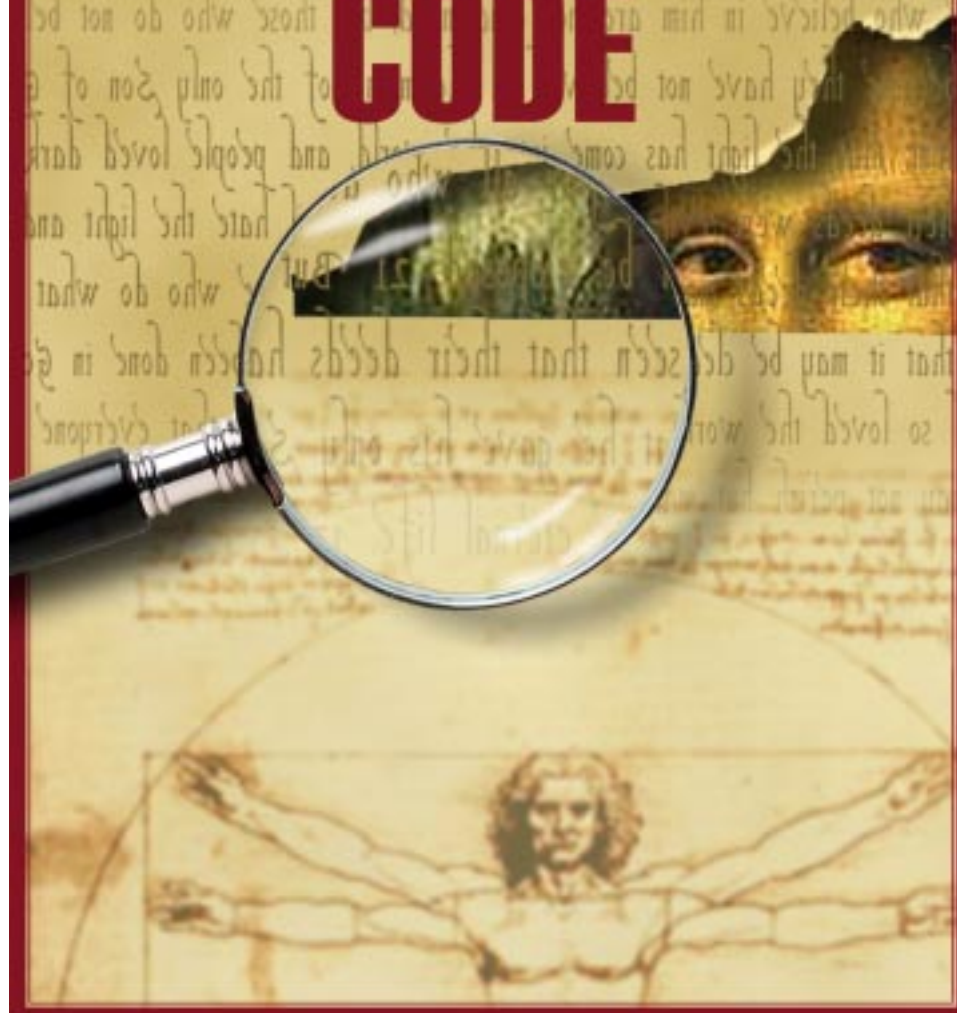


Unlocking

THE  
**DA VINCI  
CODE**



*The Da Vinci Code* has been described as a suspense-filled murder mystery with intrigue and conspiracy central to the plot. More than forty million copies have been sold as of this writing and it is now a major motion picture enjoying wide box office success. The book is really a phenomenon in that it is one of the most broadly read books with a spiritual theme, aside from the Bible itself and approximately eleven million people have said that it was a helpful spiritual document in their quest for knowing God. Of those eleven million, about two million said the book actually changed some of their religious beliefs due to the information given in the novel.<sup>1</sup>

Since Doubleday first published the book in 2003 there has been a groundswell of enthusiasts, as well as detractors, about this book. This is due in part to the fact that *The Da Vinci Code* presents a completely different view of Christ than the one espoused for the past two thousand years by Christians, as well as calling into question the authenticity of the Bible itself.

### **What's the book about?**

In case you don't already know the underlying plot of the book let me quote for you a synopsis of *The Da Vinci Code*, written by J. Richard Pearcey. He says, "The plot of this best-selling novel by Dan Brown begins with murder in Paris at the Louvre. But before dying, the victim leaves encoded clues about the killing and the ultimate issues at stake, and these codes send the book's main characters on a consciousness-raising scavenger hunt...

