

ABSTRACT

The Exegetical Method of John P. Meier in *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*

Evaluating His Approach that Prescinds from Faith

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John P. Meier is one of the foremost contemporary Catholic exegetes. His series, *A Marginal Jew*, four volumes, so far, uses an exegetical method of “complete objectivity.” Placing Meier within the “Quest for the Historical Jesus,” his exegetical method will be explored through the field of fundamental theology. Meier uses the image of an “unholy conclave” compiled of “honest historians” who evaluate the Gospels completely through a historical lens, studying the Gospels without a consideration of faith. Is such an approach viable for contemporary Catholic biblical exegesis? Does such an approach create too great a rift between faith and reason? It is concluded that a strictly rationalist approach to such faith documents like the Gospels is a sheer epistemological impossibility and exhibits a flaw in Meier’s project in *A Marginal Jew*.

Key Subject Words

John P. Meier; *A Marginal Jew*; Historical-Critical Method; Historicity of Gospel Pericopes; 20th Century Theologians; Catholic Exegetes; Third Quest; Quest for the Historical Jesus; Christology; Fundamental Theology