

Five Key Questions From The Da Vinci Code

1. Was Jesus' divinity really invented in the 4th century?

"Indeed," Teabing said. "...During this fusion of religions, Constantine needed to strengthen the new Christian tradition, and held a famous ecumenical gathering known as the Council of Nicaea."...

"At this gathering," Teabing said, "many aspects of Christianity were debated and voted upon—the date of Easter, the role of the bishops. The administration of sacraments, and of course, the *divinity* of Jesus."

[Sophie] "I don't follow. His divinity?"

"My dear," Teabing declared, "until *that* moment in history, Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet... a great and powerful man, but a *man* nonetheless. A mortal."

"Not the Son of God?"

"Right," Teabing said. "Jesus' establishment as 'the Son of God' was officially proposed and voted on by the Council of Nicaea."

"Hold on. You're saying Jesus' divinity was the result of a vote?"

"A relatively close vote at that," Teabing added...¹

What did Jesus and His disciples believe about His divinity?

Jesus:

I and the Father are One. (John 10:30)

If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. (John 8:19)

He who has seen Me, has seen the Father. (John 14:9)

The Disciples:

John 20:28—Thomas said to him [Jesus] "My Lord and **my God**."

Romans 9:5—"Christ, who is **God** over all, forever praised."

2 Thessalonians 1:12—"Our **God** and Lord Jesus Christ."

1 John 5:20—"Jesus Christ. He is the **true God** and eternal life."

Colossians 2:9—"In Christ all the fullness of **the Deity** lives in bodily form."

Others:

The Jews: "You a mere man claim[ing] to be God" (John 10:33).

The High Priest: "You have heard the blasphemy" (Mark 14:61-64).

Church Fathers PRIOR to the Council of Nicea:

Justin Martyr (100-165 A.D.) wrote of Jesus, "who, ... being the first-begotten Word of God, is even God."² 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."³

Irenaeus (120-202 A.D.), 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"⁴

Tertullian (145-220 A.D.), 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."⁵

Athanasius (293-373 A.D.), the keen defender of New Testament teaching against the early Arian heresy, which taught that Jesus Christ was not God, declared of Jesus, "He always was and is God and Son" and "He who is eternally God,... also became man for our sake."⁶

To learn more about this topic, see these articles:

- Is it True that Jesus' Divinity was Invented by Constantine at the Council of Nicea?
- Just How Unique is Jesus When Compared to Other Religious Leaders?
- Crash Goes the Da Vinci Code

For further study, check our catalog to order

- Evidence for the Historical Jesus (DVD/VHS)
- Jesus: The Search Continues (DVD/VHS)
- The Case for Jesus the Messiah (DVD/VHS)
- Fast Facts on Defending Your Faith (book)

2. Was Jesus married?

...Jesus as a married man makes infinitely more sense than our standard biblical view of Jesus as a bachelor... Because Jesus was a Jew... the social decorum during that time virtually forbid a Jewish man to be unmarried. According to Jewish custom, celibacy was condemned, and the obligation for a Jewish father was to find a suitable wife for his son. If Jesus were not married, at least one of the Bible's gospels would have mentioned it and offered some explanation for His unnatural state of bachelorhood.⁷ —Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, p. 245.

The greatest cover-up in human history. Not only was Jesus Christ married, but He was a father. My dear, Mary Magdalene was the Holy Vessel. She was the chalice that bore the royal bloodline of Jesus Christ. She was the womb that bore the lineage, and the vine from which the sacred fruit sprang forth.⁸ —Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, p. 249.

Is it true that it was socially unacceptable for a Jewish man to be single?

