

The Fallacies of the DaVinci Code

By Dr. Phil Fernandes

Preached on: October 31, 2004

Institute for Biblical Defense

P.O. Box 3264

Bremerton, WA 98310

Website: <http://www.biblicaldefense.org>

Online Sermons: <http://ibd.sermonaudio.com>

Now, we're continuing our series on refuting *The DaVinci Code*. Actually titled it "Refuting the DaVinci Fraud," because that's what it is. And I don't mean to mock Daniel Brown and I'm not trying to mock him or anything. I'm trying to be kind and considerate to him, but if somebody told you that Columbus discovered America in 1892, not 1492 that's fraudulent. It's just not true. It's just plain bad history. And certainly some of the blunders of Daniel Brown are even worse than that.

Now, take a look at the gospel of Luke chapter one and verses one to four. Throughout this series – we'll probably finish it up next week – but throughout this series I'm just going to be turning you over to passages that you will find in the Christian gospels and in the New Testament, but you will not find these in the Gnostic writings. And if you find anything close to it, it's obviously just a straight out lie. But the authors of the New Testament, like the authors of the Old Testament, never claimed to be writing mythology.

Daniel Brown says that, you know, miracles are metaphors. All faith is just basically fairy tales and lies and just fairy tales that people want to gather around. That's not what the apostles said. The apostles claimed to be recording history. So you either have to call them liars or acknowledge that they're telling the truth. And the evidence overwhelmingly favors their telling the truth, being truthful since they died for their faith.

Last week we looked at 2 Peter chapter one where Peter says, "These were not carefully devised myths. We really saw Jesus in his glory on the Mount of Transfiguration."

We also referred to 2 Timothy chapter four where Paul tells Timothy, "In the last days people will be falling prey to myths. They'll have itchy ears and desire to hear myths while rejecting the truth." And we're living in days like that right now.

But look at the gospel of Luke, how Luke starts his gospel. And the sequel to this is Acts. And we'll look at the first few verses of Acts as well. But the first four verses of the gospel according to Luke are as follows. By the way, the gospels, when they were originally written, it wasn't the gospel according to Matthew. It wasn't the gospel according to Mark. Those were added later. But James Donne and other Christian New Testament scholars have now begun to argue that they had to be added some time during the first century when people still had the knowledge of who wrote them to differentiate one gospel from another gospel. He said, "These titles actually go way back in the

history of the Church. And to find all copies of the New Testament that we have, all the complete copies that have these titles already and finding that in second century AD means that the knowledge of this has to go back to the first century. In other words, you have guys arguing that people called it the gospel according to Luke because Luke really did write it; and the same for Matthew, Mark and John.

Let me just read the first four verses here. He's writing to his friend Theophilus who is probably a government official so he calls him, "most excellent Theophilus." But he says "Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed."¹ And then he begins to write about the life and ministry of Jesus, the Jewish Messiah.

But he tells them that many people...at this time Matthew and probably Mark were already written. Luke may have had access to them or knowledge of those gospels. There wasn't a big emphasis in either Matthew's gospel or Mark's gospel to put everything in chronological order, by the way. Ancient history was often recorded...you would talk about somebody's teachings. Then you would talk about if you think he performed miracles or events of his life. Then you would talk about them. And so it was more thematic, different themes. So Luke said, "Hey. You know, you've got these reliable writings about Jesus but they're not in chronological order. And then you have other people telling stories about Jesus and maybe they are misleading people. So what I'm going to do is, I'm going to do...I've done my homework, I've done my research, I've talked to the apostles and I'm going to lay everything out in its proper chronological order."

Now, the sequel to the gospel of Luke is in Acts. And in Acts Luke says this: "The former account I made."² He is referring to the gospel of Luke. "The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."³

So he's basically saying, "I want to give you a sequel of the gospel of Luke; what happened after Jesus ascended to Heaven, what happened after he appeared alive to his apostles over a period of 40 days, after he presented to them many infallible proofs that he had actually risen from the dead. He appeared to them, so they saw him. He allowed them to touch his wounds. He ate fish in their midst. He provided evidence to them that

¹ Luke 1:1-4 (All Scripture references are taken from the New King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise indicated).

² Acts 1:1

³ Acts 1:1-3

they had risen from the dead and gave them evidence that he truly was alive and that had truly conquered death.”

