

Jesus And “The Da Vinci Code”

The greatest selling book of all time vs. the highest selling novel of this century. The Bible vs. “The Da Vinci Code.” God vs. Dan Brown. Which have you chosen?

“The Da Vinci Code” has been hailed as an action-packed, historical novel — a fictional account of what its author, Dan Brown, believes to be basically historically true. He believes Jesus married Mary Magdalene, had children, and that their ancestors are alive today. The book is also founded upon the concept that the gnostic “Christian” gospels tell the true story of Jesus: just a man; God only figuratively speaking.

During the next four weeks we will examine some of Dan Brown’s claims as fictionalized in “The Da Vinci Code.” We will also have a two night study in Corrigan on Jesus And “The Da Vinci Code,” held on October 9th and 10th at the High School Cafeteria. We will make known the remaining details of this event in the near future.

For this article, consider what Jesus said about His nature. Was He just a man, as Dan Brown claims, or was He also Divine — truly God in the flesh?

When Jesus was challenged by the Jewish leaders, He responded forcefully and decisively. He confounded them by His wisdom at every turn. As recorded in John 8:48, they slanderously said to Jesus, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?” Since they found no other way to overcome His wisdom and power, they tried false accusation. To this Jesus responded, “Most assuredly I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58). They were so infuriated by this statement they wanted to stone Him to death (John 8:59). Why were they so enraged?

To answer this question, recall what happened to Moses in the burning bush passage: Exodus 3. “The Angel of the LORD” (Exodus 3:2), who is called “the LORD” and “God” (verse 4) appeared to Moses in the burning bush, telling Moses to go to the enslaved Israelites in Egypt and deliver them from bondage by God’s power. Moses was concerned, fearing he would not know how to respond when the people asked him for God’s name. God replied, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (Exodus 3:14). So God said His name was “I AM.” So when Jesus called Himself “I AM,” He identified Himself as the God revealed in the Old Testament. The Jewish leaders understood this, and thus tried to stone Him. Of course, we know there are three called God in the Bible: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All three are equally God, like you and I are equally human. All three are also one: completely unified in spirit and purpose. But Jesus was both God and man at the same time!

“The Da Vinci Code” claims Jesus was purely man and “God” only figuratively speaking, but scripture shows us the truth.

Please watch for more articles on this during the next few weeks. And mark your calendars for October 9th and 10th, 7:00 p.m., at the Corrigan-Camden High School cafeteria, when we will discuss these matters more fully!

Shane Carrington

Decoding “The Da Vinci Code”

Have you ever wondered why some are so quick to discredit the Bible? What do they find so threatening? Of course the Bible is the most highly acclaimed, best documented, most credible book around. Yet people still attack it from cover to cover. Why do they bother?

“The Da Vinci Code” is yet another attempt to cast a long shadow of doubt on the Bible’s trustworthiness. How does Dan Brown’s best-seller do this? By claiming the opposite concerning what the Bible says about Jesus. The Bible says Jesus is the divine Son of God, born of a virgin, who not only died, but arose from the grave and ascended to heaven, ruling as King of kings at this time. “The Da Vinci Code” claims Jesus was a mere man who lived, had children by Mary Magdalene, and died. How does Dan Brown attempt to prove this?

Primarily, he appeals to gnostic writings. Note these quotations from Dan Brown. First, he says “The Da Vinci Code” “describes history as I have come to understand it...” (danbrown.com). Then on page 235 of “The Da Vinci Code,” he writes: “almost everything our fathers taught us about Christ is false.” So, the generally held — and Biblical — beliefs about Jesus are disputed by Dan Brown through his novel. Concerning what he believes true about Jesus’ nature, read this quotation from the novel concerning the gnostic writings. Allegedly, these “highlight glaring historical discrepancies and fabrications, clearly confirming that the modern Bible was compiled and edited by men who possessed a political agenda—to promote the divinity of the man Jesus Christ and use His influence to solidify their own power base” (p.234). This is false; but this is his claim.

Last time we briefly examined the claim of scripture concerning Jesus’ divine nature. This time we will consider the truthfulness of the Bible, regardless the humanistic claims of Dan Brown’s book.

First of all, the Bible claims to be “truth” (John 17:17) — “scripture” inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Further, there are over 5,000 ancient manuscripts and fragments of the New Testament scriptures. So the New Testament is the best documented collection from ancient history. No other ancient documents can make that claim, especially not the gnostic writings. Dan Brown claims the gnostic documents were destroyed by the church, but the historical truth is that they were not as widely distributed because they were considered heresy by most, even from the time they were written. Also, these writings do not even support the claims Dan Brown makes about Jesus. We will give this more consideration during the studies we have at the Corrigan high school cafeteria on October 9th and 10th.

