

An Overview of the DaVinci Code

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Ok. We're going to spend the next few weeks talking about something that I've been talking about at the AWANA conferences. And unfortunately with the AWANA conferences I only had 50 minutes to give the message. And there are so many things that need to be discussed about this that I thought I would spend two or three weeks talking about it.

Basically, I'm going to be dealing with the book called *The DaVinci Code* written by Dan Brown. It's a novel. And unfortunately what I'm finding out is that there are an awful lot of Christians that have been witnessing to their loved ones and their friends over the years and their loved ones and their friends often show no sign whatsoever of any interest in things of the spiritual realm. And then all of a sudden their friends have had this spiritual "revival" and lo and behold they buy a Christmas present or a birthday present for their Christian friends and it's *The DaVinci Code* and they tell them, "Just read this book. It's transformed my life."

Well, it may have transformed their life, but it did not bring them closer to the true God of the Bible. *The DaVinci Code* is an anti-Christian diatribe. It's an attack on biblical Christianity and it's an attempt to promote a new type of Christianity which is more of a neo-pagan worship of the self than anything else.

Let me just point out a few verses to show that the Scriptures told us that time and time again this type of thing is going to happen. This should not shock us. This is the way the world operates. If the world doesn't like the facts and the facts point to Jesus the world makes up its own pseudo-facts. And that's what Mr. Brown is doing.

I mean, I have spoken for years refuting the Jesus Seminar; even challenged the lead man of the Jesus Seminar to a debate. He didn't accept. But the Jesus Seminar is as far left and as radical, as anti-Christian as you can get and still call yourself a New Testament scholar. Even the members of the Jesus Seminar are now writing articles refuting the pseudo-history of *The DaVinci Code*. So this guy is so far out in left field that even anti-Christian scholars acknowledge the errors that he's making.

Unfortunately, the average American doesn't know a lot about the present state of New Testament scholarship. The average American is unaware of the history of the Christian Church, the history of Christian thought. And so that's rather unfortunate.

It's really interesting, too, because one of the courses I teach at King's West – and it wasn't my idea to teach it – is the History of Christian Thought. And, lo and behold, in that course, basically just by studying the history of Christian thought it's a response to all the pseudo-historical claims made by Dan Brown in his work *The DaVinci Code*. So *The DaVinci Code*, in reality, is the DaVinci fraud or the DaVinci myth or fairy tale – whatever you want to call it. But it's not real, ok?

Now, let me say this: You know, historically it's been accepted that when you write a novel, when you write a fairy tale, if you're a brilliant author you probably have an agenda. You probably have a view about reality and you want to share those views with others so you think of a creative way of doing it and you write a novel. There's nothing wrong with that. You know, an atheist will write a novel and in his novel, in his story that isn't true, he'll throw in his atheistic philosophy. And we can disagree with the atheistic philosophy but, you know, they guy's the right to do that. Christian authors like C.S. Lewis and Tolkien, they can write mythology or stories. They can write fiction, they can write novels and promote Christianity in there. And there's no foul there. The problem with Dan Brown is, he's writing a novel – which he acknowledges is a novel; it's a work of fiction. And that's; ok at that point. But then he claims that historical things and the documents that are being spoken of are, in fact, reality; are, in fact, true.

So he's claiming to give us a true assessment of history as the background of his novel. So, in other words, his lead characters don't really exist. But even though his lead characters don't really exist, he claims that the code their uncovering, the code their deciphering is real. Ok, and see, you open up his book and you come to a page right before the first chapter. In fact, it's before the prologue. And it says: "Fact." And then he lists a bunch of mumbo-jumbo which he claims is fact within the pages of his book. And if you go to his website – danbrown.com, or whatever it is – he's claiming that, "Oh, yeah. This stuff is real. True Christianity was hi-jacked basically by a bunch of male chauvinist pigs who were afraid of powerful women." And the story goes on and on and they turn Jesus into a god, but he wasn't really God.

Let me just read the last little sentence here on this page called "Fact." And Dan Brown says this: "All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals in this novel are accurate." So, that's my problem and that's the problem that Christian scholars have with Dan Brown. It's not that he wrote a novel and it's not that he hates Christianity. He has the freedom to hate Christianity. But he's claiming that the fairy tale history that he...he really didn't invent this fairy tale history. He actually got it from other books like *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* written by other occultists, other neo-pagans, who get into the Knights Templar and things of that sort and are trying to blend Christianity with new age type thought.

But that's pseudo-history. There's no evidence for this. All the evidence goes against this. But, unfortunately, we're going to need to respond to this.

Now, in Titus chapter one, verse nine we're told that the overseer, the senior pastor of a local church, is not only supposed to be able to exhort his people in sound doctrine, not only to be able to encourage people in sound doctrine – but refute those who contradict. So, the unfortunate thing is that it's my job today – and probably next week – not to refute *The DaVinci Code* because it's a scholarly attack on Christianity, but to refute *The DaVinci Code* because it's a popular attack on Christianity.

The scary thing is, too, scholarship is getting more and more post-modern. They're denying absolute truth. They're denying real history. So, in the end, guys like Dan Brown are going to receive a blank check even in scholarly circles to make history to say whatever you want it to say. We already see something like that going on with Elaine Pagels at Princeton University, one of America's Ivy League schools.

