinci Code**. One religious film that graced the screens of theaters nationwide several years ago presented Christ as Jesse, Peter as Pete and the crucifixion was performed in a barnyard where no one else could witness the act. This is not what the scriptures present. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles giving them the ability to preach and be understood in the native languages of those present in Jerusalem (**Acts 2.4-6**). As Peter spoke of the death of Christ he reminded the crowd that they had witnessed these things. **“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain”** (**Acts 2.22-23**). The events of that day were dramatic, and they were public. Peter drew on the knowledge that Christ had performed miracles and signs among them stating that by these things they knew that He was **“approved of God”** (**Acts 2.22**). The healing of the lame man was also done publicly

(**Acts 3.1-8**). Luke writes, **“And all the people saw him walking and praising God...”** (**Acts 3.9**). Later, when Peter and John had been arrested, even the enemies of Christ noted that a miracle had taken place which could not be denied. **“What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it.”** (**Acts 4.16**). The man who had been healed was present at this time as well (**Acts 4.14**). The survival of the Gospel into the present time indicates that the beginning of the church and preaching of the Gospel came about with a power that caused those who heard the message to respond. Some favorably and some negatively. The writer of Hebrews comments on this. **“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”** (**Heb 2.3-4**). Had there been nothing to this new message, the people of the time would have rejected it. History bears out the remarkable growth of the church in the first century and the influence of the scriptures works today as an expression and proof of God’s power and intent to save mankind. At that time, as now, there were those who fought the Gospel and sought to spread falsehood and dissension. Paul warned against this in his statements to the Ephesian elders (**Acts 20.29-30**). Paul also warned that this corrupting influence would bring about a **“falling away”** in his writing to the Thessalonians (**2 Thess 2.3-12**). Once more history bears out that this happened and we live with the result of man’s failure to adhere to the word that was revealed. While God revealed his word plainly man attempts to transform it into a mysterious shroud. But we love a good mystery, or conspiracy don’t we?

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