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SPECIAL EDITION:
**Born OF the Spirit—
Borne Along BY the Spirit**
Thirty-five Years of FaithSearch International
Ministry

www.faithsearch.org

The Lion and the Lamb

By Dr. Don Bierle

In his creative series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, C.S. Lewis portrays a lion (Aslan) who in love gives his life as an atoning sacrifice, by being killed on a stone table. In resurrection power, Aslan conquers evil and its consequences forever. Everyone acquainted with this series can't help but love the peaceful, sensitive, patient, all-knowing, righteous, and victorious lion. (But "he's not a tame lion," the author reminds his readers.)

Of course, C.S. Lewis is depicting the fictitious Aslan in the role of the real-life Jesus Christ. Unlike the Narnia world of "make-believe," Jesus was a man who entered earth's history through birth from a real mother. He grew in wisdom and stature in a real family, in a real school, and in a real town with other real people. As the apostle



Photo by Wolfgang Sauber

Gothic revival stained glass window depicting the Lamb of God (ca. 1890) in Kájov, Czech Republic.

New Testament Field Trip to the Holy Land

Jesus: "Who do you say I am?"

FaithSearch International is conducting our first ever Holy Land tour, and you're invited. For twelve days, from **April 30 to May 11**, we'll see the land of the Bible.

The tour is designed to bring your Bible to life and to reflect on the research reviewed by Dr. Don Bierle in his book

Surprised by Faith and in the FaithSearch Discovery presentation. These are the primary elements of our worldwide ministry of proclaiming the Gospel with evidence. God has used them to lead over seventy thousand people to make faith commitments to follow Jesus.

Touring with FaithSearch, you will explore firsthand some of the compelling evidence which establishes the New Testament as the **most reliable document of antiquity, bar none**. The structure is designed to allow Dr. Bierle to develop the "field trip" idea (as presented in his book) with Israel as the setting in which to "gather" the evidence.

Space is limited so don't delay. Registration details are on our Web site: www.faithsearch.org, or you may call our office: 953.401.4501. The tour is being conducted in cooperation with Golden Eagle Travel and Tours, Excelsior, MN.



Visit the remains of the third or fourth century synagogue in Capernaum. This synagogue was built on the site (literally on top of its foundation) of the one in which Jesus often preached during His ministry.

John later wrote, "...we have heard... we have seen with our eyes... and our hands have touched... the Word of life" (1 John 1:1).

A popular worship song has captured very simply this truth of the Christian faith, "How Great is our God—sing with me... Lion and the Lamb, Lion and the Lamb." Indeed **Jesus is identified in a paradox of being both a Lion and a Lamb** in Scripture.

The Lamb

Jewish tradition and prophecy was settled that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and was to be first revealed from the "tower of the flock"—a special shepherd's watch which lay close to Bethlehem along the road to Jerusalem. A rabbinic rule provided that any lamb, born in a flock from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, must be presumed to be for Temple sacrifice.

No wonder the angel God sent to that hillside near Bethlehem had a message of such joy for all the people: "...today in the city of David there has been born for you a
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FAITHSEARCH

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For information call:

+1.952.401.4501 / Toll-free (USA) +1.800.964.1447

Address:

12701 Whitewater Dr., STE 150, Minnetonka, MN 55343, USA

Visit our Web site: www.FaithSearch.org

Online store: shop.FaithSearch.org

E-mail: info@FaithSearch.org

Board Members:

Fred Bills, *Board Chairman*

- Larry Balmer • Don Bierle • David Berryhill
- Robb Hiller • Jim Lewerer •
- Jim Rasmussen • Steve Sheridan

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CLASSIFIEDS

GOLF 2014!

The second annual "Explore the Evidence" Golf Classic held at Dahlgreen Golf Club was a **great success**. We had sunny skies and temps in the low 70s.

There were some memorable shots; both good and bad, but fun was had by all. We were blessed with increased participation and utilized some of the monies for technology and marketing materials.