So, whatever the case take a look at 2 Timothy chapter four, verses one to four. And Paul says this to Timothy. Now, Paul's about to die so he's got some really important information to pass on to Timothy and he says: "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."¹

Now the word for "fables" there, the basic root word is *μυθος*. We get our word "myth" from it, ok? So a more literally translation there would be "myth." And we are living in a day...post-modernism denies absolute truth. We are seeing a return of the ancient pagan myths. So Dan Brown is just one of many voices. Right now he's the loudest voice. But he's one of many voices that are calling for a return to ancient myths. In fact, Dan Brown wants us to return to an ancient Christian heresy, a false belief system that claimed to be Christianity called Gnosticism; salvation through secret knowledge that only the initiated few could attain to. He wants us to return to a blending of that, of ancient Gnosticism – a blending of that and goddess worship, ok? Pagan goddess worship. So that's his agenda. And so he spins stories and claims that they're real history.

And I'll tell you: In post-modern circles with the current rejection of absolute truth in scholarly places we are not far from somebody like promoting Dan Brown's work as if it were historical because once you throw real objective history out the window and you acknowledge that each person is a product of their own community – and the narrative of the story once truth is gone all that's left are stories – then basically if radical women's libbers or radical pro-abortionists or, you know, radical-you-fill-in-the-blank; if they want to rewrite history in accordance with their agenda, they have that right to do so. And so it's really weird, but in non-Christian academic circles there's probably not much time left to refute this guy because eventually history is going to be whatever you want to

¹ 2 Timothy 4:1-4 (All Scripture references are from the New King James Version unless otherwise indicated).

make it. History will be like everything else. It just serves your purposes to justify you believing what you feel like believing.

Paul says that we have to preach the word because the time is coming when people will turn from the truth and turn aside to fables or to myths. Now, take a look at what Peter says in 2 Peter 1:16. Peter says this: “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables [again, myths] when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.”²

You see, even the most liberal and anti-Christian of all New Testament scholars will acknowledge that the New Testament was written – some would say – between the 30s AD and 80 or 90 AD. Others would say between 50 AD for Paul’s writings and about 100 or maybe 110 AD tops. Basically, all the New Testament books were either written by eye-witnesses or people who knew eye-witnesses. Now what I just said there is agreed upon even if you’re as far left as the Jesus Seminar. There are no New Testament scholars or historical scholars that would deny that statement right now. That’s how strong the evidence for Christianity is.

Dan Brown, on the other hand, chooses to rely upon ancient Gnostic heretical writings like the gospel of Thomas, which really wasn’t written by Thomas. No one ever believed it was written by Thomas. The gospel of Philip, the gospel of Mary; all these writings date the original composition between 140 AD – that’s 110 years after Jesus walked the earth – between 140 AD and about 250 to 300 AD. Those are about the earliest dates that you could possibly give to those writings. And he’s saying they more accurately represent the true teachings of Jesus. And, by the way, they only teach about one-tenth of what Dan Brown teaches. Most of what he teaches you’ve got to read 20th century conspiracy nuts....I mean, believe me. I don’t think...I think that there are some evil people conspiring behind closed doors to enslave the multitudes. So I’m not a guy who rejects conspiracy theories just because it’s a conspiracy theory. If there’s no evidence for your conspiracy theory and you present bogus documents and some of your people get arrested for perjury and you view them as a reliable source, you know, all I can say is, “Sometime, visit the real world.”

Dan Brown needs to visit the real world, unfortunately. It seems that many Americans would rather visit Dan Brown’s unreal world. And that’s rather unfortunate.

Now, the Gnosticism that he proclaims...just look at John chapter 19; you know, Jesus’ secret teachings. Let me say this. It has been agreed upon by many New Testament scholars that John’s gospel was probably written about 85 to 95 AD. Even conservative scholars hold to that. We now have some scholars who are arguing for John’s gospel...Charles Worth out of Princeton who is not a conservative scholar is now arguing that John’s gospel should be dated to the mid-50’s AD. Whatever way you look at it, John’s gospel was written somewhere between 50 and 95 AD. Some scholars try to stretch it to 110 AD but that’s only because they’re trying to reject what it teaches.

² 2 Peter 1:16

So we go to the earlier sources and what do they tell us about Jesus? In fact, I think it's actually John 18:20. Jesus is on trial before the high priest and he says this. It says: "Jesus answered him, 'I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing.'"³ That disqualified Jesus right there from being a Gnostic teacher.

Gnostics believed in salvation through secret knowledge, not salvation by God's grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone. Jesus said, "Look. I didn't speak in secret. I went into the synagogues. I spoke in public places." And so he was just saying, "Why do you have to question me about what I taught? I shouted my message from the rooftops. I had nothing to hide."

That's exactly the opposite of the world of the Gnostics, the world of the secret handshakes, the world of, you know, initiating the higher degrees behind closed doors where only the few, the intellectuals, could attain the knowledge. Jesus did not go to the intellectual elite. He proclaimed his message to the masses. He had nothing to hide. He was as far from being a Gnostic as you could possibly be.

So let's take a look at *The DaVinci Code* and then we'll try to point out a few areas where Dan Brown misses the boat. I'll give you a little bit of an overview on his novel. I'll read one quote. I don't want to spend too much time reading quotes from it.

By the way, first turn to the back – the last page. If you want some excellent books – and you can get some of these books right at Barnes and Noble usually where they put *The DaVinci Code*.

