



## Gregory Dickow answers questions about the Da Vinci Code

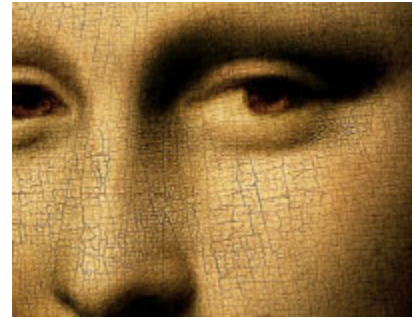
There is much debate these days about the book and film—The Da Vinci Code. And many people are asking my view of it.

While it is important that we understand how to respond to friends and family when they ask about it, we don't have to be experts on it, and we don't have to taste poison to know not to eat it.

Most importantly, we need not be afraid that this movie can somehow damage Christianity and undermine the Bible. For 2000 years people have tried to discredit the Bible claiming that it wasn't authentic or it wasn't the Word of God, etc. Yet for 2000 years it has continued to save souls and change the lives of the millions who read it with an open heart toward God.

A legendary poem put it this way:

“Truth crushed to earth will rise again!  
The eternal years of God are hers.  
But error wounded writhes in pain.  
And lies amid her worshipers”



Since the Bible is the truth, even if the Da Vinci Code tries to crush it, it will rise again. In a few weeks, the buzz about the Da Vinci Code will end, but the Word of God will continue to save souls and change people's lives.

Let's trust God's ability to defend Himself and be light-hearted about the criticisms that others try to make about our faith and about Christianity. Error will writhe in pain. Truth will rise again!

Now some answers to questions people have:

**1. Should I see this movie?** Like any movie, you have to decide if it's worth the time and money. I personally don't need to see it to understand its attempts to undermine the gospel, and put into question the integrity of Jesus, and the Bible.

From an entertainment perspective, the previews didn't grab me, intrigue me or interest me. From an economic perspective, do you want to spend your time and money on something that claims to be truth, when it is only fiction? I'd rather go bowling! From a

spiritual perspective, do you need to see it to reach your friends and families with the gospel? No. But if you think you should, then you should be informed of the main heresies or lies that the book and movie promote, as follows:

**2. Was Jesus married to Mary Magdalene?** No. But Mary had a close relationship with Jesus after she was delivered from the power of sin and the devil. This shows us that God forgives and cleanses and accepts those who trust Him.

Mary Magdalene shows us that anyone can be forgiven and have a close relationship with God. She wept at Jesus' tomb (John 20), but that shows her love. Can a woman love her Savior without being physically married to him? Of course! That is the testimony of millions of women (and men) who have been forgiven of so much, and are now so in love with Him. For Jesus to have married Mary, He would have been showing favoritism toward one woman over another. And clearly the Bible says that God does not show favoritism (Acts 10:34). He loves all equally, and marriage would have contradicted His integrity and equal love for all men and women.

Da Vinci Code author, Dan Brown, says that in Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, the figure to Jesus' right, traditionally known as the apostle John, is actually Mary. Not true. Artists often gave characters feminine features to portray youth. John was the youngest of the disciples. Brown correctly observes that few Jewish men of Jesus' day did not marry. But why, then, did the apostle Paul, himself celibate, not mention Jesus and Mary when he argued that apostles could marry (1 Cor. 9:5)?

A marriage in the Bible was a greatly celebrated event—Jesus attended one in John, chapter two, and turned water into wine. For an event so celebrated by God, why would Jesus hide this secret? It is preposterous to imagine.

Furthermore, the Bible clearly reveals that Jesus is waiting for His marriage to the Church, the Bride of Christ, which will take place after the rapture. Revelation 19:7 says “Let us rejoice and be glad, and give honor to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.” It doesn’t say, “His wives, referring to the “Church” and “Mary Magdalene”. It says, “His wife”, which is the church, clothed in fine linen---in verse 8, which is the righteousness of the saints.