Please consider joining us next year on **Friday, September 12, 2014**. We are planning to honor fire fighters next year in remembrance of our 9-11 week time frame.



The winning team at the 2013 Golf Classic (L to R): Rolf E., Shawn M., Chris K., and Jon L..

Save the Date: Saturday, May 17, 2014

FaithSearch 35th Anniversary Benefit Dinner and Silent Auction

Plan now to join us on **May 17, 2014**, for an evening of good food, great fellowship, friendly bidding, delightful entertainment, inspirational reports, and spiritual challenge. Friends of *FaithSearch* will gather in support of the proclamation of the Gospel with evidence and to celebrate **thirty-five years of faithful ministry**. Watch for more details about the dinner and program, and consider inviting some friends to join you!

WHEN AND WHERE

Saturday, May 17, 2014

5:00 p.m.

Grace Church

Eden Prairie, MN 55347

Calling for Donations for our Silent Auction

In recent years, we have added the fun and excitement of a silent auction to our Benefit Dinner. There are great values to be had, and the friendly competition for a good cause has been enjoyable.

We plan to continue this tradition in 2014, and are eager to engage others in making this event an even greater success. Do you, or someone you know whom you could recommend to us:

- **Own a business** which could donate items or services for our Silent Auction?
- **Know someone** who could donate items or services?
- **Have the "moxie"** to ask for donations from businesses and people in your networks for donations?



Guests enjoyed browsing the diverse array of items at the 2013 Silent Auction.

We'd love to hear from you! Give us a call at 952.401.4501 or E-mail us with details (info@faithsearch.org).

2013 FaithSearch Benefit Dinner

Last year over 160 people joined us for this evening event. International, award-winning, illusionist **Adrian Van Vector** amazed us with his tricks. We heard inspirational stories (*no tricks!*) from our evangelists, about both the **response from** and the

ongoing need for the proclamation of the Gospel with evidence. President **Dr. Don Bierle** and emcee **Dr. Irv Woolf** each challenged participants to *step up and make a difference* in the eternal destinies of people by making a sacrificial financial investment in the ministry. (*If believers in Jesus don't give to the cause of telling people about the hope of the Gospel, who will?*)

As a result, God provided \$43,875 from our guests toward our annual budget of \$539,500! Our silent also auction provided fun and friendly competition, and raised

more than \$6,000 in addition to those gifts. We thank the Lord for the generous giving of our friends.

We hope to see YOU at our 2014 Friends of *FaithSearch* 35th Anniversary Celebration and Benefit Dinner! Plan now to attend, save the date, and to invite your friends.

We hope to see YOU there



Dr. Don Bierle addressed the audience at the 2013 Benefit Dinner, introducing the headquarters staff (on platform) and evangelists (ringing the stage) who together conduct the ministry of *FaithSearch* International.

The Lion and the Lamb

(Cont. from page 1)

Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11). Destined for sacrifice, Jesus (=Savior) was introduced to the world by John the Baptist simply as “...the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29)! **Christmas is all about celebrating the arrival of this Lamb–Immanuel: God with us** (Matthew 1:23).

The Lion

The patriarch Jacob called his many sons together and prophesied about their future (see Genesis 49). Concerning his son Judah he referred to him as a lion whose rule (scepter) would not cease until his staff would be passed to Him to whom rule rightly belongs, and to whom all the nations would eventually be obedient (vv. 9-10).



The Adoration of the Lamb of God (ca. 1432) by Jan van Eyck, from the altarpiece of a cathedral in Ghent, Belgium.

The role of a lion and the ruler’s staff was passed to Judah’s descendent, Jesus, forty years before the loss of Israel’s rule when the Temple was destroyed by the Romans (A.D. 70).

Jesus, of the tribe of Judah, having conquered death through the power of His resurrection, is then identified with absolute authority in John’s vision into the heavenlies: “See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals” (Revelation 5:5).