"From the opening page, the book asks readers to take its basic thesis seriously — namely, that just about everything you were taught about Christianity in Sunday School is false. You may think that Jesus claimed to be God (and is God), but no, what we know today as the divinity of Jesus is really the result of a political power play by Constantine (A.D. 280-337), the emperor of the Western Roman Empire. As politicians are wont to do, Constantine was seeking ways to maintain power. Realizing that paganism was fading and that Christianity was likely the next major player in history, he caught the wave and used the Christian religion to help unify his constituency and solidify his powerbase. Jesus was a great prophet, says the book, but it was Constantine who elevated him to deity and had it all wrapped up theologically by orchestrating the outcome of the Council of Nicea (325).

"According to this book [*The Da Vinci Code*], Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene (also a descendant of King David), who was already pregnant with a child (named Sarah) when she witnessed the crucifixion. After Christ died (and did not rise again), mother and child fled to Gaul (what is modern-day France). They did not leave Jerusalem because they were saddened, disillusioned, and knew the game was up. No. According to the book, Jesus was the 'original

feminist’ (p. 248) and believed in the ‘Sacred Feminine’ (p. 36). He along with ‘the ancients envisioned their world in the two halves — masculine and feminine. Their gods worked to keep a balance of power... When male and female were balanced, there was harmony in the world. When they were unbalanced, there was chaos,’ explains Harvard Professor of Religious Symbolology, Robert Langdon, the book’s leading male character (p. 36). As the first feminist, Jesus wanted Mary to run the church after he was gone. But the male-dominated church would have none of it, and was willing to do virtually anything to maintain its hold on power, up to and including the killing of those who would expose the truth about Jesus (that he was not God, etc.) and thereby undermine its power and authority. Mary and child escaped the terror of the church, lived quiet protected lives in Gaul, and their royal bloodline eventually gave rise to the Merovingian dynasty that later ruled France. What we have in the Bible, according to *The Da Vinci Code*, is not reliable information from God but rather the human product of fallible man — a male-approved and unreliable document that advances patriarchy and oppresses women.”<sup>2</sup>

### **What’s all the fuss about?**

Most people would dismiss the conspiratorial propositions that are found in the book were it not for something that Mr. Brown places in the opening pages of his novel. He claims that, **“All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate.”** Were it not for this single declaration as to the supposed factual nature of certain parts of the book most people would assume that this is nothing more than a fictional depiction of the author’s bias against Christianity. But, by adding this statement to his novel Mr. Brown has caused many people to believe that while the characters in his book are fictional, the plot line is factual.

Even respected news outlets like USA Today have bought into his bold assertion and reported the book consists of **“historical fact with a contemporary storyline.”**<sup>3</sup> Charles Taylor of the popular Web site Salon.com wrote: **“...let me hasten to reassure you that Brown, for all the facts he throws around, operates squarely in the territory of the pop bestseller...As a thriller writer, Brown is like a showboat academic, using facts to spin one grand theory after another.”**<sup>4</sup>

Because of the repeated references to the so-called “facts” of the book, some people have been led to believe that there is truth to Dan Brown’s claims. As has already been pointed out, some two million people have already changed some of their religious beliefs as a result of these supposed facts.

Further evidence of the impact of Mr. Brown’s “facts” can be found in the research that has been done by means of various public opinion polls. For instance, “...Decima Research, Inc. showed that one out of three Canadians

who have read the book now believes there are descendants of Jesus walking among us today. And according to pollster George Barna, 53 percent of Americans who have read the book said it had been helpful in their ‘personal spiritual growth and understanding.’”<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, because of having read the book or having seen the movie, people have been duped into believing Mr. Brown’s version of the “truth” about Christ, Christianity, and the Bible, little realizing the magnitude of the hoax that has been foisted upon them. Yet, anyone with even the slightest interest in discovering the truth about Brown’s “factual claims,” can find the works of noted historians and theologians who have consistently shown the book to be filled with historical inaccuracies and theological fallacies.

