

## **DECODING THE DA VINCI CODE.**

Galatians 1:6-8.

April 23, 2006 Sunday a.m.

### **INTRODUCTION.**

- A. The “Da Vinci Code” is a wildly popular book written by the now fabulously wealthy Dan Brown.
  - 1. I, like many of you , have read the book.
  - 2. Everyone loves a conspiracy and Brown’s novel is dripping in it.
  - 3. What makes his book different from other “airport terminal novels”, though, is his subtle claim that its fact, not fiction.
  - 4. Next month, “The Da Vinci Code” is coming to the big screen with Tom Hanks cast in the lead.
- B. Brown’s plot, I must admit, is a real page-turner.

It starts off with the murder of a curator at the Louvre in Paris, leads to a trail of clues found in the work of Leonardo Da Vinci, and the discovery of a centuries-old secret society. But that’s not what has grabbed our attention. It’s that the clues of Leonardo’s work and the mission of the secret society revolve around the Holy Grail. This Holy Grail is not put forward as what we traditionally think of as the Holy Grail, the chalice that Jesus used during the Last Supper and that some feel was also taken to the cross and captured some of the blood from the crucifixion. The novel identifies the Holy Grail as the bloodline of Jesus. The book suggests that Mary Magdalene was the wife of Jesus and the mother of his child. And because she bore descendants, particularly a daughter by the name of Sarah, Mary is, in fact, the Holy Grail.
- C. Today, lets examine a few of Brown’s conspiracy theories.

### **I. CONSPIRACY THEORY NUMBER ONE: JESUS WAS MARRIED.**

- A. On page 245, the book claims Jesus had to married because it would have been unthinkable for a Jewish male to remain single. (READ).

Furthermore, the book contends Jesus had to be married because he was a Jewish rabbi and that’s one of their requirements.
- B. The fact is, however, that, although, Jesus’ followers called Jesus rabbi or teacher, he was, in the technical sense, not a rabbi.
  - 1. For example he held no official role as a rabbi, he didn’t have a position in the Temple and the Jewish religious leaders did not consider Jesus to be a rabbi.
  - 2. If Jesus were married, certainly one of the 27 books of the New Testament would have mentioned it.
  - 3. In addition, Paul mentions the right of an apostle to have a wife in 1 Corinthians 9:4-6, but he never says Jesus also had a wife.
  - 4. Furthermore, both Jeremiah and John the Baptist were single Jewish men, so it wasn’t unheard of as Brown writes.

### **II. CONSPIRACY THEORY NUMBER TWO: MARY MAGDALENE WAS JESUS’ WIFE AND THE MOTHER OF HIS CHILDREN.**

- A. On page 244, the book claims Jesus and Mary Magdalene were husband and wife (READ).
- B. What is the basis for Brown’s assertion?
  - 1. Brown believes the Gnostic Gospel of Philip reveals this secret.
  - 2. Gnostics were philosophers who lived in the 2nd and 3rd centuries after Christ’s death. They loosely claimed to be Christians, however, they rejected most of what the Bible says about Jesus.
  - 3. The Gospel of Philip was not written by the Philip mentioned in the New Testament as one of Jesus’ twelve disciples. In fact, it was written over a hundred years after Philip died.
  - 4. This 3rd century writing contains a famous passage about Jesus kissing Mary. It says Jesus used to kiss Mary on her (mouth). The word mouth is unreadable in the earliest

manuscript and is therefore assumed. However, it could just as easily read “cheek” or “forehead”.

C. The fact is, however, that....

1. Jesus shows no affection to Mary at the cross. He only mentions concern for his mother’s care, not his widow (John 19:26-27).
2. In addition, following Jesus’ death, he mentions his brothers, sisters, and mother, but again, there is no mention of a wife.

### **III. CONSPIRACY THEORY NUMBER THREE: MARY MAGDALENE IS PORTRAYED IN DA VINCI’S FAMOUS PAINTING OF THE LAST SUPPER.**

A. Brown doesn’t just contend there are secret scriptures, but also hidden messages in works of art. On pages 242-243 Brown contends the biggest secret is found in Da Vinci’s painting (READ).

B. The facts, however, say otherwise.

1. When you look at the painting, the person depicted at John the apostle does look a bit feminine.
2. During the Renaissance period, however, we are told it was normal to portray young men in a feminine way.
3. If this is Mary, though, then where is John? Its inconceivable Da Vinci would exclude the disciple whom the Bible says Jesus loved.
4. In addition, we are told that Da Vinci made early sketches of his painting before the project was ever begun. These sketches are on display in Venice, Italy. In the sketches, Da Vinci labeled each of the figures, and he labeled this figure as John, not Mary.
5. Brown also makes much of the fact no chalice appears in the painting. What he doesn’t understand is that Da Vinci’s painting depicts the announcement Jesus made that one of them would betray him, not the institution of the Lord’s Supper. This is why there is shock on the faces of his figures.

### **IV. CONSPIRACY THEORY NUMBER FOUR: THE CHURCH INVENTED JESUS’ DIVINITY.**

A. This, by far, is Brown’s most serious assertion (READ, page 233).

B. What are the facts, though?

1. The Council of Nicea (325 A.D.), was called together answer the false teachings of an Alexandrian theologian named Arius.
2. Arius claimed Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God. His teachings were gaining popularity, just like Brown’s are.
3. Therefore, The Nicene Creed was drawn up to restate what the early church already thought about Jesus.
4. What did they already think about Jesus? The New Testament, written within just 60 years after Jesus’ death, clearly states his divinity (John 10:36; John 14:6; John 14:9 & Mark 14:61-62).
5. Brown says the creed barely passed the vote of the bishops. In reality, the vote was 298 to 2. The Council of Nicea also branded Arius a heretic and Brown should be considered one too.

### **CONCLUSION.**

- A. If Christianity is true, it will stand up under any amount of intellectual or historical scrutiny.
- B. The problem is most people never check it out. So, for countless numbers of people, Christianity hasn’t been investigated and found wanting. Its never been investigated at all.
- C. Go see the movie and eat some popcorn while you’re at it, but remember its just a movie. And also remember the words of the apostle Paul-Galatians 1:6-8.