Praise to the Lion and the Lamb

In the very next line of Scripture John records: “Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne...” (Revelation 5:6). John concludes:

“Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand...In a loud voice they sang:

‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’

How Great Is Our God – sing with me!

**Christmas
is all about
celebrating
the arrival
of this Lamb**

BAR Headline

“Brother of Jesus” Inscription Is Authentic!

In what some have called the “forgery case of the century,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* reported* that an Israel court ruled the prosecution (Israel Antiquities Authority– IAA) had failed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the inscription on an ossuary (bone box) discovered in 2002 was a forgery. The court did not rule on whether the inscription is authentic, but there are several lines of excellent evidence to support that conclusion.

The Aramaic inscription on the burial box reads, “Jacob [James], son of Joseph, brother of Jesus.” Joseph was the husband of Mary, Jesus’ mother (Matthew 1:18-19). James is identified in the New Testament as one of the brothers of Jesus (Matthew 13:55) and later as the leader of the Jerusalem church (Galatians 2:9; Acts 15:13; 21:18). He was martyred in A.D. 62. Some archaeologists believe this inscription to be the **earliest attestation of these three important figures in the history of Christianity.**



The James ossuary was on display at the Royal Ontario Museum from November 15, 2002, to January 5, 2003. The inscription (highlighted, inset) has cleared a complicated court challenge.

Two world-class experts in paleography (the study of ancient writing) have expressed their professional view that the **inscription is authentic.** In addition, the results of scientific tests on the limestone of the box and the presence of an ancient patina on the entire inscription both support its authenticity and its origin during the time period in which James died.

Is the “Jesus” on the box the Jesus of Nazareth, the “founder” of Christianity? That cannot be stated with certainty, only as a probability. A prominent statistician of Tel Aviv University in Israel has calculated that there is a **95% probability** that fewer than two persons in the relevant population at that time would be named James, while also having a father named Joseph and a brother named Jesus. Furthermore, there is only one other ossuary out of 900 found so far which lists a brother. The reason for doing so would undoubtedly be due to the brother’s importance and fame.

While we, as Christians, don’t need the James bone box to ‘prove’ our faith, **its authenticity is important affirmation** to skeptics of the New Testament’s historical truthfulness. As the apostle Peter said, “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty” (2 Peter 1:16).

For more detail about the James bone box, see pages 45-46 in *Surprised by Faith* (third edition) and the references provided in the end “Notes” section for chapter 2.

* “Brother of Jesus’ Inscription is Authentic!”, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 38:04, Jul/Aug 2012. *Biblical Archaeology Review* (BAR), edited by Hershel Shanks, is an archaeology magazine bridging the academic study of archaeology and a broad general audience eager to understand better the world of the Bible. Written by the world’s greatest archaeologists, most distinguished scholars, leading researchers, and world-renowned experts, BAR has covered both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament since its beginning in 1975. BAR is a nonsectarian forum for the discussion of biblical archaeology. (<http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/magazine/about-biblical-archaeology-review-magazine/>)



Dr. Don Bierle

If It's Good Enough...

...for the Apostles of Jesus... They established in Scripture the subject for effectively presenting the Gospel of salvation to the unbelieving world: **Jesus' life, teaching, and miracles.** While the apostles could appeal to their *firsthand knowledge* of Jesus as evidence, two thousand years later we must point to the *New Testament account* of those events.

In today's culture of skepticism, it is effective to use historical and archaeological evidence to establish the New Testament as an **accurate, eyewitness record** of the facts concerning Jesus. Through this “Gospel with evidence” proclamation, the Holy Spirit removes skeptical resistance, and the satisfied mind of the unbeliever is set free to embrace Jesus for salvation through faith. **God ordained this approach through the apostles,** and has brought thousands to Himself through this same approach during thirty-five years of *FaithSearch* ministry as well!