If for no other reason, we, as Christians who are people of the “Truth,” should want truth to prevail even if the book hasn’t had a detrimental effect on our faith or us. Richard Abanes writes in his book, *The Truth Behind The Da Vinci Code*, “This is not even a ‘Christian’ issue. . . . The issue is fact verses fiction. Truth verses lies. . . . The Da Vinci Code would still be just as offensive if its misrepresentation of historical facts were used to attack Buddhism, Islam, or any other world religion instead of Christianity.”<sup>6</sup> But misrepresent Christ and Christianity it does, so often that it is impossible in a short pamphlet like this to address all of its errors.

### **Where did Brown go wrong?**

To give you some examples of these errors, just consider with me a few of his so-called facts. Mr. Brown indicates that the Dead Sea Scrolls along with the Nag Hammadi documents are the earliest Christian records that we have in our possession today. The truth is that the Dead Sea Scrolls are purely Jewish documents that predate Christianity. In addition, there is absolutely NO evidence that the Nag Hammadi documents are the “earliest Christian records.” Discovered in 1945, these Gnostic manuscripts, with the possible exception of the gospel of Thomas, were written during the middle second and third century A.D. In fact, the oldest Christian records extant are the synoptic Gospels, the Gospel of John, and the other New Testament books of the Bible. All of the Gnostic texts to which Mr. Brown refers were penned well after the canonical Gospels were written, possibly more than 100 years after Christ had ascended back to Heaven, if you date them at the earliest possible date of their origin. Mr. Brown failed to mention that the Gnostics were not eyewitnesses of the events of the canonical Gospels and there is NO responsible scholar who believes that these manuscripts were written by the people whose names were ascribed to them. It might also be helpful to know that these Gnostic texts are called “gospels” in the broadest sense of the word, because there is no “good news” in them since they present a false Christ. The Gnostics were a second and third century cult that

manufactured these documents to look genuine, but they were never accepted as authentic witnesses to the historical Christ. Why some documents were accepted into the canon of Scripture, while the so-called Gnostic gospels were rejected will be addressed later.

Another example of an erroneous declaration by Mr. Brown is his claim that Jesus was only a great man or prophet in the earliest historical sources but that He was later proclaimed to be divine at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. This proposal is so preposterous and egregious that one must wonder how even a novice in the Scriptures could miss the error. In fact, in the oldest Christian documents (the New Testament books) Jesus is referred to as “God” at least 7 times and He is called “Lord” in the divine sense numerous times. (Additional evidence of Christ’s divinity will be presented later in this article.) There is no credible historical scholar who has ever dated the books of the New Testament after 325 A.D., thus making Mr. Brown’s claim an outrageous lie or a terrible bungling of the historical record.

One of the book’s favorite theories concerns Mary Magdalene, which, Brown purports, can be found in the mystical Gnostic documents from Nag Hammadi and date to the second and third century. He states, “One particularly troubling theme kept recurring in the [Gnostic] gospels. Mary Magdalene... [and] her marriage to Jesus Christ” (p. 244). However, as unorthodox and misguided as the Gnostics may have been, the amazing thing is that there is not one scintilla of evidence in any of the Gnostic writings that Jesus was ever married to Mary Magdalene. This statement in *The Da Vinci Code* is a blatant falsification of the records of the Gnostics themselves.

By this time you should be getting the idea that Dan Brown missed a number of facts or that he simply decided to ignore them in his effort to malign Jesus and mislead His followers. Before moving on, though, let me show you a couple more inaccuracies in his supposedly factual claims. Mr. Brown says that, “The Bible, as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine” (p. 231), but a basic knowledge of the historical facts is all one needs to debunk this theory. The Old Testament existed prior to the first century, and thus was a settled document several hundred years before Constantine. The New Testament had started coming together by the end of the first century (about 90-100 A.D.), and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament were finally codified by the church around 393-397 A.D., well after Constantine’s death. (I will give more attention to the canonization of Scripture later.) Why would Mr. Brown want to mislead people on these known facts except that he wants them to believe a theory about Christ and Christianity in spite of the fact that it does not square with history, which is the only way he can make his heretical theory work?

## **The truth about Constantine**

He goes on to say that Constantine “commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ’s human traits and embellished those gospels that made him godlike.” According to Brown, “The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up and burned” (p. 234). So numerous are his historical inaccuracies on this point that it is difficult to decide where to begin answering his claims. The fact is that Constantine NEVER commissioned a “new” Bible. What he did do was have Eusebius, the Bishop of Carthage, to make copies of the already existing and widely held copy of the accepted Scriptures. Did you notice that last phrase: “the already existing and widely held copy of the accepted Scriptures”?