So we’re going to see even in next week I’ll bring up a few more passages as well that talk about the fact that these are reports from eye-witnesses. You cannot say that about the Gnostic writings, especially...you know, you can’t say that about any of the Gnostic writings. And that refers also to the literature that Dan Brown refers to on a regular basis.

Now, last week we talked about, you know, Brown’s agenda. He’s basically a neo-pagan, a neo-Gnostic. He’s politically correct. And he’s anti-Christian. He has his anti-Christian agenda and so it forces him to try to rewrite Christianity and argue that the Christianity we find proclaimed in the New Testament and believed and proclaimed by the Church for the past 2000 years was not, in fact, the historical traditional Christianity. The true, earliest Christianity was Gnostic – claims Dan Brown.

And then he misrepresents history to try to argue that point. We talked about this last week that he misrepresents early Christianity as believing in a merely human Jesus. There is no evidence that the early Church believed in a merely human Jesus. From the start the Church believed that Jesus was really a man, but he had always existed as God and he became a man at a point in time without ceasing to be God. You can go to the ancient creeds, you can go to Paul’s writings, you can go to the gospels themselves; we’re going to give evidence later on in this series on why we know the gospels were written between 30 and at the latest 100 AD. I would argue the gospels were written between 30 and 60 AD. I would argue the dates are that early. Even conservative evangelical scholars would disagree on that, but I really think if we just allow them to speak for themselves and examine the evidence in an unbiased way the dates get earlier and not later.

He misunderstands the whole purpose of the Council of Nicea. The issue had nothing to do with is Jesus human or is Jesus divine? Everybody at that debate, at that Council acknowledged Jesus is human. And everybody there acknowledged he’s divine in some sense. So the debate was...and they all acknowledged he’s the Creator of the universe. The whole debate was whether Jesus is fully God, equal with God the Father or whether he was a lesser God created by God the Father and then he created everything else.

So nobody held the view that Dan Brown is claiming was held up till that point. He claims that the early Church believed in a merely human Jesus right up until 325 AD. That’s not the case. There is absolutely no evidence for that whatsoever. Cutting edge scholarship argues that Jesus was considered to be fully God and worshipped as equal with the Father as early as the early 30s AD.

So he calls it a close vote. Again 316 to 2 is not a close vote.

He says that miracles are metaphors. This shows his bias. He does not believe in miracles. He doesn’t believe in supernatural miracles. So whatever kind of religious worship he has...he’s really not looking for a God out there. He’s looking for a God

within. He's got this view that in some way, shape or form man is God and so he's going to reject miracles like the incarnation, God the Son becoming a man; Christ's bodily resurrection from the dead; and things of that sort. So he's got a smaller God. His false god is not the all powerful God of the Bible who can perform these miracles. He doesn't believe miracles are possible.

He believes the Bible is merely a human product so he denies inspiration. He denies that God wrote the Bible, God guided human authors to record his Word without error.

You see, what I'm getting at here is: People like Dan Brown, even the Jesus Seminar – that are nowhere near as radical as Dan Brown is – these liberal critics of the Bible, they do not prove that the Bible is a human book filled with errors. They start out with that assumption. And when you start out with that assumption, when you start out with that assumption in a debate, “My opponent is wrong,” and that's your first premise. Then your conclusion is going to be, “My opponent is wrong.” You really haven't proven it.

This is what philosophers call arguing in a circle. You assume what you're supposed to be proving. And that's what Dan Brown does. He assumes miracles are impossible, the Bible is not the Word of God, the Bible is a human book that contains errors, the true Jesus of history never really did these things, never claimed to be God, never rose from the dead, never performed miracles. And then by the end of the book – after you read almost 500 pages of his novel – you get the impression that he's proven his anti-Christian premise when, in reality, he came into that with that assumption.

It's just like if you deny that God created the universe you have to look for an alternative and usually you accept, embrace evolution. But if you don't reject creation by God there's no need to speculate over there. So all his wild speculation – which is very much less than convincing – all his wild speculation wouldn't even get started if he would just examine the evidence and acknowledge, go where the evidence goes, which the evidence indicates that Jesus claimed to be God and proved he is God.

The three main proofs – you might want to jot this down – three main proofs. When everything that is said and done, because it is so obviously clear that Jesus did claim to be God, the three main proofs of Jesus' deity are, number one: the miracles he performed; number two: the Old Testament prophecies he fulfilled; and number three: his bodily resurrection from the dead.