Soctt Boeser

Transforming Truth

Is it possible that God, the creator and sustainer of all things, has what you're looking for? I was raised in a traditional religious type church, **struggling to keep up a religious image** so others would see me as a good person. I often gave up trying because it was exhausting work.

People seeking to know God must begin with knowing Him for who He revealed Himself to be, and subsequently the plan and purpose He has for His creation. We were made, first and foremost, to be in an intimate, covenant relationship with God. Many people have no idea what this means or how to obtain it.

The Gospel with Evidence PowerPoint® presentation can open the eyes of your mind and heart, so you can see and know the God of the universe, and enter into an authentic, personal relationship with Him through Jesus. When the grace of the Lord Jesus transforms your heart, your life can be a bastion of joy and peace as well as a beacon of light and hope to others. **Now that is a recipe for transforming the world!**



Reuben David

Historically Verifiable

I often hear critics say, “Christianity is a blind faith,” meaning that believers cannot support their claims about the person of Christ.

While Jesus existed in eternity, He also came into history as a person, born in a specific location. He is referred to as Jesus of Nazareth; In that one reference I see Jesus Christ rooted in history and geography, as well as in eternity. That's why I like to share the Gospel with evidence: **the life and times of Jesus on this earth are historically verifiable.** The French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte said, “Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires [upon] force. Jesus Christ founded an empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for Him.”

Indeed, there are millions right now who risk their lives for the sake of their faith in Jesus. **It would not make sense to risk your life for a legend.** The Gospel lives on evidence.



Joe Komarek

Just the Facts

I loved watching reruns of the 1950s crime drama, “*Dragnet*.” My favorite line as a kid was hearing Sergeant Joe Friday say, **“All we know are the facts, ma'am.”** At *FaithSearch* International, too, we deal with the facts. Facts and truth statements are the building blocks to bring refreshing illumination and freedom to people awash in a culture of relativity.

I love sharing the Gospel with Evidence because it presents the historical, archeological, and scientific facts of the Christian faith in a logical and balanced way. Jesus said that truth sets people free (see John 8:31-32). When people follow His teaching, they can be free, their lives change, and they produce fruit.

As a “*Dragnet*” fan, perhaps I should paraphrase the program's introduction each time I present: “The story you are about to hear is true. **The evidence has NOT been changed to protect the misinformed.**”



To All Peoples Everywhere



Adrian Van Vector

Plain and Simple

I was raised in a secular home, and never thought to ask whether God exists. I didn't learn much about God until I met my first Christ follower as a teenager. Then I began to discover the importance of a well-thought-out worldview.

In my early 20s, as a follower of Jesus, I was surrounded by contradictory, emotional, or “blind faith” religious ideas (“you just need to believe” or “if you feel it's true in your heart”, etc.) **I had questions and wanted the hard truth... I found solid answers supported by facts.**

I love to share the Gospel with evidence. Coming to a lasting faith for any other reason is just too subjective. Had I received those “blind faith” answers when I first believed I wouldn't know how to evaluate or defend my faith. **I believe because Christianity is TRUE, plain and simple.**



Oleg Voskresensky

Know It All?

I love teaching teachers and training trainers! It is the most challenging and yet the most blessed aspect of proclaiming the Good News. *Teachers, by definition, already know it all, have seen it all, and have taught it all.* They have been asked tough questions and are ready with smart answers.

They already know the best way to present the material and to keep an audience's attention. They can tell immediately whether you are valid or fake, and if your message is even worth their time.

The fortress of the Russian educational system has been challenged many times before. We seem to have discovered a “Trojan horse” to open the gates. “Rational, Historic Foundations of Christian Faith” (i.e. *FaithSearch* Discovery) is **readily accepted and greatly appreciated** by scholars, teachers, and students at all academic levels. They know this most significant part of world history has been removed from their curricula; and the historical, archeological, and paleographic facts excluded. Filling that gap and asking my audience, “**What does this mean to you?**” is the most joyous and rewarding experience!