

Seeking The Truth

EXPLORING THE *DA VINCI CODE* BY DAN BROWN



Dan Brown's book *The Da Vinci Code* and the subsequent movie of the same name by director Ron Howard (Cinderella Man, A Beautiful Mind, Happy Days) have presented Christians with a unique opportunity to both examine for ourselves what we believe and why we believe it, and to use the interest generated in society by this best-selling book and movie to share the truth about our faith and to correct some of the errors presented.

Some may object to even spending any time looking at what is, essentially, a work of fiction - a made-up story, however, despite it being so, it has been marketed as and many in our community will understand it to be a story based on actual historical fact.

NBC Today – October 10, 2005

Dan Brown was asked by host Matt Lauer, "How much of this [book] is based on reality in terms of things that actually happened?" Brown emphatically replied, "Absolutely all of it... is historical fact."

ABC Good Morning America – November 3, 2003

Host Charlie Gibson said to Dan Brown, "This is a novel. If you were writing it as a nonfiction book, how would it have been different?" Brown responded, "I don't think it would have."

USA Today

The Da Vinci Code is..."Historic fact with a contemporary storyline."

(Bob Minzesheimer, "Code Deciphers Interest in Religious History," December 11, 2003, pD1)

The book is fiction, and anyone - Christian or otherwise - who spends any time at all researching the claims made will find them to be false, however, many people will not spend any time doing independent research and so will inevitably accept some or all of the themes and ideas proposed in this story as the truth.



Read: 1 Peter 3:15-16



How does this passage relate to our investigation of The Da Vinci Code?

The Da Vinci Code presents the following ideas as thoroughly researched historical fact, verified by historians and scholars:



1. That Christians don't have the real story of Jesus
2. That the institutional church is the enemy of spiritual truth
3. That the genuine spiritual facts are guarded by secret societies
4. That priceless works of classical art reveal these hidden messages for those who have the special knowledge to decipher them
5. That Jesus isn't divine—isn't really God—but his wife, Mary Magdalene, should be worshipped as a goddess
6. That for two thousand years the church has conspired to suppress this truth.



What is it, do you think, that makes people so interested in these kinds of stories?



Under investigation none of these claims stand up to even casual scrutiny.

The purpose of this study is not to investigate these claims (there is enough research available in a much better form than I can present it) but, rather, to look at how we respond to these kinds of stories and how best to use them to bring glory to God and to connect with a community so desperately hungry for truth and spirituality.

1 Peter 3:15-16 gives us a great model for connecting with our friends, family members and community and sharing God's truth with them.

There are five principals which are given to help guide our response.

ONE: *"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord"*



What does this mean? How do you think it is relevant to sharing God's truth with others?

Unless we know and are certain of where our faith and allegiance are placed then our testimony will be shaky and uncertain and able to be swayed. We must seek God's truth and know that we know that we know that this is our firm belief - even if we may not understand everything about it. I do not understand exactly how the moon orbits the earth which orbits the sun - but I believe it does because of gravity, even though I don't understand gravity.

TWO: *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have"*



What is the "hope that you have"?

What does it mean to be prepared? Do you think it means more than simply being willing to open our mouths and talk back?

In the case of The Da Vinci Code, what is required for us to be "prepared to give an answer"?

The hope we have is that Jesus Christ was and is God, that His death and resurrection was the only way to demonstrate His love for us and to make right all the things we've done which would cause a perfect and holy God to reject us. Our hope is that faith in Jesus means we can have a relationship with God and spend eternity with Him in heaven.

To be "prepared to give an answer" to *The Da Vinci Code* claims means we need to (i) know the claims made (ii) know the answers to those claims (actual, historical, verifiable answers).

THREE: *"But do this with gentleness"*



Why? What impact will this have on our attempts to share our faith?

FOUR: *"But do this with...respect"*



Why? What impact will this have on our attempts to share our faith?

FIVE: *"...keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander."*



What does it mean to keep a clean conscience and why is it important?

How will our lifestyle influence people's receptiveness to our testimony?

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