

Newsweek on The Bible – So Misrepresented it's a Sin

[Excerpts by the Berean Call Ministry]

Newsweek magazine decided to greet the start of 2015 with a massive cover story on the Bible....The author of the massive essay is Kurt Eichenwald, who boasts an impressive reputation as a writer and reporter for newspapers like *The New York Times* and magazines including *Vanity Fair*. A two-time winner of the George Polk Award, he was also a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize. Eichenwald, however, has been primarily known for reporting and writing in a very different area of expertise. Most of his writing has been on business and financial matters, including business scandals.

When it comes to *Newsweek's* cover story, "The Bible: So Misunderstood It's a Sin," Eichenwald appears to be far outside his area of expertise and knowledge. More to the point, he really does not address the subject of the Bible like a reporter at all. His article is a hit-piece that lacks any journalistic balance or credibility. His only sources cited within the article are from severe critics of evangelical Christianity, and he does not even represent some of them accurately.

But Eichenwald demonstrates absolutely no attempt to understand traditional Christian understandings of the Bible, nor ever to have spoken with the people he asserts "claim to revere [the Bible] but don't read it." What follows is a reckless rant against the Bible and Christians who claim to base their faith upon its teachings.

In a predictable move, Eichenwald claims to base his research on "works of scores of theologians and scholars, some of which dates back centuries." But the sources he cites are from the far, far left of biblical studies and the most significant living source appears to be University of North Carolina professor Bart Ehrman, who is post-Christian. Even so, he makes claims that go far beyond even what Bart Ehrman has claimed in print.

Eichenwald writes as if textual criticism is a recent development and as if Christian scholars have not been practicing it for centuries. He also grossly exaggerates the time between the writing of the New Testament documents and the establishment of a functional canon. He tells of the process of copying manuscripts by hand over centuries as if that seals some argument about textual reliability, wrongly suggesting that many, if not most, of the ancient Christian scribes were illiterate.

He cited Bart Ehrman as saying, "There are more variations among our manuscripts than there are words in the New Testament," but then he follows that with his own concession: "Most of those discrepancies are little more than the handwritten equivalent of a typo, but that error was then included by future scribes." So there are many variations, but most are "little more than the handwritten equivalent of a typo?" Then, why is the point even important?

Eichenwald's opening sentences trumpeted his disdain for evangelical Christianity's sexual ethic, and his essay turns to deny that Christians have any textual basis for a negative view of homosexuality. He dismisses 1 Timothy as being falsely claimed to be written by the Apostle Paul, citing, oddly enough, Friedrich Schleiermacher, the father of modern theological liberalism, who made that argument in 1807. There is no counter-argument offered.... Interestingly, he appears unable to ...

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