Finally, why do people try to discredit the Bible? God’s word is the standard of absolute truth. God is not only our creator and savior, He is also our judge. We are accountable to the word of Jesus (John 12:48). Many in our world do not want to hear this. Many want to justify some actions that God calls sin. In order to do this, they try to cast doubt on Jesus and the Bible. Let’s not be led astray by their claims. Thank God for His standard; and follow it to His glory.

Shane Carrington

The Draw of Da Vinci

What makes this force so powerful? Why the extreme popularity of the book and movie? Consider these possible reasons.

People are constantly looking for something new. This, of course, is nothing new. Athenians of Paul's day viewed life this way. They, like we, were fascinated with the unusual and extraordinary. "For all the Athenians and foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21). That is why television shows about exotic animals, Ripley's Believe It Or Not museums, and the Guinness Book of World Records are so popular. But turning to false views of Christ, like in "The Da Vinci Code," should turn us off, not entertain us.

Some are reducing the Bible to myth. Since we live in a scientific world, some act as though the Bible and science are incompatible. That is patently false! In fact there are many "scientific" discoveries the Bible mentioned long before we discovered them in a test tube. Consider this statement from Leviticus 17:11: "... the life of the flesh is in the blood" As late as George Washington's day doctors believed draining blood could rid the body of impurities and lead to healing. In fact he died, not from being sick, but from having too much blood drained away. But before medical science "discovered" this truth, scripture declared the importance of blood to life.

Others want action and adventure at almost any cost. Witness the many murderous video games flying off the shelves and into the homes of teenagers. The "Grand Theft Auto" series of video games promotes violence against policemen and women, stealing, filthy language, and sexual immorality. These are not appropriate for anyone — especially Christians. Yet when "The Da Vinci Code" depicts Jesus as a mere man without true divinity, claims there was a sex ritual in Old Testament temple worship, and other blasphemous themes, the book still gains popularity, because of its intriguing story line and action. Action and adventure can be great fun, but only when they are consistent with godly principles.

Conspiracy theorists abound. Rewriting history gets attention. And this revisionist version of Jesus is affecting our culture. With the popularity of the book and movie, more people question the authenticity of scripture and the nature of Jesus. One of the primary conspiracies promoted in the book — and believed by its author, Dan Brown — is that the Roman emperor Constantine decided what books should be included in the canon of the New Testament. Nothing could be further from the truth. Church leaders for almost three centuries had been citing the 27 books in your New Testament before Constantine did anything. Constantine and people of his day merely recognized what Christians all along had known — that the 27 books in your New Testament were the authentic writings of inspired men. We will discuss this in some detail in our studies on October 9th and 10th, 7:00 p.m., at the High School Cafeteria in Corrigan.

There are many reasons why "The Da Vinci Code" has reached such popularity. But none of them should satisfy truth seekers and Christians. Jesus is the "truth" (John 14:6), and the New Testament you carry speaks the truth about Him. Put your faith in God and His word — not in "The Da Vinci Code."

For more information on the discussion at the Corrigan-Camden High School cafeteria, please call 936-398-2269 and leave a message, or visit

www.corriganchurchofchrist.com/davinci.

Shane Carrington, Preacher, church of Christ

Why Discuss The Da Vinci Code?

Edmund Burke, who served in the British House of Commons during the 1700s and supported the American colonies in their revolt against King George, is quoted as saying, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." God wants His people to stand up for Him. Consider ...

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12). The Da Vinci Code promotes the opposite about Jesus, saying that what the New Testament claims for Him is not true. Jesus also said of His disciples, "You are the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13a) and "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14a). The Da Vinci Code claims the opposite about Christians, saying those who hold the Biblical view of Jesus are deceived, not enlightened.

Paul wrote that Christians should do the following: "Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21,22). We hope you will attend the lectures on the Da Vinci Code on the nights of October 9th and 10th at 7:00 P. M. at the Corrigan-Camden High School Cafeteria. We will test the claims of The Da Vinci Code against the annals of history and scripture. What Dan Brown's book claims may surprise and shock you, but what scripture and history say will assure you that Jesus is indeed exactly what the New Testament claims: the divine, sinless, Christ and Son of God ... the Savior!

Joshua of old put it this way, "... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh 24:15b). May we too serve the Lord by standing for Him and His word and standing against efforts — like The Da Vinci Code — to dishonor His name. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Will you come and take a stand?

Shane Carrington