Lots of people have claimed to be God, have claimed to be uniquely God throughout history and never gathered much more than a little tiny following and historians have recorded these guys as insane – the Charles Mansons, the Adolf Hitlers and the list goes on. But you get this one guy who claimed to be God and he convinced billions of people on the planet earth – 2000 years later – that he really was God. Why? Because of the evidence he presented for his claims and they fall into those three categories: the miracles he performed, the Old Testament prophecies he fulfilled to a T, hundreds of them; and then his resurrection from the dead.

So now let's take a look at some of the other inaccuracies – theological and historical inaccuracies – of Daniel Brown. He argued that Christianity is anti-woman. And he...at times Dan Brown does not differentiate between the Roman Catholic Church and Christianity. He acts like if the Roman Catholic pope ordered somebody to be put to death automatically that's a blemish on all of Christianity. Well, the Bible teaches that all people are sinful; even people who profess faith in Christ. The Bible teaches that some people profess faith in Christ and they're not really believers. And then even if they really are believers they can still do the wrong thing.

Now, to be a straight out cold blooded murderer, that's pretty good evidence to me that the person may profess faith in Christ, but they're really not a Christian. But whatever the case, he says that the Church...he acts like it's common knowledge that the Church – and what he means by that is the Roman Catholic Church – killed over five million women in medieval times during the Middle Ages and the witch hunts and that sort of thing throughout Europe.

Actually, the Roman Catholic Church killed less than 80,000 women in a 400 year period. He claims they killed over five million women in a 300 year period. So, number one: it was a longer period of time; number two: the numbers are much less. It's probably closer to 20,000 to 40,000 women than it is 80,000. By the way, most of these ladies were turned in by other ladies who accused them of being...because, again, and even through the Middle Ages didn't spend a lot of time talking with ladies, you know. Society was more chauvinistic at different times in history. And so ladies who were friends of other ladies started saying, "You know, this lady's doing occultic things." And then would turn her into the authorities.

A lot of times these executions were carried on not even by the Roman Catholic Church, but by the authorities who, themselves, were Roman Catholic. And sometimes the popes were saying, "Hey, this is too...this is ugly. We shouldn't be doing these things."

Now, there were other times when the popes were giving the thumbs up and actually calling the hits. But when everything is said and done we're Protestants here. We're not Roman Catholics. We're not here to defend the Roman Catholic Church because the Roman Catholic Church has blended paganism with Christianity and come with a hybrid form of religion. But the fact of the matter is: If you're going to slam Roman Catholicism, get your numbers right. Nobody holds to the numbers Dan Brown is talking about. In fact, if five million women were killed in Europe in the Middle Ages, half the people in this room right now would not have come into existence. I mean, the world's population was not that big back then. So just to kill five million people...I mean, it isn't rocket science to figure out it takes a man and a woman to make a baby. You just wipe out five million females during a 300 year period of time that is going to significantly set back the population numbers and you're going to have a lot less people on the planet earth today because of something like that; and certainly a lot less Europeans. And most of us have some type of European background.

He argues that patriarchy replaced ancient matriarchy; that somehow in ancient times he things that women were in charge, females were in charge. Again, you have little pockets of tribal peoples where there may be a matriarchy where a woman is in charge, but for the most part even where you have female leaders like Cleopatra, you look at the list of the kings or the Pharaohs or whatever and they were mostly men. And the lady ruler was the exception rather than the rule.

So in his idea he would try to argue: Well, America was founded on Christian principles and that's why all our presidents have been men.

There are two things that come into play with this. One is that men tend to be more aggressive than females. In general men tend to have a conquering mentality, you know, and ladies tend to have more of a nurturing mentality. Because of that it usually, as a general statement, ladies do a lot better than men do when it comes to taking care of little children and raising children and teaching them right from wrong. And the guy usually does better going out and hunting for the food or working and that type of thing and then coming back to his household. Psychological studies have shown that children don't feel loved by their mother if their mother doesn't spend quantity time with the child. Yet, they feel perfectly at home with their father even if their father just spends a little bit of quality time with them and most of the time of their waking hours he's away at work. There's something built in to little children that that's not considered abnormal.

And so guys just with this attitude of conquering and going out there and hunting for the food for tonight's dinner. That type of mentality only makes sense. You're going to find more males holding leadership positions than females.

