

EXPOSING THE DA VINCI DECEPTION

(By Pastor Chris Jordan – April 2009)

The Da Vinci Code is a 2006 movie directed by Ron Howard, which is based on the 2003 novel *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown. When this movie hit the theatres a couple of years ago, the front page headline of *The Province* newspaper in BC read: “*Is Da Vinci Code Winning the Battle?*” The article declared, “A poll shows 17 per cent of Canadians now believe author Dan Brown’s premise that the crucifixion was faked and Christ had a wife and children.” How should we as Christians respond to this novel, and the movie that is based upon it?

The author Dan Brown claims in the introduction: “*All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals in this novel are accurate.*” Even though this is a fiction book, the author is trying to convince people that the details contained within the novel are true. Erwin Lutzer says, “*If The Da Vinci Code were billed as just a novel, it would be an interesting read for conspiracy buffs who like a fast-paced thriller. What makes the book troublesome is that it purports to be based on facts.*”¹

Brown does little to hide his true malicious intentions towards the church when he writes, “*Almost everything our fathers taught us about Christ is false.*” (Brown, page. 255). From the beginning of this novel until its very end, Brown sets out to attack and discredit the Christian church and the Bible at every turn. The purpose of this article is to expose the Top 10 Lies of The Da Vinci Deception, and to arm the Christian with the true facts from the Bible and history.

#1: THE ROLE OF WOMEN:

Da Vinci Lie: “*Powerful men in the early Christian church ‘conned’ the world by propagating lies that devalued the female...*” (Brown, pg. 133).

The Truth: One of the earliest lies in the novel, perhaps this one is the most easily disproved by anyone who has an elementary knowledge of the Bible. From the stories of the Old Testament heroes of Deborah, Ruth, Esther and Hannah, to the New Testament women of Mary (the mother of Jesus), Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha, and Phoebe, a deaconess in the church (Romans 16:1), the Bible is full of many women who did mighty exploits for the Lord. In fact, the Bible declares in Acts 2:17 that God calls men AND women to His service: “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.*” If that wasn’t evidence enough, consider the clear teachings of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:28: “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*” There is nothing in either the Bible, or the true Christian church, that devalues women.

#2: THE PRESERVATION OF THE BIBLE:

Da Vinci Lie: “*The Bible is a product of man... Not of God... Man created it as a record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the Book.*” (Brown, pg. 250-251).

The Truth: Second Timothy 3:16 tells us, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.*”

The Bible, which is actually a collection of 66 different books, written by about 40 different authors over a period of 1500 years is indeed the very Word of God. Second Peter 1:20-21 says, “no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” As Christians, we have an absolutely certain promise from God Himself that He will preserve His Word to ALL generations! “But the word of the Lord endures forever.” (1 Peter 1:25). Jesus Christ Himself declared, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” (Matthew 25:35). One of the factors that Dan Brown takes out of the Bible equation is the reality of the existence of God. Because there is a God, and because the Bible is His own Word, we can trust that the same God who inspired the Scriptures over two thousand years ago will also preserve that truth wholly intact and without error to our generation today.

#3: THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE:

Da Vinci Lie: “More than 80 gospels were considered for the New Testament, and only a relative few were chosen for inclusion.” (Brown, pg. 251).

The Truth: It is true that there were many other books that were written about Christ that were not included in the Bible. However, this was not some major conspiracy as Brown makes it out to be. The goal of those in the church who compiled the different writings that we have into the Bible were called by God to discern which books had the stamp of divine authorship upon them, and put them together in what we know as the Bible today. “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 367. 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 must have been accepted by the entire church... Church leaders considered earlier letters and reports more credible than later documents. Finally, they prayed and trusted the Holy Spirit to guide their decisions.”²

#4: THE COUNCIL OF NICEA:

Da Vinci Lie: “The Bible, as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the great.” (Brown, pg. 251).

The Truth: Although there was an actual historical event known as The Council of Nicea, at no time did this council discuss or debate what books of the Bible would be included in the New Testament. More than 300 bishops met at Nicea to settle disputes about Christology - that is, the doctrine of Christ.³ The council did not meet to discuss the content of the Bible. We also need to realize that “the church no more gave us the New Testament canon than Sir Isaac Newton gave us the force of gravity. God gave us gravity by His work of creation, and similarly, He gave us the New Testament by inspiring the original books that make it up.”⁴ This is just another example of either Brown’s ignorance of the true historical facts, or his outright attempts to twist the truth in order to further his own anti-Christian agenda.

#5: THE DEITY OF CHRIST:

Da Vinci Lie: *“Until (the Council of Nicea), Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet... a great and powerful man, but a man nonetheless. A mortal.”* (Brown, pg. 253).

The Truth: John 1:1 says, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* On many different occasions, not only did Jesus declare Himself to be the Son of God, He demonstrated it through the supernatural miracles that accompanied His ministry. The main reason the earliest disciples of Jesus gave for his divinity was the fact that he had actually risen from the dead.⁵ Another one of the lies in Brown’s book, *The Da Vinci Code*, says that *“the doctrine of Christ’s deity passed by ‘relatively close vote.’ That is fiction, since only five out of more than 300 bishops... protested the creed. In fact, in the end, only two refused to sign it. The outcome was not exactly a cliffhanger.”*⁶ For nearly 2,000 years, the church of Jesus Christ has universally agreed in the basic foundational truth that Jesus Christ is the only begotten son of the living God.

#6: THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN:

Da Vinci Lie: *“It was man, not God, who created the concept of ‘original sin’, whereby Eve tasted of the apple and caused the downfall of the human race. Woman, once the sacred giver of life, was now the enemy.”* (Brown, pg. 258).

