

12-8-2006

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Chapman University Media Relations

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Recommended Citation

Chapman University Media Relations, "Chapman Religion Professor To Appear on Nationally Televised Documentaries" (2006). *Chapman Press Releases 2003-2011*. 275.
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Chapman Religion Professor To Appear on Nationally Televised Documentaries

ORANGE, Calif., Dec. 8, 2006 – Dr. Marvin Meyer, Chapman University professor of religion, will be all over the nation’s television airwaves this holiday season. The noted expert on early Biblical texts and the ancient Coptic language made headlines last spring with his participation on the National Geographic Society’s Gospel of Judas project -- he translated the Coptic text into English and was prominently featured in the bestselling book and National Geographic TV special (which will re-air Dec. 18). Now Dr. Meyer has been called back to participate in another National Geographic special, “Secret Lives of Jesus,” as well as a two-hour special on CNN and a Christmas segment on ABC-TV’s news show “20/20”:

- **Friday, Dec. 15 at 10 p.m. (new)**– “20/20” (ABC-TV) will feature Dr. Meyer and other Biblical history experts in a segment on Christmas and the Nativity. Elizabeth Vargas hosts, and the experts try to separate fact from fiction in the Nativity story.
- **Sunday, Dec. 17 at 9 p.m. (new)** – **National Geographic Explorer: “Secret Lives of Jesus” (National Geographic Channel)** -- More than 1,500 years ago, ancient writings were buried that offered alternative narratives about Jesus of Nazareth. Rediscovered within the last century, these texts – once considered scandalous and heretical – offer more questions than answers. Dr. Meyer and other experts will examine these mysterious lost stories of Jesus and explore the questions surrounding the texts: Who wrote them and why? Who buried them? How do they compare to the accepted New Testament gospels?
- **Monday, Dec. 18 at 9 p.m. (special encore)** – **“The Gospel of Judas” (National Geographic Channel)** – An ancient text that lay hidden for nearly 1,700 years, the Gospel of Judas offers a radically different perspective on a man whom history has painted as the ultimate villain – and in it, the villain becomes a hero. Dr. Meyer was the translator of the ancient Coptic text into English, and is seen in the special traveling to Egypt to search for background history on the text and offering commentary on it.
- **Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 4 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 22 at 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 23 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, Dec. 24 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. (new)** – **“CNN Presents: After Jesus – The First Christians” (CNN)** – This 2-hour program is a sweeping documentary on the tumultuous early years of Christianity, from the crucifixion of Jesus to the conversion of Constantine. Narrated by Liam Neeson and featuring Dr. Meyer as CNN’s commentator in Egypt, the special examines how the earliest Christians spread their message, despite infighting over their faith and violent persecution by Rome. CNN examines archaeological evidence and speaks with the most renowned authorities on the ancient church to answer “the” question at the heart of the story: How did Jesus – a wandering rabbi from the hinterland – and his illiterate followers triumph over the might of Rome and establish a worldwide faith?