By the way, if you think, "Why is Pastor Phil speaking on this? It's not that important." Walk into Barnes and Noble and just in that little foyer before you get to the second door. Just look to your right. Every book on that shelf – many of those books have been out of print for years. Now they're back in print because of *The DaVinci Code*. Many of the books were written because of *The DaVinci Code*. And they're all a bunch of garbage books about Gnosticism, the Dead Sea scrolls, other writings: *The Holy Blood Holy Grail* type books, *Search for the Holy Grail*, *The Knight's Templar*. And all it is is occultism, the secret arts, the hidden, forbidden arts, the world of the occult, the world of the demonic realm dressed up in Christian terminology so that we can feel comfortable with it, we Americans who, you know, most of us come from at least a nominally Christian home. This is having tremendous impact. But you could also buy these books there.

The first book I would recommend more than any other: *Cracking The DaVinci Code* by James Garlow and Peter Jones, published by Victor Books. Now, a standing book; I just saw it on the shelf at the end of the aisles. I wasn't even looking for it. Just walking out of Barnes and Noble there it was staring me in the face. In fact at one time they had a *The DaVinci Code* at the end of an aisle and it was surrounded by seven or eight other books about *The DaVinci Code* and out of those seven or eight books at least five or six of them were Christian books written by noted Christian scholars refuting this work. So I don't

³ John 18:20

think any of those books will sell as much as *The DaVinci Code* but I think when you combine all the Christian reputations together I wouldn't be surprised if you end up selling over one million books that are bought and read by people that actually do refute *The DaVinci Code: The DaVinci Deception* by Irwin Lutzer, *The Gospel Code* by Ben Wetherington, III. That's probably...*The Gospel Code* is probably the most difficult to read. Ben Weatherington, III is one of the leading evangelical New Testament scholars alive today. And so he gets really deep into stuff. Sometimes I'm there scratching my head wondering what in the world is he talking about. But he actually breaks it down well. But every once in a while he's just such a deep thinker on this topic....

Breaking The DaVinci Code by Daryl Bach. He's another really top quality Christian scholar, but I think he breaks it down a little bit more. And then there's *The Truth Behind The DaVinci Code* by Richard Abanes. Most of these books just do what I'm going to be doing and that is refuting the main heretical issues that deal with Christianity and just refuting enough of this guy to show you that Dan Brown doesn't know what he's talking about theologically, historically, biblically. But Richard Abanes is the kind of guy who tries to refute everything that Dan Brown was messed up about. And so this stuff I just read in passing where he mentions some secret order and he mentions some guy here or something there. He'll mention: "Dan Brown mentioned this occultic symbol means this." And I just assume, "Well, he's an occultist so Dan Brown should know." But Richard Abanes researched it and Dan Brown can't even get the occultic symbols right. So I guess he just takes an occultic symbol and says, "Well, I don't like what it really symbolizes. I want it to symbolize something in my agenda. I'm just going to change the meaning," or something. I don't know what.

But whatever the case Dan Brown is proving to be....Let literary experts be the judge of what is good literature or not. Because I'm not...I mean, I'm so...I like philosophical works. I'm not much on novels and stuff. It's not a complement to myself either because I wish I were more creative, more literary. But I'm not sure I would even read Shakespeare and recognize the greatness in his writing. So I'm not going to say Dan Brown is a lousy author and a lousy novelist or he's a good one. I'll let the Christian literary experts debate that issue. But, you know, maybe he's proven he's a good novelist. I don't know. He's definitely proven he figured out a way to make some big money. Ok, and that's not a slam on him either. I mean, you know, it's what you do with your money that's...you know, and how you got your money whether it's a legal means or illegal or serving the Lord or serving self. But whatever the case, his knowledge of history...I would say it's worse than deficient. It's deceptive. This guy has an agenda and he's trying to deceive people.

Let me give you a little overview. The three main characters are Robert Langdon, who is supposed to be...and he, you know, invents these people out of his imagination which is perfectly ok when you're writing a novel. There is Robert Langdon who is a Harvard professor of religious symbols. And I don't even know if Harvard has a professor of religious symbols. I would not be surprised if they do. And there's Leigh Teabing who is supposed to be an expert on the Holy Grail; there's a wasted life. And then there is Sophie Neveu whose name means "new wisdom." You know, so the Greek Word σοφία

for wisdom. And that's what Brown is trying to promote. It's the new secret wisdom; basically new age Christianity which is not Christianity at all. It's neo-pagan. You see, Brown has an agenda. He's a neo-Gnostic. He wants to bring back ancient Gnosticism. But he's so radically into feminism, into the radical women's rights movement which is....you know, the original women's libbers were Christian ladies. And then the movement got hi-jacked. And all they wanted was: women to be treated equally with man. And they recognized that women were different than men. When was the last time you saw a man give a birth to a baby or give birth to another human being? The only time I think that ever happened was Adam. That was a really unique thing. It sounded like a miraculous cloning or something – God taking Eve from his side.

But, you know, there's a difference between men and women and because of that men have some strengths that women don't have and women have some strengths that men don't have. And so, you know, when everything is said and done...but the women's lib movement has basically been taken over by lesbian Wiccans; radical lesbian Wiccans who also happen to be, a lot of them, Marxist. And so you get witches in this movement. You get communists in this movement; ladies who hate men. And so Dan Brown is a guy who likes to promote a movement that hates men. He reminds me of Phil Donahue who used to constantly...he couldn't go without a program apologizing for being a white European male. And it's like, "Get over it, Phil. You're a white European American male. I mean, just accept it. Move on now."

But whatever the case....Also and his feminism is so strong that it's like the radical leaders of the feminist movement that are into goddess worship. It's like when I debated at Delby Community College and I kept getting heckled every time I called God a he. You know, go figure. But whatever the case he tried to blend goddess worship and Gnosticism. You can't do it. And we'll talk about that later.