As to the claim that Constantine “embellished those gospels that made him godlike,” there is simply NO evidence to support this misleading statement. After reading the oldest records that we have of Christ (the New Testament Gospels), how can anyone deny that His humanity is poignantly depicted in them? Nearly every aspect of human existence is described as being experienced by Jesus: hunger, thirst, fatigue, anger, rejection, love, friends, family, enemies, pain, death, etc. The New Testament gospels present to us a colorful picture of both the humanity and deity of Christ and Constantine neither enhanced nor diminished those depictions. These facts alone would make Mr. Brown’s allegation that, “[A]ny gospels that described earthly aspects of Jesus’ life had to be omitted from the Bible” (p. 244), a laughable example of historical ignorance if it weren’t for the serious nature of his claims and the fact that many believe them to be true.

In addition, there were no gospels burned by Constantine. Texts written by Arius (a second and third century heretical theologian who did not believe that Jesus was co-eternal or co-equal with God) were burned, but none of them were gospels. Christ’s essential nature was at the heart of the debate at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. and in spite of the fact that Mr. Brown asserts that the vote to reject the heresy of Arius was a close one, the actual count was 316 bishops affirming the biblical truth of Christ’s essential nature and 2 voting against it.<sup>7</sup> Hardly a close vote!

## **Who were Dan Brown’s sources?**

I suppose that it is possible that Mr. Brown got so much of his history wrong because of the “historians” that he used as his sources. Obviously, if your foundational material is inaccurate then all of your conclusions based upon that material will be inaccurate. So, who were Mr. Brown’s sources for *The Da Vinci Code*? We aren’t left to guess at this because he lists the books that he referenced for the theories he espoused (p. 253). The four books he named in his novel are authored by the following people: Margaret Starbird, Michael

Baigent, Richard Leigh, Henry Lincoln, Lynn Picknett, and Clive Prince, but not one of them is a recognized scholar in history, art, or theology. Margeret Starbird has an M.A. in comparative literature and German. Michael Baigent has an undergraduate degree in psychology and is pursuing an M.A. in mysticism. Richard Leigh is a novelist and short story writer, while Henry Lincoln is a television personality and scriptwriter. Finally, Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince have both shown an affinity for occultism, the paranormal, and UFO studies.<sup>8</sup> These are hardly the kind of sources that lend a great deal of credibility to his controversial thesis, especially since that thesis contradicts the well-known and long-documented historical record. Consequently, Mr. Brown also got the Priory of Sion wrong, the Knights Templar wrong, Opus Dei wrong, Leonardo's art work wrong, and a host of other important historical details!! For more details about these and other inaccuracies you can visit our web site ([www.LMBC.org](http://www.LMBC.org)) and check out the additional material that can be found on our resources pages.

By now any thinking person should be questioning whether there are ANY details in the book that can actually be considered factual. The REAL facts have blown so many holes in Mr. Brown's conspiratorial dike that it can no longer hold water, and if I were to go on listing his inaccuracies, you would see the whole thing collapse into a heap of pure fiction.

### **The truth about the Bible and Jesus Christ**

Let's turn our attention to what we know about the Bible and about the Christ of the Bible for just a few moments. These details taken from the oldest records we have of the early church and the life of Christ (from first century eyewitnesses) can give us all the facts we need.

The Bible we hold in our hands is the best-attested book of all antiquity. At present there are more than 5,600 partial and/or whole manuscripts of the New Testament and the originals from which these copies were made were penned from 45-95 A.D. One of the earliest copies of an original manuscript of a portion of the Gospel of John dates back to 125 A.D., which is within 35 years of the original itself. When you add the writings and sermons of the early church fathers which quoted from the Scriptures, as well as the various ancient translations of the biblical text into other languages (e.g. Latin, Ethiopic, Coptic, Slavic, Syriac, Armenian), the amount of corroborating evidence for the authenticity of the Bible jumps exponentially. It has been estimated that a person could actually reproduce the complete New Testament solely from the quotes found in sermons, letters, and other such writings of the early church fathers.