It has long been believed that Jesus was single. Every detail of Scripture indicates this. When he was in ministry, there is no mention of a wife. When he was tried and crucified, there is no mention of his having a wife. After his death, there is no mention of a wife. Whenever Jesus' family is referred to, it is his brothers and sisters who are mentioned, but never a wife. Nor is there any indication that he was widowed.⁹

... two factors make this argument [that Jesus was "required" to be married] weak. First, Jesus was not technically a rabbi, nor did he portray himself as one. The apostles addressed him as such to say he was their teacher, not because he held any kind of official Jewish office. The Jews asked Jesus "by what authority" he did certain things because he did not hold any kind of formal office within Judaism. He did not have an official position that would have permitted him to do things like act within the temple (Mark 11:28). As far as the Jewish leaders were concerned, Jesus had no recognized role within Judaism....

Second, the example of the call to be "eunuchs for the kingdom" appears, in part, to be rooted in Jesus' own commitment and example not to be married (Matthew 19:10-12). In fact, the rationale for the Roman church's later view that priests should not be married partially stems from the view that Jesus was not married.¹⁰

The Jewish atmosphere of Jesus' day clearly had a tradition of celibacy for those who devoted their lives to God, as exemplified by the

unmarried prophets Jeremiah and Elijah and as expressed by New Testament-era groups such as the Essenes and figures such as John the Baptist and Banus the prophet (Josephus, *Life* 2.11). Celibacy and singleness were indeed exceptional, but contrary to Brown, they were not forbidden by any “social decorum.”¹¹

Specifically, there is not a shred of historical evidence that Jesus ever married Mary Magdalene (or anyone else) or ever fathered children. As Darrell Bock points out in his recent *Christianity Today* review (January 2004, 62), such information would certainly have been included in 1 Corinthians 9 where Paul appeals to the fact that Peter and various other apostles had wives when they received material help from the churches. In supporting his right to receive such help, Paul would have wanted to appeal to an even more convincing example—Jesus—if it were available.¹²

To learn more about this topic, see these articles:

- Was Jesus Married? Who Was Mary Magdalene?
- Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code

3. Is it true that the Bibles we have in our homes do not contain the earliest and most accurate information about Jesus?

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. —Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, p. 231¹³

“Fortunately for historians,” Teabing said, “some of the gospels that Constantine attempted to eradicate managed to survive. The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1950s hidden in a cave near Qumran in the Judean desert. And, of course, the Coptic Scrolls in 1945 at Nag Hammadi. In addition to telling the true Grail story, these documents speak of Christ’s ministry in very human terms.... The scrolls 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.” —Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, p. 234¹⁴

What did the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal?

These ancient texts, hidden in pots in cliff-top caves by a monastic religious community, confirm the reliability of the Old Testament text. They provide significant portions of Old Testament books—even entire books—that were copied and studied by the Essenes. These manuscripts date from as early as the third century B.C. and so give the earliest window so far found into the texts of the Old Testament books and their predictive prophecies. The Qumran texts have become an important witness for the divine origin of the Bible.¹⁵

Even the deity of the Messiah is affirmed in the fragment known as “The Son of God” (4Q246), Plate 4, columns one and two: “Oppression will be upon the earth... [until] the King of the people of God arises,... and he shall become [gre]at upon the earth. [... All w]ill make [peace,] and all will serve [him.] He will be called [son of the Gr]eat [God;] by His name he shall be designated.... He will be called the son of God; they will call him son of the Most High.”¹⁶

What did the Nag Hammadi documents reveal?

The Nag Hammadi Texts, ... are named after the place they were found on the west bank of the Nile. A library was found containing forty-five texts written in the Coptic language. These were written from the early second century to the fourth century AD. Examples of texts included

The Gospel of Thomas, The Gospel of Philip, The Acts of Peter and others. These texts were Gnostic in character and found in a library of Gnostic works....¹⁷

...Gnosticism may be described generally as the fantastic product of the blending of certain Christian ideas—particularly that of redemption through Christ—with speculation and imaginings derived from a medley of sources (Greek, Jewish, Parsic; philosophies; religions, theosophies, mysteries) in a period when the human mind was in a kind of ferment, and when opinions of every sort were jumbled together in an unimaginable welter. It involves, as the name denotes, a claim to “knowledge,” knowledge of a kind of which the ordinary believer was incapable, and in the possession of which “salvation” in the full sense consisted. This knowledge of which the Gnostic boasted, related to the subjects ordinarily treated of in religious philosophy; Gnosticism was a species of religious philosophy (Early Church History to AD 313, II, 71).¹⁸

Are the Gnostic Gospels earlier and more accurate? Why were the Gnostic Gospels not included in our New Testament?