And he's also into the new morality, the new tolerance. You know, pro-homosexual rights, pro-abortion rights and, you know, that type of thing. So all this stuff, it's his agenda. It's an anti-Christian agenda. And that forces his views, not the evidence. And he can title things fact that are not fact so long as they serve his purposes.

So I'm going to read to you from 233 and 234 – a few paragraphs – a key portion of the book *The DaVinci Code* just so you can see. By the way, the more I read this the more chauvinistic I think this sounds. Because you've got this Teabing guy, the expert, he'll give like three paragraphs and then Sophie's over there, "I don't follow his divinity."

And then he comes out with another two paragraphs and then, "Not the Son of God?"

And then he comes up and talks and, "You mean this? And you mean...?"

I mean, she sounds like a total blank slate. I mean, if I wrote something like this as a Christian, you know, they would slam me and say, "What a male chauvinist pig. The woman doesn't know anything. She has to be educated by the man." But that's sure the way it sounds. So apparently Dan Brown is right about feminism. He has some

chauvinistic influences on his life that need to be deconstructed. But whatever the case...You're going to hear...whenever my voice shifts that's Sophie saying, "Educate me, oh male human." Whatever.

So now they're talking about the Council of Nicea. Let me state this on the record: Dan Brown is probably the world's leading expert as far as a guy who has spoken about the Council of Nicea more than any other person who knows absolutely nothing about the Council of Nicea. He doesn't even understand why they met. He doesn't even...I mean he says it was a close vote. Three-hundred-sixteen to two is not a close vote. If the Raiders lost a football game 316 to two I would not say that's a close vote. But he doesn't even know why these guys met and what the issue was they were debating. And we'll talk about that.

So he talks about the Council of Nicea and it states as follows: "'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.'

"I don't follow, his divinity?"

Ok, you know that's Sophie.

"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 Nicea.'

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

I'm going to stop right there. He never complains about the votes that the Jesus seminar is taking. So when liberals take votes 2000 years later as to which sayings Jesus actually said and which sayings we should throw out of the gospels, I guess that kind of voting is ok. But when a bunch of theologians get together to vote on a theological issue and their all studying the same Scriptures to try to arrive at the conclusion, I guess that vote's not ok. Whatever the case, he misses the whole idea of what the vote was about so it's almost irrelevant.

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

"A relatively close vote, at that."

Again, 316 to 2 is a relatively close vote.

“Teabing added, ‘Nonetheless establishing Christ’s divinity was critical to the further unification of the Roman Empire and to the new Vatican power base. By officially endorsing Jesus as the Son of God Constantine turned Jesus into a deity who existed beyond the scope of the human world, an entity whose power was unchallengeable.’”

And then he says, “‘Further, many scholars claim that the early Church literally stole Jesus from his original followers, hi-jacking,’” and it’s some really powerful words here. “‘The early church literally stole Jesus from his original followers, hi-jacking his human message, shrouding it in an impenetrable cloak of divinity and using it to expand their own power.’”

“‘The twist is this,’ Teabing said talking faster now, ‘because Constantine upgraded Jesus’ status almost four centuries after Jesus’ death thousands of documents already existed chronically his life as a mortal man. To re-write the history books, Constantine knew he would need a bold stroke. From this sprang the most profound moment in Christian history.’”

“Teabing paused, eyeing Sophie, ‘Constantine commissioned and financed a new Bible which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ’s human traits.’”

Hey, I don’t know what he’s talking about. The Christian Church has always taught that Jesus is human. He’s fully human and he’s fully God. It’s called the doctrine of the hypostatic union. Jesus is one person with two natures forever. He is fully God and fully man. He always existed as God the Son. At a point in time he became a man and added a human nature.

This guy is acting like the Christians today don’t teach that Jesus is God and he’s not really a man. He doesn’t even know what Christianity teaches.

[Off Mic Voice]

The writings of the Apostolic Fathers he just ignores. What Kurt is talking about is the Apostolic Fathers. It’s something I’ll talk about later on. But you can go to Barnes and Noble and pull the Apostolic Fathers. They were the...right off the shelf. They’ve got a one volume set. They were the pupils of the apostles that the apostles selected to lead the early church as the apostles were getting older. They wrote between 96 AD – Clement of Rome writing first – to 156 AD with the last of the Apostolic Fathers died – Polycarp. And so you have Ignatius in 107 AD enroute to be thrown to wild beasts over and over again he refers to Jesus as, “our God and Savior Jesus Christ, our God and Savior Jesus Christ, our God and Savior Jesus Christ.” These guys were all bishops in the early Church, appointed by the apostles.

Now, the funny thing is: Ignatius is not arguing that Jesus is God. He’s just saying that in passing as if everybody agrees with him. He’s actually arguing that Jesus also fully became a man. So he really was born of a virgin. He really did die on the cross for our

sins. See, he's refuting Docetism, the belief that Jesus was divine and only appeared to be human, but really wasn't human.

Dan Brown is so confused he's arguing that we should return to Gnosticism and a merely human Jesus and he doesn't even understand the Gnostics acknowledged Jesus is divine. They denied Jesus is human. So not only does he misunderstand Christianity, he must misunderstand ancient Gnosticism. This guy's oblivious to the facts wherever they fall; whether it's on the Christian side or the Gnostic side.

And so Constantine supposedly commissioned and financed a new Bible – as if the writings we have today..... By the way, 107 AD Ignatius is writing, Clement of Rome 96 AD; Polycarp is writing about 130 AD; Papias is speaking about the writings; and they are all paraphrasing the books we have in the New Testament today. So he's acting like they didn't accept these books until like 325 AD. No, no. Don't even go there, Mr. Brown.