However, this book so long revered by the saints of God, claims itself to be more than just the words of fallible men. Repeatedly the authors indicated that they

were writing and speaking the very words of God, or as it is properly said, they were inspired by God. Biblical inspiration, simply put, means that while God used human authors and their individual personalities to pen the Scriptures, He superintended their writing so that the words they recorded were the exact words of God to man. Scripture gives numerous claims of divine inspiration and the list below is only a sampling of the evidence [emphasis mine]:

1 Corinthians 2:13 *“These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”* (NKJV)

1 Thessalonians 2:13 *“For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.”* (NKJV)

1 Peter 1:23-25 *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever...But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”*

2 Timothy 3:16 *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...”*

Another of Mr. Brown’s outrageous claims in his novel is that “More than eighty gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John among them” (p. 231). In my effort to see how many Gospels I could find, I could only arrive at a count that was far less than that claimed by *The Da Vinci Code*. There are approximately 16 other gospels, in addition to the four canonical Gospels, all of which came from the Gnostics of the second and third century who were NOT eyewitnesses of the first century events recorded in the New Testament. We have already seen that these Gnostic writings are spurious documents and were falsely attributed to well-known first century saints in an effort to gain acceptance. (These writings are called “Pseudepigrapha” or false writings ascribed to biblical characters or times.)

Dr. Darrell Bock, a professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, reportedly said in an interview concerning *The Da Vinci Code*, “First of all, there weren’t 80 gospels out there. We don’t even have 80 gospels today. We have maybe 15 or 16. [He apparently was not counting the four canonical Gospels.] Now, when you add in other books that don’t have the name gospel that discuss Jesus, to one degree or another in terms of these post-resurrection alleged dialogues, we might get up to 25. But in the first century, there wasn’t much to choose from.

You had your four Gospels. You might have had ‘Thomas’ toward the end of that period or the beginning of the second century. And then the rest of these books trail on much, much later. So there was no choice to be made.”

Once again, in an apparent effort to discredit the Bible and shake people’s faith in God’s Word, Mr. Brown made a false claim. It wasn’t even accurate when he suggested that the church was responsible for choosing (as if they were doing this arbitrarily) which books would be accepted into the canon of Scripture. Actually all the church did was to codify, i.e. systematically arrange, the books that were already accepted by the early church as being authentic. They had a very stringent set of criteria by which to test the authenticity of each book. For instance, each one had to have been written by an apostle or someone closely associated with an apostle. They had to conform to the Christian tradition that had been recognized by the early church as normative. And, they had to have had continuous acceptance and usage by the early church at large. None of the Gnostic gospels could pass these tests since none of them were written until 100-200+ years after the events of the canonical Gospels, by people who did not have first-hand knowledge of the events.

Most of the canon was already well set before the time of Constantine and the finale affirmation of the canon, including all twenty-seven books of our New Testament, took place well after the death of Constantine.

Dr. James Sawyer chronicled the canon of Scripture to show the time line of its acceptance. He indicates that the earliest known canonical list comes from 140 A.D. “By the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century the canon included the four Gospels, Acts, Paul’s 13 letters, Jude, Revelation, 1 John and at least one of John’s two letters, meaning that there were 21 of the 27 canonical books recognized as authoritative before the end of the century... A century and a half later (c. 325 A.D.), Eusebius distinguished three categories of books circulating within the churches: 1) the recognized books; 2) the disputed books — accepted by many, still doubted by some (including James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 John and 3 John); and 3) books rejected because of heresy or recent origin. At that time, 22 books were undisputed, recognized as canonical... In 367 A.D., Athanasius provided the first list that includes all and only the 27 books of the New Testament. In the Greek-speaking East, Athanasius’ list ultimately prevailed. In 393 A.D., Augustine endorsed the same list in the Latin-speaking West, and Jerome included these in his translation of the Vulgate.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Who really chose the books of the Bible?**

As you can see, there is no way that Constantine had anything to do with the choosing of the books of the New Testament. Also, lest someone think that the

church was, in fact, capriciously choosing the books of the Bible, consider the following quotes from recognized scholars on the canonization of the New Testament:

F.F. Bruce says in his book, *The New Testament Documents: Are they reliable?*, “The NT books did not become authoritative for the Church because they were formally included in a canonical list; on the contrary, the Church included them in her canon because she already regarded them as divinely inspired, . . . [Church] councils [did] not impose something new upon the Christian communities but codif[ied] what was already the general practice of those communities.”<sup>10</sup> Additionally, in his book, *The Books and the Parchments*, Bruce wrote, “[The Third Council of Carthage] did not confer upon [the New Testament books] any authority which they did not already possess, but simply recorded their previously established canonicity.”<sup>11</sup>