But this idea that there was a time when women ruled and then men started ruling and turned the planet into a disaster, you know, it never really occurred. I voted for a female – Ellen Krazel – when she ran for governor. I thought she would have... I think he would have made the best governor in the history of Washington state. And I'm not intimidated by "powerful ladies." But whatever the case there's this big argument that Christianity is anti-woman.

Now, the issue of: Should a woman be a pastor; that has to be settled by Christians based on biblical texts. What does the Bible say? But to turn around and then say that Christianity is anti-woman because most Christian groups do not ordain women to the position of the senior pastor, that's just going too far. I mean, if anything, if you can make an assessment when you looked at the history of mankind, you can make an assessment if there's chauvinism if there's a charge of chauvinism it should go against the world, the secular world, even more than against the Christian world. And, in fact, the rights of the ladies being recognized is a biblical idea. Except for these small pockets where ladies ruled, these small little groups throughout history, which there haven't been a whole lot of them; a woman had no rights until biblical times.

I mean, go to countries that have not been influenced by the Christian world view. Go to Muslim regimes. How many rights does a lady.... Saudi Arabia is supposed to be our

friend even thought he hi-jackers are from Saudi Arabia. They're supposed to be our friends, right? Go to Saudi Arabia and find how many rights a woman has in Saudi Arabia. She can't show more than her eyeballs without getting in trouble. And there basically are no rights.

One of the women's rights groups is making a big protest against the fact that in many Islamic countries if a young girl...the father and brothers are allowed to kill their daughter or their sister in many Muslim countries if the daughter, you know, gets pregnant before getting married or they find out that she had sex before getting married. Or if she falls in love with and wants to marry a man who isn't part of the pre-arranged marriage set by the father. You know, the list goes on and on. And for reasons...and a lot of these reasons these ladies are just, you know, they just fell in love with a man and want to marry this guy and not the guy that daddy has for her. And so they are basically allowed to just be put to death. And there's no formal putting them to death. They just take them outside and stone them and the whole village knows about it. There are usually, in most Islamic countries, there are laws on the books against that, but nobody enforces them. So the idea that the Islamic faith is a really nice faith, forget about it. There's like zero women's rights there. And you go to many tribal peoples and the rights of women are just not there as well.

There are...many tribal peoples in Africa are still practicing female circumcision which is a very, very dangerous not only procedure, but it's dangerous even after the procedure is done. But whatever the case, in most cultures the ladies have no rights. You want to go to a place...the women's rights movement would not have been started anywhere on the planet except in a country influenced by the Christian world view.

Now, Dan Brown may not like that, but that's the way it is.

Ok, so the idea that Christianity is anti-woman is, you know...Let me tell you. Because Jesus came to the real world and Christianity transformed the real world, then Christianity inherited all the problems of the real world. So that's why Utopia, like the perfect realm, really means no place. People who think they're going to build this perfect society on earth...Hey, that's Jesus' job. It's not our job to rebuild the Tower of Babel.

But there's people, you know...Dan Brown is...what is he comparing Christianity to when he makes it anti-woman? There's only two things he's comparing it to. One is an unreal world that never existed. And the other thing is his politically correct views which, if that's what he thinks is the embodiment of tolerance, I beg to differ. I think political correctness is so intolerant they want to stifle anybody who calls their behavior a sin.

People bad mouth me all the time and I don't want to see them thrown into prison. Yet, in the name of tolerance the politically correct want to imprison anybody who calls homosexuality a sin. That's not tolerance. That's the ultimate in intolerance.

There's a false view of Mary Magdalene in *The DaVinci Code*. Supposedly she was the wife of Jesus and she was pregnant with his daughter when Jesus was crucified so that she is the Holy Grail. The Holy Grail isn't really the cup that was supposed to be at the Last Supper and that the Knights Templar searched for.

And, by the way, the Knights Templar searching for these relics and stuff...they were occultist themselves. They would...their brand of Christianity was very occultic. And so Dan Brown loves reading about occultic societies, secret societies like the Knights Templar and things of that sort. But that's more new age, neo-pagan than it is actually Christian.

But she's supposed to be the Holy Grail. Mary Magdalene carries Jesus' royal bloodline supposedly. And, according to Brown, she's supposed to be the leader of the Church and the first of the apostles not Peter. And so Peter threw a tantrum and wanted to bad mouth her. He probably would have had her killed if she had not fled pregnant with Jesus' daughter.