But whatever the case: “He commissioned and financed a new Bible which omitted those gospels that spoke of Jesus' human traits.”

Hey, look. My gospels still say Jesus got tired. He got weary. He got hungry. Those are not divine traits. Those are his human traits. So I wonder if this guy has even read the Bible. So many times I've had people who are telling, “Oh, the Bible teaches reincarnation.”

I said, “No it doesn't.” I quote Hebrews 9:27. It's the quickest biblical one line refutation of reincarnation: “It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,”⁴

And then this guy said, “Well, I saw this lady on TV and she proved that the Bible teaches reincarnation.”

And this guy's name was Frank so I turned to him and I said, “Frank, don't be talking about a book you ain't never read.” You know, and it's one of those deals where I don't know. I get the impression this guy really hasn't spent time reading the Bible.

“So he omitted those gospels which spoke of Christ's human traits and embellished those gospels that made him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up and burned.’

“An interesting note,’ Landon added, ‘Anyone who chose the forbidden gospels over Constantine's version was deemed a heretic.’”

And then he goes on from there. He also on page 235 – this is just part of the narrative: “Sophie was staring at the most famous fresco of all time, *The Last Supper*, DaVincis' legendary painting from the wall of Santa Maria Del Grazie in Milan.”

⁴ Hebrews 9:27.

We'll talk a little bit about Leonardo DaVinci. By the way...and we're all guilty. I'm not going to slam Brown on this because I'm guilty of sometimes I call Thomas Aquinas, Aquinas. Well, really his name is Thomas who happened to be from Aquino, Italy so he was called Thomas Aquinas. Leonardo DaVinci, his real name was Leonardo. So DaVinci isn't his real name. Art experts will refer to him as Leonardo. There's not a whole lot of Leonardos that...and even with the present actor included that, you know, when you say Leonardo everybody knows what you're talking about. But DaVinci is not really his name. I mean, that would be like calling Jesus, of Nazareth. But that's neither here nor there.

Let me just give you a little bit of an overview. I'm not going to read from Abanes, his *Truth behind The DaVinci Code*. But here's his basic story line. Brown is claiming. Boy, when I look at you you're blurry now. But Brown is claiming that Jesus made no claim to be God and that he was married to Mary Magdalene and Jesus picked Mary Magdalene to lead the early Church. Now, this ticked off Peter who wanted to lead the early Church. And so he wanted to kind of persecute Mary and so she had to flee and at the time of Jesus' crucifixion she was pregnant with Jesus' daughter.

And so it turns out: Mary Magdalene, according to this guy, is the Holy Grail. The Holy Grail is not the chalice that the Knights Templar were looking for. The Holy Grail, instead, is Mary Magdalene who, in her womb, contained the blood of Jesus, the bloodline of Jesus, so that the royal blood of Jesus would spread down to the future.

I mean, this sounds a lot like the Nazis and their blood myth of the superiority of the Arian race. And, by the way, the new age movement, neo-paganism, the first culture to embrace it was Nazi Germany. The Discovery channel did an outstanding program showing how occultic and new age the Nazis were. I mean, these guys were even looking for the lost continent of Atlantis. These guys believed that the Arian race was divine; all other races were inferior and had to be exterminated so they would not pollute the perfect genetic code of the Arian race.

Basically, in the new age movement Nazism is making a comeback. The only difference is there will be no national boundaries this time. The Nazi belief system is being spread on a worldwide scale through the new age movement. There's a whole lot of documentation on it so I'll give you this one little clue. The United Nations, the meditation room? That is more of a Hindu, new age type of worship place. It's supported by Lucius Trust which was founded by Helena Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society. And Helena Blavatsky, you know, used to teach...she was a Russian mystic. She used to teach that Lucifer was actually a good guy who enlightens us and got a bad rap. So the publishing house of the Theosophical Society was actually called "Lucifer Publishing." The book sales were low so they changed the name to Lucius Trust and now Lucius Trust has more than publishing. It also, you know, maintains the meditation room at the United Nations building. So that let's you know...if you think the United Nations has the answers to our problems, it's just building another brick in the new Tower of Babel is all that's doing.

So Mary is to escape from Peter because she was really the rock upon which the Church was supposed to be built – according to Dan Brown. She survived and some people helped her out and she found refuge in France. She fled to France and gave birth to Jesus' daughter. Now, there was a big political agenda in the Church. And so what they did was they turned the merely human Jesus into a divine Jesus and since now they....According to Brown at this time there was lots of goddess worship. There was ancient paganism. There was widespread matriarchy, women were ruling instead of men and stuff. Now even experts on ancient paganism – some of them pagans themselves – openly acknowledge there's no historical evidence for widespread matriarchy.

Now, granted, there's always going to be little pockets. You might find one tribal people where some lady is in charge or a group of ladies are in charge. You're going to find little pockets of matriarchy. But throughout history – and I'm not saying this is right. I'm not saying this is wrong. All I'm saying is: This is historical fact: Men have ruled. Every once in a while you're going to get a Cleopatra, but that's the exception rather than the rule. And even if you didn't find it today, my mother's side of the family the Minichinos – the Italian's on my side of the family – I mean, it was Grandmom Marion, . Marion Minichino. Even the few mafia relatives that I had, they answered to her. You don't want to tick off Marion. So even today you'll find little pockets of matriarchy. But the idea that under paganism women ruled and the worship of the goddess was the main thing. No, almost all the ancient goddesses had a male cohort who usually exercised more authority than her. So even in goddess worship it was still this male dominance for better or for worse. That's why they put those words in the marriage vows.