Bruce Metzger, professor emeritus at Princeton Theological Seminary and one of the foremost authorities on the biblical manuscripts and canonization of the New Testament said, “You have to understand that the canon was not the result of a series of contests involving church politics... You see, the canon is a list of authoritative books more than it is an authoritative list of books. These documents didn’t derive their authority from being selected; each one was authoritative before anyone gathered them together.”<sup>12</sup>

I’m sure by now that you are getting the picture of how our New Testament came together as we have it today and that what *The Da Vinci Code* claims has no basis in fact whatsoever. However, let me give you two more quotes concerning the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.

Well-known theologians Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, in their book, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, state, “Canonicity is determined or fixed authoritatively by God; it is merely discovered by man.”<sup>13</sup> And, S. R. L. Gaussen in his book, *Theopneustia: The Bible, It’s Divine Origin and Inspiration*, writes, “In this affair, then, the church is a servant and not a mistress; a depository and not a judge. She exercises the office of a minister, not of a magistrate. . . . She delivers a testimony, not a judicial sentence. She discerns the canon of the Scriptures, she does not make it; she has recognized their authenticity, she has not given it. . . . The authority of the Scriptures is not founded, then, on the authority of the church: It is the church that is founded on the authority of the Scriptures.”<sup>14</sup>

As it turns out, Mr. Brown’s alleged facts turn out to be nothing more than pure fiction and those of us who know the Bible to be God’s inspired, inerrant, infallible Word can go on trusting it just as we always have.

## Is Christ God?

The other area of special concern that we must address relates to the deity of Christ which Mr. Brown says was an invention of Constantine and the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.). These are his quotes taken from their respective pages: “Jesus’ establishment as the ‘Son of God’ was officially proposed and voted on by the Council of Nicea.... [and it was] a relatively close vote at that” (Page 233); “Constantine upgraded Jesus’ status almost four centuries after Jesus’ death” (Page 234); and “Almost everything our fathers taught us about Christ is false” (p. 235).

Wow! Those are incredible statements and if they were true they would show Christianity to be a sham religion that ought to be abandoned by all professed believers in Christ. We might as well turn out the church lights and go home if his statements are accurate. But, are they accurate? I hope you know the answer to that question by now, since you have already been shown so many other inaccuracies in the book that are purported to be facts.

Did Jesus ever claim to be God? A number of years ago I read the words of an Episcopal priest who said that Jesus never claimed to be God. His statement left me both shocked and incensed! How could a man who claims to be a representative of God make such a fallacious assertion? What Bible was he reading or did he read the Bible at all?

The oldest documents chronicling the life of Christ (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) give repeated, overwhelming evidence that Jesus *is* God and that He claimed to be God both directly and indirectly. As a matter of fact, if Jesus is not God then some of the statements He makes about Himself mean that He is either a liar or a lunatic. “A good man” or “a great teacher” are not options.

Just read these Scriptures and decide for yourself whether or not He claimed to be God and if those who heard Him thought He was making that claim.

Mark 14:61-64 *“But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.”* (cf. Matthew 26:63-64; Luke 22:67-23:2)

John 5:17-18 *“But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.”*

John 8:58 *“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”* (“I am” is the Old Testament name for God-Exodus 3:14)

John 10:30-33 *“I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”*

John 14:9 *“Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?”*

John 1:1-3, 14 *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”*

John 3:13 *“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.”*

John 8:12 *“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”*

John 11:25 *“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live...”*

Besides these verses, the New Testament is filled with evidence that Jesus is God: He possesses the attributes that only God possesses (*Eternality – John 1:1; 17:5, 24; Colossians 1:15; Omnipresence – John 3:13; Matthew 18:20; 28:20; Ephesians 1:23; Omniscience – John 4:29; 16:30; 21:17; Luke 6:8; 11:17; Omnipotence – John 5:19; Hebrews 1:3; Matthew 28:18; Mark 5:11-15; Luke 4:38-41; Matthew 9:18-25; John 2:3-11*); prerogatives that belong only to deity are attributed to Him (*He forgave sins – Matthew 9:2, 6; He will raise the dead at the resurrection – John 5:25-29; 6:39f., 11:25; He executes judgment – John 5:22, 26-27, 30; Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 19:15; Matthew 25:31, 34, 41.; He will receive honor as does the Father – John 5:18-23*); metaphors used of Him show He is Divine (*John 6:41, 50; 10:9; 11:25; 14:6; 15:5; Revelation 3:14; 22:13*); He is specifically called God in Scripture (*John 1:1; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20*); He said that He and the Father were One, indicating equality (*John 10:30; 14:9; 17:11*); and Jesus claimed for