And then, you know, as the story goes on she ends up in France. And her descendants intermarried with the royal French line so you've got these people that, I guess, somehow in some way – Dan Brown doesn't come right out and say it – but somehow, somehow they have this superior blood line. I mean, we're talking almost Nazi stuff here.

But whatever the case, Mary Magdalene was supposedly slandered by the anti-woman Church. All we know about Mary Magdalene is Luke chapter eight. She was a woman out of whom Jesus cast seven demons and she was a prosperous woman and she wasn't married, otherwise they would not have called her Mary Magdalene. They wouldn't have called her Mary from this particular city – Magdala. Otherwise, you know, she would have been Mary of whoever she was married to. So she was a single woman. For all we know, this lady could have been 88 years old while Jesus was ministering to her. We're not told. But she hung out with Jesus' mother Mary, a couple of other ladies. And they were some of Jesus' biggest supporters and they often traveled with Jesus and the apostles. But the fact of the matter is: There's no evidence whatsoever – in fact, all the evidence is against her being married at all, let alone married to Jesus.

And, again, Jesus is coming to earth to save mankind. Like John the Baptist, Jesus' mission was too important to be bogged down with the important problems of marriage and raising a family. Let's face it. When...if you're single and you don't like your job you could just quit and sleep on a park bench for three weeks and then say, "Ok. I need to go looking for another job now." When you're married you can't do that.

You know, Jesus can't say, "I'm going to...I need to save mankind but I can't do it this week because my kids have the flu and, you know, I need to stay home and take care of my family." It just wouldn't make sense, whatsoever.

Many first century Jews did not get married because they devoted their lives to serving the Lord. The apostle Paul – there's a debate about whether he was ever married or not –

but whatever the case; maybe he got married and his wife died before he became a Christian. But, you know, he talked about the fact that he had the right – like the apostles, like Peter – he and Barnabas had the right to bring a believing wife with them. But he implied that they didn't and he implied that he didn't have a wife.

So whatever the case, only single women were named after their town; but this idea that she was slandered by the early Church; she was not slandered by the early church. Pope Gregory was preaching a message and he confused her with Lazarus' sister Mary who anointed Jesus' feet and with a prostitute who anointed Jesus' feet. So he started teaching that Mary Magdalene had formerly been a prostitute. There's no evidence of that.

Now, there are Christians to this day who will talk about Mary Magdalene being a prostitute. Even movies like *The Passion* make Mary Magdalene the woman that they were going to stone to death for adultery. And they make her a young beautiful woman when we have no idea. For all practical purposes, I assume that she's probably, you know, may have been either an elderly widow or an elderly lady who never married – which is more likely because being named after a town – and that she just had this large inheritance and was helping support Jesus' ministry.

Very rarely do you find young wealthy ladies who are not married at that time. But to this day we make movies of Jesus and we fall prey to the sixth century lame sermon preached by one of the Catholic popes, one of the bishops of Rome mistaking Mary for a prostitute when there was absolutely no evidence that she had lived a life of sexual immorality before coming to Jesus' salvation.

Dan Brown argues that Christian morality is outdated. That's just his politically correct ideology coming to play.

He slams Christianity for not being pagan. But then he tries to claim that Christianity has pagan roots. Two things about that: Number one: If Christianity has pagan roots then it's still pagan. If it's pagan he's supposed to like it. Why doesn't he like it? I mean, he's slamming Christianity for not being pagan, but then he turns around and says, "Oh, yeah, and by the way it has pagan roots." Go figure.

But then, secondly, the whole idea that Jesus...the idea that we have a Jesus who came from paganism and not from Judaism, that idea has been refuted by the liberal scholars themselves. No...the only scholars that even entertain this idea – and they usually get laughed at for it – are the Jesus Seminar. They're still trying to say that you had the gospel of Jesus story actually came more from the Greek pagan mystery religions and that type of thing. That's been refuted and thrown out like a hundred years ago. And like only the Jesus Seminar...they're the only scholars who hold to that kind of thinking. There's probably a lot of lay people who just don't know what's going on like Dan Brown who hold to that type of thinking as well.

Dan Brown's views are so weird he talks about the sacred feminine and achieving spiritual enlightenment through sexual intercourse. And he argues that was the true

Christianity. The true Christianity were these, you know, secret gnosis, the secret hidden knowledge and behind closed doors, probably a few, you know, secret handshakes, whatever. But behind closed doors there was also attaining spiritual enlightenment through sexual intercourse. He even argues that the Jews in the temple...that in the sanctuary, the Holy Place of the temple there was sexual intercourse for spiritual enlightenment that was going on.