But anyway, so they decided, well we want....we're afraid of powerful females, you know, and that's the big slam on Christians today. You know, when Evelyn Krasner ran for governor I voted for a female to become governor. I thought she would have made a much better governor than, you know Gary lock-up-the-state-and-throw-away-the-key whatever you call him. But I thought she would have been a great governor. I'm not afraid of powerful ladies. I'm afraid of ungodly ladies and ungodly men who receive positions of authority.

But...so there's a stereotyping of the Church, a prejudice, a stereotyping of the church that is vicious, a vicious attack that is not the way we really are.

He also, Dan Brown, just about equates Christianity with Roman Catholicism. So if the Roman Catholic pope called a hit on somebody that's Christianity doing it, period. So it's like this guy is either oblivious to the Protestant Reformation or even the Reformers before that who got killed, burned at the stake for trying to reform the Catholic Church. He's either oblivious to that or he just purposefully ignores that so that he could paint Christianity in its worse possible light. And even then he exaggerates the wrong things that the Roman Church did.

Whatever the case Christ's line grew, you know. They're in secret in France until the fifth century and then they intermarried with French royal blood and created the

Moravian blood line. I don't even know if I'm pronouncing it right. But whatever the case there's supposed to be this hidden royal French line that is now intermarried with the royal blood of Jesus.

By the fifth century the Catholic Church was still attacking Mary Magdalene. So they decided at that point to turn her into a prostitute. And so then from...you get a lot of sermons preaching that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. It was actually Pope Gregory – who was less than infallible. I don't believe any pope was infallible. But he made a mistake because, you know, you had a prostitute anointing the feet of Jesus in one gospel and in another gospel you have Mary the sister of Lazarus anointing the feet of Jesus and then somewhere else in the gospels you have Mary Magdalene mentioned as the women whom seven demons were cast out of her and that she was one of the wealthy ladies that was supporting the ministry of Jesus.

Nowhere does the Scripture say that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. Mary Magdalene could have been 85 years old. We have no idea. We're never told whether she was young or old. We do know one thing, though...well, we know several things about Mary Magdalene: She financially supported the ministry of Jesus, she was, you know, a follower of Jesus, a disciple of Jesus. But we also know that she was not married. That's why she's called Mary Magdalene. See, it's Mary of Magdala, the city with that name.

You see, in ancient times if you were not married, if you were a female and you were not married they named you after the city you came from. If you were married, they named you...your "last name" became of your husband: Mary, Joseph's wife – that type of thing. Now, when your son becomes real famous because he's like raising the dead then you might be know as Mary, the mother of Jesus. But to identify a woman by the city in which she lived, not only means that she was not married. It probably means she was never married. So she would have been Mary, Jesus' wife, if she had been married to Jesus.

And, by the way, if God becomes a man for the purpose of saving mankind do you think he's going to have enough time to say, "Well, while doing that, while saving mankind I also want to get married, have a couple of kids, get a nice house, a white picket fence, two cars in the driveway. Oh, I can't preach the Sermon on the Mount today because of my kid's got the flu. Or I got to drive my kids to soccer practice.

"I'm not saying those are bad things, ok? But that's not as important as saving the world. And when you're me," – when you are God and you are here to save the world it just makes sense to me you're not going to take the time to get married.

You see, Jesus didn't come to earth to say, "You know, I'm a human and most human males have a need and a desire for a mate and to get married." Jesus wasn't here to meet his needs. He was here to meet our needs. He was here to provide salvation for us. And so there's absolutely no evidence that he was married. All the evidence goes against that. As it does with John the Baptist; John the Baptist, another guy whose ministry was just too important to have the time to get married.

And Dan Brown argues that if you were a first century Jew, a first century Jew had to get married. No. First century Jewish males, probably 99.5% of them, even rabbis, got married. But that 0.5%, many times, more times than not, their mission...they decided to devote their lives solely to the cause of God and therefore chose not to get married. And in fact some of them probably...John the Baptist probably said, "You know, if I get married that would be a total injustice to the lady I marry because now she's got to wear camel hair and eat locusts and wild honey and live with me in the wilderness. That's not the way to take care of your family."

So there were those people who would say, "Hey. My mission is too important. I've got too much time to spend serving God. I don't have time to take care of a family properly. I'm not going to do that."

And there were Jews in the first century AD, and there have been Jews and Gentiles throughout history who have thought that same way. And he denies that fact.

Ok, so now you've got this French royal line and so the Roman Catholic authorities decided to try to destroy all of the records that told the true story of Mary Magdalene's life but the documents were secretly hidden beneath the ruins of Herod's temple in Jerusalem. So trust Dan Brown on this. We haven't found them, but underneath that temple there's the true records about Mary Magdalene. And so we Christians, we're guilty of blind faith, but just trust Dan Brown. He knows what's going on.

Ok, and then he's got the Knight's Templar. Now these guys were a bunch of occultists and they were in it for the money. But he's got them as the truth honoring knights. We'll Dan Brown is not an expert on truth, obviously, at this point. But they were the truth honoring knights called the Knights Templar who basically were trying to protect and pass on from generation to generation the suppressed truth about Mary Magdalene.

Now, the Knights Templar, they recovered the documents but then Pope Clement V conspired with the King of France to have the knights rounded up and killed. But a few of the knights survived. And then they established an order – the Priory of Scion where they hid these documents. And so then he talks about the agenda, the Holy Grail is a metaphor for Mary Magdalene who is the bearer of Christ's blood line. And so the quest for the Holy Grail was to find her bones and to kneel before her bones.