Himself that He was the Son of God, which is a title of deity (*John 10:36; 19:7*). Even an elementary student of theology would have known these Scriptures that prove His divinity and this isn't an exhaustive list! Now you understand why I was so astounded when I read the priest's comments denying Christ's deity.

Add to that what the apostles who walked with Christ had to say about Him. Thomas declared, "...My Lord and my God" (*John 20:28*). Peter said, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (*2 Peter 1:16*). Paul made two unmistakable pronouncements about Christ's deity:

*"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell..."* (*Colossians 1:16-19*).

*"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"* (*Philippians 2:9-11*).

### **What did the early church fathers say about Jesus?**

The biblical evidence is incontrovertible for the deity of Christ, both from what He claimed for Himself and what others said about Him. And then, there is the evidence of the early church fathers and what they said about Christ in their writings and sermons. All of these men lived well before the Council of Nicea was convened (325 A.D.), which proves that Constantine did not invent the deity of Christ as Mr. Brown proposes, which shows that this is another fabrication he calls fact.

- 1. Ignatius of Antioch (30-107 A.D.)** In his writings we find these phrases: "Jesus Christ our God"; "who is God and man"; "received knowledge of God, that is, Jesus Christ"; "for our God, Jesus the Christ"; "for God was manifest as man"; "Christ, who was from eternity with the Father"; "from God, from Jesus Christ"; "from Jesus Christ, our God"; "Our God, Jesus Christ"; "suffer me to follow the example of the passion of my God"; "Jesus Christ the God" and "Our God Jesus Christ." [The fact that Ignatius was not rebuked, nor branded as teaching heresy by any of the churches or Chris-

tian leaders he sent such letters to prove that the early church, long before 107 A.D., accepted the deity of Christ.]

2. **Polycarp (69-155 A.D.)** “Our Lord and God Jesus Christ.”
3. **Justin Martyr (100-165 A.D.)** He wrote of Jesus, “who... being the first begotten Word of God, is even God.” In his Dialogue with Trypho, he stated that “God was born from a virgin” and that Jesus was “worthy of worship” and of being “called Lord and God.”
4. **Irenaeus of Lyons and Rome (120-202 A.D.)** Irenaeus wrote that Jesus was “perfect God and perfect man”; “not a mere man...but was very God”; and that “He is in Himself in His own right...God, and Lord, and King Eternal” and spoke of “Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour and King.”
5. **Tertullian of Carthage (145-220 A.D.)** He said of Jesus, “Christ is also God” because “that which has come forth from God [in the virgin birth] is at once God and the Son of God, and the two are one...in His birth, God and man united.” Jesus is “both Man and God, the Son of Man and the Son of God.”
6. **Hippolytus (170-235 A.D.)** He said, “[it is] the Father who is above all, the Son who is through all, and the Holy Spirit who is in all. And we cannot otherwise think of one God, but by believing in truth in Father and Son and Holy Spirit.... For it is through this Trinity that the Father is glorified.... The whole Scriptures, then, proclaim this truth.” And, “the Logos is God, being the substance of God.”
7. **Origen of Alexandria (wrote ca 230 A.D.)** Origen stated that Christ was “God and man.” And, “Jesus Christ...while he was God, and though made man, remained God as he was before.”

These church fathers had no doubt about who Jesus was and affirmed it often in their writings. With all this evidence for the deity of Christ you might think that there could be little else that would be more convincing on this subject, but let me tell you the most important evidence of Christ’s deity: It is His resurrection from the grave on the third day following His crucifixion. Of course, Mr. Brown denies Christ’s resurrection, but the Bible says in Romans 1:3-4, “*Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead...*”

### **The truth about Mary Magdalene**

Before leaving this discussion about Christ’s deity, there is one more thing that inquiring minds want to know that *The Da Vinci Code* states as a fact and that is the possibility of Jesus and Mary Magdalene being married. Mr. Brown wants us to believe that it would have been impossible for Jesus to have been a first century rabbi and not to have been married. Therefore, he posits that Jesus and Mary were either sleeping together or were married to one another. The historical and biblical facts, however, don’t bear out this assertion either. There were first century rabbis who were not married (ex. The Essenes, John the Baptist, the

Apostle Paul) and there is NO evidence in any biblical writings or even in the cultic, Gnostic writings that ever say that Jesus was married.