The assertion by Brown that these are secret gospels is false. We have known of these for centuries. The early church fathers wrote about the texts and rejected them as uninspired and non-apostolic. Iraneaus (130-200 AD) and Tertullian (160-225 AD) mentioned the texts in their letters and stated their rejection of them. These texts were never considered part of the inspired writing of the Apostles for several reasons.

Many of the texts are dated well after the death of the apostles. The teachings are inconsistent with previous revelation of Jesus and apostolic teaching. The teaching of Gnostic dualism is what the gospels of John and Epistles appear to be reacting against. Additionally, the church fathers knew of these texts and never regarded them as equals to the gospels.¹⁹

To learn more about this topic, see these articles:

- Should Additional Gospels Have Been Included in our Bibles?
- The Gnostic Gospel of Thomas
- Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code

4. Was Jesus' original message that men should encounter God through sexual rituals?

The once hallowed act of Hieros Gamos—the natural sexual union between man and woman through which each became spiritually whole—had been recast as a shameful act. Holy men who had once required sexual union with their female counterparts to commune with God now feared their natural sexual urges as the work of the devil, collaborating with his favorite accomplice...woman.²⁰—Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, p. 125.

Did the church make sex the original sin?

The church has not recast sex as a shameful act. Sex within marriage is good (see Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; 1 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31). Sex was a part of God's "good" creation. Indeed, God created sex and "everything created by God is good" (1 Timothy 4:4). But it is good only within the confines of the marriage relationship (1 Corinthians 7:2), which He Himself ordained (see Hebrews 13:4). The Song of Solomon indicates that God desires married people to have truly fulfilling sex.

Christians, however, are to abstain from fornication (Acts 15:20). Paul said that the body is not for fornication and that a man should flee it (1 Corinthians 6:13,18). Certainly the sex ritual depicted in THE DA VINCI CODE (a copulating couple surrounded by chanting people) constitutes a form of fornication and is thus condemned by God.

Scripture is quite clear: "For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient" (Eph. 5:5-6).²¹

Do men "encounter God" through sexual rituals?

Sex was never intended as a means of achieving "gnosis." Man is not to seek revelation or knowledge in altered states of consciousness related to the sex act, but rather from God's Word. Scripture alone is the supreme and infallible authority for the church and the individual believer. Jesus always used Scripture as the final court of appeal in every matter under dispute. We must do the same.

Instead of a view that says individuals can receive individual insights from God during sexual ecstasy, Scripture indicates that a definitive body of truth was objectively communicated to man. This is why Jude 3 admonishes us to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." In the Greek text, the definite article "the" preceding "faith" points to the one and only faith; there is no other. "The faith" refers to the apostolic teaching and preaching which was regulative

upon the church (see Acts 6:7; Gal. 1:23; 1 Tim. 4:1).

This body of truth is referred to in Jude 3 as that which was “once for all delivered to the saints.” The word translated “once for all” (Greek: *apax*) refers to something that has been done for all time, something that never needs repeating. The revelatory process was finished after this “faith” had “once for all” been delivered.

The word “delivered” here is an aorist passive participle, indicating an act that was completed in the past with no continuing element. There would be no new “faith” or body of truth communicated through people in sexual ecstasy.²²

It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this manner no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you His Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 4:3-8).

The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”...So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep.... Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man.” For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh (Gen. 2:18,21-24).