Man, I tell you: You tell a book like this 50 years ago and no Americans would long to kneel before the bones of a dead lady. I mean it's just like...but that's where we are as America. We have rejected the true God of the Bible and now, you know, there are a lot of people who say, "Oh, you Christians are idiots for worshipping Jesus."

"Well, what are you doing?"

Well, I wish I could find the bones of Mary Magdalene. I want to kneel down before them and worship them.

It's like, you know, get a life there.

Whatever the case...so the secrets fell into the hands of this Priory of Scion, the Holy Grail is really Mary Magdalene and the royal bloodline of Jesus which blended with the French line. And Leonardo DaVinci, Isaac Newton and other famous Renaissance men were supposedly secret members of this secret order – the Priory of Scion. And so Leonardo DaVinci, his *Last Supper*, supposedly contains clues, symbols and codes that teach the truth about Mary Magdalene. So that's basically the story line here.

And as Sophie finds this out...I'll kill the ending of the book for you. As Sophie finds this out, she finds out she's in the royal...whoa, what a surprise? She's in the royal...she has a French name and she's in the royal bloodline of Jesus. So this lady, Sophie Neveu whose name means new wisdom, she finds the new wisdom looking within. It's within her. It's the blood running through her veins. And that's what Gnosticism wants us to believe; that truth is found by looking within, not looking at objective real history, but looking within ourselves, that small voice inside. And ultimately neo-paganism you end up with the same lie that you find in the Garden when Lucifer speaking through the serpent told Eve that if you eat from the forbidden fruit you will not die, but you will become like God.

And so I think we're going to have to...well, let me just start on the historical and theological inaccuracies and we'll wrap it up in just a couple of minutes and then we'll pick it up from there.

So basically what I need to do, talking about Dan Brown, is just pointing out some of his historical and theological inaccuracies. First off, he misrepresents early Christianity as believing in a merely human Jesus.

Christianity taught from the start that Jesus is fully God and he became a man so now he is fully God and fully man. The Jesus Seminar is as far left as you will go among New Testament scholars. And even they admit that Paul started his writings about 49 or 50 AD and that Paul, from the start of his writings, taught that Jesus is fully God.

Now, what they'll try to deny is that Paul really got that from the apostles. But that's hard. They don't want to call Paul a liar. Paul said that he got the right hand of fellowship from Peter and James, the half brother of Jesus, when they recognized that he was teaching the same Gospel they were teaching. Yet, Paul does not...Larry Hertado from the University of Edinboro, one of the world's leading New Testament scholars, in his work *The Lord Jesus Christ*. It just came out a few months ago, about 700 pages; he argues that, you know, Paul liked to argue. Paul liked to argue and in his writings he argued. All right. If there's disagreement in the Church he will argue for his point because he knows it's the true issue. And God, you know...I'm sure Paul had some errors, but God did not allow them to creep into the Word.

Paul never argued that Jesus is God. He always mentioned it in passing. So Larry Hertado says, "Therefore Paul was not teaching something new. The deity of Christ was something that was universally accepted in the Church. And this belief goes back to the early 30's AD."

What Larry Hertado is saying is: It goes right back to Christ's death and resurrection itself. Jesus was teaching he was God while he was walking the earth. The apostles just said, "He can't mean that. He probably means something else." When they saw him risen from the dead it was like, "Ok. Now we know what he means."

So I have these questions here for Dan Brown. Would the authorities, the Jewish religious authorities try Jesus and convict him and then turn him over to the Romans....would the Jewish authorities want to execute a merely human Jesus?

See, every time we try to water down Jesus and turn him into less than fully God you always end up with a politically correct Jesus that nobody would bother to kill.

If Jesus did not claim to be God then why would the Sanhedrin find him guilty of blasphemy –he being man makes himself out to be God – and then turn him over to the Romans to try to nail him with a charge of treason.

Second question I have for Mr. Brown, there: Would Rome persecute Christians for believing in a merely human Jesus?

See, the whole reason...and there's no dispute about this. Historians tell us the whole reason why Christians were put to death and that the persecution stopped around the time of Nicea. It didn't start. So this was due to the beliefs of Christians....Roman persecution really started heavy about 64 AD lasting to about 310, 315 AD, until Constantine made a profession of faith in Christ as the Roman Emperor. So from about 64 AD, the reign of Caesar Nero, to Constantine about 315 AD, during this time frame Christians were being put to death because they refused to say, "Caesar is Lord." They refused to say, "Caesar is God." Instead they said, "Jesus is Lord."

And we know that saying goes all the way back to the book of Romans which even the Jesus Seminar accepts as an authentic writing of Paul about 56 AD when it was written. And Paul talks about a baptismal formula where you say, "Jesus is Lord."

You see, we coined the phrase "Jesus is Lord," because the Romans were forcing people to say, "Caesar is Lord." It goes right back to the early days of Christianity.

N.T. Wright's work *The Resurrection of the Son of God* and his other works on who Jesus is shows that the belief that Jesus is fully God goes all the way back to the apostles themselves, the eyewitnesses who knew Jesus.

In fact, Larry Hertado – getting back to him – he refers to worship of Jesus as binitarian worship. So, before we fully figured out the doctrine of the trinity, the early church

worshipped both the Father and the Son as equals. And they were still scratching their heads over the issue of the Holy Spirit. He traces binitarian worship all the way back to the early 30s AD.