At one point the Gnostic gospel of Philip intimates that the other disciples were jealous of Mary Magdalene because Jesus kissed her more often than he kissed them. Of course, it doesn't say that this kiss was anything more than a friendly kiss of fellowship, which was a common greeting in the first century. Also, we cannot forget that the Gnostic gospel of Philip was not written by a contemporary of Christ and therefore the anonymous author was not an eyewitness to any event in Christ's life, including this supposed kissing and the resulting jealousy. However, even if his depiction of events were correct (which it isn't), it is laughable to think that the disciples would be jealous of Jesus kissing His own wife more than He kissed them. In other words, inherent in the proposition is the proof of its fallacy.

To further confirm that this is an inaccurate assumption on Mr. Brown's part, consider this evidence. On one occasion the Apostle Paul was arguing why it was acceptable for him (Paul) to have a wife if he choose to do so (1 Corinthians 9:5) and in making his argument he pointed out the marriages of other apostles and the "brethren of the Lord," but he never mentioned Jesus (which would have been the definitive proof for his argument). Why? Because Jesus was never married to Mary Magdalene and they did not have a child together named Sarah, as *The Da Vinci Code* would have us believe. It is just a further attempt to discredit the Lord Jesus Christ and confuse His followers and discourage would-be followers.

So much more could be said about the fallacies of this book and movie, but you can pursue additional materials on this subject at your local Christian bookstore. You can also visit our church web site ([www.LMBC.org](http://www.LMBC.org)) and there you will find a link to some Da Vinci materials that will allow you to further critique the inaccuracies of the book, including a recording of the message I delivered on this subject from which these notes were derived.

### **What is faith?**

One of the saddest statements that is made in the novel says, "*Every faith in the world is based on fabrication. That is the definition of faith— acceptance of that which we imagine to be true, that which we cannot prove*" (p. 341).

The truth is that the only thing we cannot prove are all of the so-called facts Mr. Brown would have us believe. Don't be deceived into believing that there are no absolutes, that the Bible is just a book of ancient fairytales, or that Jesus was just another man who lived and died. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world and every person will one day give an account of himself before the living Son of

God and the Bible will be the book by which we are judged. If you haven't bowed your knee to receive Christ as your own personal Savior, as the Scripture declares we must do, then you would be wise to do so now.

John 1:12 *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name..."*

Philippians 2:9-11 *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

## End Notes

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- <sup>4</sup> Taylor, Charles. “ ‘The Da Vinci Code’ by Dan Brown.” 27 March 2003. May 2006 <[http://dir.salon.com/story/books/review/2003/03/27/da\\_vinci/index.html](http://dir.salon.com/story/books/review/2003/03/27/da_vinci/index.html)>
- <sup>5</sup> Strobel, Lee. “How to Respond to *The Da Vinci Code*” 3 March 2006. May 2006 <<http://www.pastors.com/RWMT/?id=249&artid=9211&expand=1>>
- <sup>6</sup> Richard Abanes. *The Truth Behind The Da Vinci Code*, (Harvest House Publishers, Eugene Oregon, 2004), p. 77.
- <sup>7</sup> Licona, Mike. “Was Jesus First Declared Divine Nearly 300 Years After He Died?” Know the Truth...Share the Truth. 2006. May 2006. <<http://go.family.org/davinci/content/A000000096.cfm>>
- <sup>8</sup> Abanes, pp. 41-42.
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- <sup>11</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments* (rev. ed. Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1963), p. 113.
- <sup>12</sup> Metzger, B., interviewed in Strobel, L., *The Case for Christ*, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1998), p. 69.
- <sup>13</sup> Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1968), p. 221.
- <sup>14</sup> Gaussen, S.R.I., *Theopneustia: The Bible, Its Divine Origin and Inspiration, Deduced from Internal Evidence and the Testimonies of Nature, History, and Science*, (Rev. ed., New York: Jennings & Pye, 1867), p.137



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