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.... “For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking *about Christ and the Church*. (Eph. 5:25-32, emphasis added)

To learn more about this topic, see these articles:

- Did the Church Recast Sex as a “Shameful Act”?
- Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code

5. Is Christianity nothing more than a copy of older mystery religious beliefs and practices?

The vestiges of pagan religion in Christian symbology are undeniable. Egyptian sun disks became the halos of Catholic saints. Pictograms of Isis nursing her miraculously conceived son Horus became the blueprint for our modern images of the Virgin Mary nursing Baby Jesus. And virtually all the elements of the Catholic ritual—the miter, the altar, the doxology, and communion, the act of “god-eating”—were taken directly from earlier pagan mystery religions.²³

Did Christianity borrow from pagan rituals?

Many alleged similarities between Christianity and the Greek pagan religions are either greatly exaggerated or fabricated. Liberal scholars (such as those in the Jesus Seminar) often describe pagan rituals in language that they borrowed from Christianity, thereby making them appear to be “parallel” doctrines.²⁴

New Testament scholar Bruce Metzger is quoted by Nash: “It must not be uncritically assumed that the Mysteries [i.e., pagan religions] always influenced Christianity, for it is not only possible but probable that in certain cases, the influence moved in the opposite direction.” Nash notes that it should not be surprising that leaders of cults that were being successfully challenged by Christianity should do something to counter the challenge. What better way to do this than by offering a pagan substitute? Pagan attempts to counter the growing influence of Christianity by imitating it are clearly apparent in measures instituted by Julian the Apostate.²⁵

The mysticism of the mystery religions was essentially nonhistorical. The religion of Christianity is grounded in history.²⁶

To learn more about this topic, see these articles:

- Did Christianity Arise Out of the Mystery Religions?
- Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code

Notes

¹ Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (), p. 233.

² Justin Martyr, “The First Apology,” Chapter 63, in Roberts and Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 184.

³ Justin Martyr, “Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew,” Chapters 64, 68, in Roberts and Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol 1, 231-233.

⁴ Irenaeus, “Against Heresies” Book III, Chpt. 16, Title; Chpt. 19, Title, para.2; Book I, chapt. 10, para. 1, in Roberts and Donaldson (eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1, 440, 448-49.

- ⁵ Tertullian (Quintus Tertullianus), "A Treatise on the Soul," Chapter 41, and "Apology," Chapter 21, in Roberts and Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 3, Latin Christianity: Its Founder, Tertullian* (Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmans, 1978), 221, 34-35, respectively.
- ⁶ Athanasius, "Against the Arians," III, para.29, 31, in Maurice Wiles and Mark Santer (eds.), *Documents in Early Christian Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 52, 54.
- ⁷ Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), p. 245.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 249.
- ⁹ Darrell L. Bock, Ph.D., "Was Jesus Married?" <http://www.leaderu.com/theology/wasjesusmarried.html>
- ¹⁰ Bock, "Was Jesus Married?"
- ¹¹ James Patrick Holding, A SUMMARY CRITIQUE - THE DA VINCI CODE: Revisiting a Cracked Conspiracy, www.equip.org
- ¹² Craig Blomberg, review of *The Da Vinci Code* in *Denver Journal - An Online Review of Current Biblical and Theological Studies*, <http://www.denverseminary.edu/dj/articles2004/0200/0202.php>
- ¹³ Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), p. 231.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 234.
- ¹⁵ Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999), p. 187.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, quoting Robert H. Eisenman and Michael Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1992), p. 70.
- ¹⁷ "Discerning Fact from Fiction in *The Da Vinci Code*." <http://www.evidenceandanswers.com/>.
- ¹⁸ "Gnosticism" *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (www.studylight.org)
- ¹⁹ "Discerning Fact from Fiction in *The Da Vinci Code*." <http://www.evidenceandanswers.com/>.
- ²⁰ Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), p. 125.
- ²¹ Ron Rhodes, "Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code."
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2003), p. 232.
- ²⁴ Rhodes, citing Ron Nash, "Was the New Testament Influenced by Pagan Religions," *CHRISTIAN RESEARCH JOURNAL*, August 1994.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ Rhodes.

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