So we'll close with that and we'll close with just the reading of one passage – Philippians two – Paul's letter to the Philippians. And I don't know any New Testament scholar who rejects Philippians as being written by Paul. Paul is writing Philippians, I believe, about 60 AD. And he quotes an ancient creed in this which probably goes back to the early to mid 30s AD. So he quotes an ancient creed and in this ancient creed he talks about the true Jesus of the Bible, the true Jesus of history, the true Jesus of the eyewitnesses, the Jesus that the early Church in the 30s AD believed in, not the false Jesus of history, the false Jesus of Dan Brown.

And so it starts at verse five and it runs through verse 11. And listen to what this creed that Paul quotes...and Paul's not going to quote a creed that is teaching heresy. He's an authoritative leader in the early Church.

And, by the way, Paul claimed he had seen the risen Christ on numerous occasions and even the Jesus Seminar will not call him a liar. So when everything is said and done you can choose between a Jesus Seminar or – even more radical than that – Dan Brown or you can choose the apostle Paul. But I don't know if Dan Brown would call Paul a liar because, I mean, he really isn't an expert. But the experts who deal with it have to acknowledge that Paul was sincere enough to die and suffer for his beliefs. Nobody wants to call him a liar. He claimed he saw Jesus risen from the dead. 1 Corinthians 3:6 he claims that over 500 people at one time saw Jesus risen from the dead and most of them are still alive. So if you don't believe him go and question him. Nobody wants to call Paul a liar. Paul said he preached the same gospel message that Peter, John and James. Nobody wants to call him a liar. You know, for me and my house I've got to choose between Jesus Seminar, *The DaVinci Code*, or the apostle Paul. I ain't going to die for *The DaVinci Code*. I ain't going to die for Marcus Borg and the Jesus Seminar. But I'm willing to die for the Lord Jesus Christ. And I'm willing to die for what the apostle Paul taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

I know the apostle Paul was willing to be beaten with rods three times, scourged numerous times, shipwrecked, ridiculed, chased and eventually beheaded. I know these other guys are willing to spout their politically correct teachings if that makes them richer and more popular. But as for me and my house we're going to side with the Lord Jesus Christ and his servant, the apostle Paul.

Listen to what Paul says: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."⁵ And then he quotes this ancient creed: "who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is

⁵ Philippians 2:5

above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”⁶

The Old Testament says that every knee will someday bow to Yahweh. That’s LORD with all capital letters. It’s Yahweh. Paul says, “Jesus is Yahweh because every knee will bow to him someday.”

And then Paul says about Jesus in this ancient creed, this is what the earliest church, the earliest Christians believed, that Jesus who being in the form of God... basically the NIV breaks it down for us and translates this... because we think a form is a physical thing, the form the shape of something. For the ancient Greeks and even the ancient Jews the form, ok, the matter, the material was the clay, the lump of clay. The form was the idea of the sculpture that he put into the clay that gave it its shape. So the shape is immaterial. The shape is the idea that’s been impressed upon the material thing.

So the form is basically the idea or the nature or the classification of the thing you’re talking about. So, in other words, the NIV is correct to translate that, talking about Jesus who continues to exist in nature as God – and then goes on to say something along the lines – even though he continues to exist in nature as God, he didn’t cling to his equal privileges with God, but instead he emptied himself, he humbled himself and veiled his glory by becoming a man for the purpose of dying on the cross for our sins. This is the true Jesus of history.

The Jesus of the Bible is the true Jesus of history. There have been attacks on him for all 2000 years since he visited the planet earth. There’s going to continue to be attacks on him. But when everything is said and done, the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Jesus of history is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob become a man to provide salvation for us.

And so Dan Brown doesn’t want to join us when we bow before Jesus. But we need to pray for Dan Brown because the Bible teaches he will join us and bow before Jesus; though if he doesn’t accept Jesus as his Savior and do it willingly he’ll do so against his will.

When the Lord Jesus returns you’re not going to have a choice to bow before him. He’s not going to make you a believer. God’s not going to force you into Heaven. But when the almighty Creator and Redeemer returns to this planet everyone on earth, under the earth, in Heaven, everyone will have to bend the knee and bow before the Lord Jesus and proclaim that he is the Lord of all. That is not the Jesus of *The DaVinci Code*. But that’s ok with me because the Jesus of *The DaVinci Code* never existed.

Let’s close with a word of prayer.

⁶ Philippians 2:6-11

Father, in Jesus precious name I just pray, Lord, that you would give us more of an appreciation for studying your Word at a deeper level and that you give us more of an appreciation for how you work through the Church throughout history, how you guided the Church to recognize the books that you wanted in the New Testament; rather than these false teachings that came over 100 years after your Son walked the earth. I thank you for guiding your Church in the past and I pray that you continue to guide your Church and our Church in the future. And so guide us into your truth, Lord; guide us into how we are to represent you and live our lives in submission to you and proclaim your truth and to refute the lies and the errors of those anti-Christians who would like to attack the Christian faith.

I pray, Lord, that you would help others throughout our country and throughout the world to seek through the lies of Dan Brown and *The DaVinci Code* and that they would see the light of your gospel, the truth of your gospel and the good news that your Son has become a man and died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead to conquer death for us and some day the Lord Jesus Christ who is fully God and fully man will return to this planet and take his stand upon the earth.

We pray for Dan Brown. We pray for his salvation. We pray for the salvation of all who read his book and would be deceived by it. We pray, Lord, that by the power of your Holy Spirit you'll keep them from being deceived and guide them into the truth that your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is Lord and king over all. In Jesus precious name we pray. Amen.

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