The Truth: Here is another troubling instance of both Brown’s ignorance of the Bible text, and the teachings of the Christian church. Romans 5:12 says, *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”* And even though Eve ate the fruit first (which incidentally, was not an apple – it was the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), it was through Adam’s violation of God’s commandment that sin was passed onto the human race. Further knowledge of the original Biblical story in Genesis three also teaches us that it was neither the man nor the woman who was the enemy - but the tempter, Satan!

#7: JESUS AND MARY MAGDALENE:

Da Vinci Lie: *“One particularly troubling earthly theme (in the other gospels was) Mary Magdalene... (and) her marriage to Jesus Christ.”* (Brown, pg. 264).

The Truth: This is nothing more than a highly imaginative conspiracy theory, with absolutely no historical or credible evidence to substantiate it. *“We know of no eyewitness documents that would give evidence of the marriage of Jesus to Mary. She no doubt had a deep love for Jesus, but in the most reliable accounts, there is no hint of romance between them.”*⁷ The idea that Jesus married Mary is pure fiction.

#8: THE SINGLENES OF JESUS:

Da Vinci Lie: *“Jesus was a Jew, and the social decorum during that time virtually forbade a Jewish man to be unmarried.”* (Brown, pg. 256).

The Truth: What a ridiculous thought. *“Although Jewish rabbis were usually married there was no requirement that they be married. Also, although Jesus was called rabbi, he was not a part of the rabbinical order of his day.”*⁸ When the Bible, which was written by some of the closest followers of Christ, tells us that he was single throughout his entire life – there is no good reason to disbelieve their claims.

#9: THE FIRST PASTOR OF THE CHURCH:

Da Vinci Lie: *“Jesus was the original feminist. He intended for the future of the church to be in the hands of Mary Magdalene.”* (Brown, pg. 268).

The Truth: First of all, in none of the Gnostic gospels that Brown refers to is there a clear indication that Mary was anything but a favoured disciple, as indeed John was. In fact, the only clear reference that we have in any reliable manuscripts regarding Jesus’ wishes for the first pastor of His church is found in Matthew 16:18 where He said, *“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”* Although in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, and in the church today, there are opportunities for both men and women to minister side by side in the Gospel, there is no evidence whatsoever that Jesus intended Mary Magdalene to be the first pastor of the church.

#10: THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE:

Da Vinci Lie: *“The Sangreal documents simply tell the other side of the Christ story... (they) include tens of thousands of pages of information... scientific evidence that the New Testament is false testimony.”* (Brown, 277 & 369).

The Truth: They say, “The ‘truth’ is out there.” If this is the case, then where is this mountain of evidence that they speak of? Where is this scientific evidence that they claim proves that the New Testament is fake? If there are really thousands of pages of documents that exist that disprove Christianity, where are they? As Erwin Lutzer boldly asserts, *“Let’s call (Dan Brown’s) bluff and insist that he find them and present them to the world!”*⁹

CONCLUSION:

Although this is by no means an exhaustive look at the many lies and errors contained within *The Da Vinci Code*, I trust that I have made a very strong case that there is little, if any, truth to the author’s claims of historical and factual accuracy. What then should our response as Christians be? Should we read this book? Should we see the movie? Here is my pastoral encouragement to you:

APPLICATION:

1. For most of you, the best advice to you would be: don’t read the book or go see the movie. This is no harmless fiction tale – this is a premeditated attack on the church of Jesus Christ by someone who clearly hates God, Christianity and the Bible. His goal is to – through his lies – shatter your faith. Unless you are solidly rooted and grounded in your faith, this movie has the potential to poison you and weaken your faith.

2. If you pray about it and feel released by the Lord to read the book or see the movie, here are some very important suggestions for you:

a. **BE PRAYED UP.** It is abundantly clear that Dan Brown has an agenda. *“This book is a direct attack against Jesus Christ, the church, and those of us who are his followers and call him Saviour and Lord... (In fact), One man said now that he has read the book, he will never be able to enter a church again!”*¹⁰

b. **KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE.** Take the time to avail yourself of some of the great resources listed in the bibliography so that you are saturated with the truth of God’s Word and church history, so you won’t be easily deceived.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Erwin Lutzer, The Da Vinci Deception, page xxv
2. Colin Hansen, 5 Big Questions from Da Vinci Code, article from www.christianitytoday.com.
3. Lutzer, pg. 6
4. J.I. Packer, God Speaks to Man.
5. Josh McDowell, The Da Vinci Code: Quest for Answers, pg. 82.
6. Lutzer, pg. 10
7. Lutzer, pg. 64
8. Lutzer, pg. 74
9. Lutzer, pg. 123
10. Lutzer, pg. xxiii, xxv

EVANGELISTIC ADDENDUM:

SEEK THE TRUTH!

If you're reading this brochure, then you have most likely read the book, or seen the movie, The Da Vinci Code. Consider this quote:

“My hope for The Da Vinci Code was, in addition to entertaining people, that it might serve as an open door for readers to begin their own explorations and rekindle their interest in topics of faith.” (Dan Brown).

“The Da Vinci Code book and movie provide an opportunity for anyone and everyone to consider afresh the claims of Jesus Christ. In The World's Great Religions, Huston Smith observed, Only two people ever astounded their contemporaries so much that the question they evoked was not ‘Who is he?’ but ‘What is he?’ They were Jesus and Buddha. The answers these two gave were exactly the opposite. Buddha said unequivocally that he was a mere man, not a god—almost as if he foresaw later attempts to worship him. Jesus, on the other hand, claimed...to be divine.” (Josh McDowell).

The Truth about Jesus Christ is out there.

I challenge you to embark on a journey to consider the claims of Christ. Don't be content until you have encountered *The Truth* for yourself!

Free Bible Available Upon Request