**3. What about these alternative gospels that aren't in the New Testament?** It's true that the Bible did not arrive as a "fax from heaven," as Brown writes. The New Testament canon in its current form was first formally attested in the year, 367 AD. Nevertheless, church leaders applied important standards when compiling the Bible. Authors of accepted writings needed to have walked and talked with Jesus, or at least with his leading disciples. Their teaching could not contradict what other apostles had written, and their documents had to be accepted by the entire church, from Jerusalem to Rome. Church leaders considered earlier letters and reports more credible than later documents. Finally, they prayed and trusted the Holy Spirit to guide their decisions, which is exactly what Peter writes in 2 Peter 1:20: Knowing this first, that no prophecy

of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For it came, not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Paul writes in 2 Timothy 3:16 that all scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. The scriptures, as they are—are profitable. They need no addition to make them profitable and to fulfill what God intended for them to accomplish.

The so-called Gnostic gospels, many of which were discovered recently, did not meet these criteria. Many appeared much later than the Bible and were falsely attributed to major Christian leaders. Their teachings contrasted with what apostles like Paul had written. For example, many Gnostic writings argued that Jesus did not appear in the flesh, because flesh is evil, or they rejected the Old Testament.

**More importantly, the gospels, as we have them, are complete. They address as many real life issues as we will ever face. They consistently reflect Jesus' compassion, His power, and His purity. And they need no additional help to reflect that. Those who believe the gospels and the Bible, as they are written, have experienced life-changing power that cannot be refuted. We have experienced life-changing mercy and forgiveness that is all a result of believing the gospels, as they are written.**

**4. Were there really competing Christianities during the early church?** Yes—just as there are many disputing denominations today. But true Christianity has passed the test of time. Paul said he delivered of first importance what he received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried and that on the third day, He rose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Any “Christianity” that competes with this reality, along with the reality of Jesus' deity, is not Christianity at all. “Christianity” is rooted in “Christ”. Anything that contradicts the authority, purity and integrity of Jesus the “Christ”, is not “Christianity”.

Historically, after the resurrection of Jesus, later church councils convened to discuss other threats to Christian orthodoxy (the purity of the Christian faith, as the Bible describes it). Constantine, the first Roman emperor to make Christianity legal, called the most important of these meetings in 325 AD. Leaders from around the Christian world gathered in Nicea, where they debated Arianism, which taught that God created Jesus. Brown writes that Constantine called this council so he could introduce a new divine Jesus on par with the Father. On the contrary, documents from before Nicea show that most followers of Jesus already called him LORD, the Yahweh of the Old Testament. The church leaders at Nicea rejected Arianism and affirmed that God and Jesus existed together from the beginning in the Trinity. This council produced the first drafts of what became the Nicene Creed, a landmark explanation of Christian belief.

**5. What is Opus Dei?** A conservative religious group within the Roman Catholic Church. Opus Dei urges priests and laypeople to strenuously pursue sanctification through everyday discipline. The group has taken criticism for its conservative views,

zeal, and secretive practices. There is no evidence whatsoever that Opus Dei has resorted to murder; nor has the Vatican entrusted Opus Dei to violently guard the church's deepest secrets, as Dan Brown claims in *The Da Vinci Code*.

**Opus Dei's work of spiritual formation complements the work of local churches.**

**Opus Dei's main activities are classes, retreats and spiritual direction.**

**Opus Dei has around 87,000 members, both men and women; 98% are laypersons, most of whom are married.**

**Membership involves a commitment to receive spiritual formation from Opus Dei and to participate in its mission.**

**6. Does the Priory of Sion really exist?** Yes, but not as described by Brown. Researchers suspect that members of the real-life Priory of Sion, founded in 1956, forged documents that placed major historical figures—such as Isaac Newton and Leonard da Vinci—in an ancient secret society. There is no evidence for this group beyond dubious documents. Any story relating this group to a dynasty begun by Jesus and Mary Magdalene is an imaginary work of fiction.

**In Conclusion, there will always be conspiracy theories about Jesus and the Bible. Conspiracy theories sell books and movie tickets. That's what the Davinci Code is trying to do—make money.**

**But is the money going to advance the cause of humanitarian needs? Doubtful. Is it going to be used to help ease the suffering of children with AIDS around the world? No. Is it going to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoners and heal the hurting? No. Is it going to bring hope, answers and solutions to real people with real needs? No.**

**Yet, that is exactly what authentic Christianity does. And that is why Christianity and the Bible, in their current and God-given form have changed the world, saved many in the world, and will continue to spread around the world in an unquenchable fire of love and power that cannot be quenched by books, movies, conspirators or devils...**

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