



Incentives For Conspiracy & Coverup

The belief that the Gospel record represents a complex conspiracy and subsequent cover-up leads to many questions for which there are no answers. We have looked at the nature of the men responsible for this action and raised the question of how were they able to orchestrate the world's best lie. For what reason? Given the diversity of the writers of the New Testament, fishermen, a tax collector, a zealot Pharisee and a gentile physician we create a dilemma as to how this conspiracy could have grown and influenced so many. We might be able to understand the apostles following the death of Christ. Left without their charismatic leader, Christ, they would need to perpetuate a life for themselves. Perhaps they had seen the effect that Christ had on the multitudes and possibly saw a way to "cash in" on this popularity. Such a group as the apostles would need to orchestrate the hoax, manipulate the masses and somehow, in the midst of such a complex lie, speak of goodness and spirituality. Christ stated, "***A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.***" (Matt 12.35). Reviewing the history of the world and other great hoaxes, it is evident that at some point they fall apart. This disintegration can be brought about by the death of a leader, conflict among the members who are part of the lie, or, by others discovering the truth and exposing the perpetrators. It is also evident that the teachings recorded in the New Testament, if one wishes to deny the divine element of inspiration, are filled with moral goodness at the least and sound spiritual practice at best. If these men were responsible for such a deception, they certainly were out of character in the things that they taught. We would be forced to assume then that their lives would have betrayed any underlying motives since the amount of energy needed to sustain the belief would be extreme. How could a group of dishonest liars create a book that has inspired so many to live in such a way as to do good to others? Certainly there have been abuses of the scriptures for the sake of control and gain, but this is denounced in the very book these individuals state they proclaimed and lived by. History bears out the hypocrisy of such practices and sects have eventually faded, sometimes to be replaced by others but all with a finite lifespan. If we take this view then we must consider that every word written in the New Testament is pure fabrication. Once more, this leads to a remarkable achievement unparalleled in human history. If the motives were for personal gain then why did the apostles and early Christians live as they did, denying the pursuit of material things, a legacy which has been taken to extremes by some religious groups to this day. If we go back to our beginning idea, to use a common sense approach to interpreting these events and their meaning, then we have no explanation for the survival of the scriptures in the form that we possess. It is also evident that the teaching of the Gospel was in direct contrast to the ideas of the day. During the time that Christ was with his disciples they failed to grasp the meaning and intent of many of

the things Christ taught them. These individuals were Jews and it seems reasonable that they would have focused on the Jewish nation. Prior to Christ's ascension, the disciples, still not understanding the nature of the kingdom asked if Christ was going to restore the physical power of the Jews (Acts 1.6). This lack of understanding was evident at one point as the disciples asked Christ if he wanted them to command fire to consume a village of the Samaritans who had rejected him. The Lord's answer to this was, "***Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.***" (Luke 9.52-54). In these instances we see a nationalistic pride that was still plagued with the idea of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. In Acts 2 we find on the day of Pentecost that the spiritual nature of the kingdom unfolds as Peter preaches the first Gospel sermon. A speech which denies the above misunderstandings. If Christ was indeed dead, hidden in a tomb somewhere, what was the source of this new doctrine which defied their own thinking. Again, we must shake our heads in wonder at the conspiracy theorists who suggest this. Having misunderstood Christ, and obviously holding on to a pro-Jewish idealism, how is it that the Gospel was later taken to the Gentiles? How is it that Peter did not understand the mission of the Gospel and balk at the idea of preaching to those who were considered unclean by Jewish standards (Acts 10)? How is it that the apostle Paul, a devout and zealous Jew suddenly changed his manner of life, turning from a persecutor of the church to the great preacher of that which he tried to destroy? None of this makes any sense from a rational point of view. The only explanation that does have merit is that the disciples indeed received power from on high on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit, who guided them into all truth as Christ had promised (John 14.26). It makes sense that the apostle Paul did not abandon his beliefs for a well crafted lie, but saw the Lord himself on the road to Damascus. It makes sense that the New Testament is the inspired word of God and through it's revelation even the ideas of Christ's own disciples gave way to the true nature of the message that they carried to the world. It makes sense that this message is indeed the power of God unto salvation (Rom 1.16) and that the providence and power of God has preserved it to this day. It makes sense that Christ indeed rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and there reigns as the only Lord and authority over all things spiritual. It defies explanation when we think of the time and social nature of the Jewish world when these things took place. An environment that we will examine next week, and which surely would have exposed the truth two thousand years ago.