I mean, if anything even close to that that went on in the history of the Jews the Bible says that was because the Jews were caving in to peer pressure from their pagan neighbors and were actually becoming idolatrous in their worship.

So if the Bible ever talks about anything that even comes close to that it condemns it as idolatry both in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Dan Brown is arguing for...and it's crazy, too. I don't know why he would argue that the Jews did that in the temple when he's arguing also for Gnosticism. The Gnostics believed the Old Testament God was evil so they trashed the Old Testament, so why do you even need a Jewish justification for this act if the Jews automatically are the sons of the devil or the sons of a false evil God that created the material world.

You see, Dan Brown doesn't even understand what Gnosticism is. He's going to argue that we should embrace Gnosticism. You would at least hope that he would understand what Gnosticism is. But he doesn't. In fact, he misrepresents ancient Gnosticism. The Gnostics themselves are anti-woman. And even the gospel of Thomas says if a woman wants to be saved she has to first become a man. That doesn't sound like something our women's libbers would say today.

And in actuality, I would say that the Gnostics were more than just anti-woman. They were actually anti-man. They were more anti-woman than they were anti-man. But they were still anti-man as well. Actually, they wanted androgyny or whatever. They wanted us to be neither male nor female. They were into celibacy. Forget about attaining spiritual enlightenment through sexual intercourse. The Gnostics – and, boy, this stuff is crazy, it's weird. We have students – Ellen Krazel's granddaughter told me when I spoke at her Church – students at Olympic College now that call themselves neo-Gnostics. So as weird and as irrelevant some of this stuff I'm talking about may sound this is a growing movement within new age circles today.

But far from attaining spiritual enlightenment through sexual intercourse the Gnostics argued for asceticism and celibacy; that the flesh is evil and sexual intercourse is evil. And so they were anti-sex. And so, you know, again, Dan Brown really just doesn't understand Gnosticism.

Even Gnostics, by the way, believed in Christ's deity of some sort. They believed that Jesus was somehow, someway divine. Yet, they were Docetists, meaning they rejected Christ's real humanity. They said Jesus appeared to be a man, but he really wasn't a man.

And so Dan Brown is saying, “We need to return to Gnosticism, that’s the true form of ancient Christianity and they believed in a merely human Jesus.”

No. They didn’t. They believed that Jesus was somehow divine and he only pretended to be human because if he really was human he would have a material body and all matter is evil.

So, whatever the case, too, he acts like the Gnostics were more “democratic.” You know, democracy was a bad word for the founding fathers, but apparently it’s a good word today. And they were more democratic. They were more, you know, into empowering the average guy. No. No. The Gnostics were elitist. They were actually more top heavy than even the Roman Catholic Church because basically, at least the Roman Catholic Church even with supposedly infallible pope, the Roman Catholic Church believed that all of its people could eventually get to Heaven.

The Gnostics, no; most Christians were not intellectually capable of embracing or understanding the secret knowledge, the Gnosis so only a select few could be saved. I mean, these are elitist to the max. Rather than proclaim the gospel message from the rooftop, rather than share your faith with your neighbor, you have to find out: Is this person ready to be initiated into these different secrets behind closed doors; an only initiated few, only the elect. By the way, the Gnostics are way earlier than Augustine introduced that idea to the early Church of kind of the heavy handed predestination where there’s no free will in accepting Christ. The initiated, the intellectuals who would know the secret knowledge, the Gnostics believed they were foreordained by God and that it was already – that issue was already settled and things of that sort. So and so basically if a person just couldn’t understand their secrets or if they decided not to reveal their secrets to that person then they’re just not part of the small elite, the elect or the elite.

And goddess worship, which was very promiscuous and Gnosticism which was ascetic, you know, you need the body for spiritual gain – they’re incompatible. You can’t have them both. And even most goddess worshippers, by the way, also believed in male deities that were at least on the same level if not higher than the goddess they worshipped.

But whatever the case, he’s arguing for two things that are incompatible. You can’t blend the two and that’s what he’s trying to do. In fact, Gnosticism was not original Christianity. Gnosticism can only be explained as a perversion of some of Paul’s teachings and some of John’s teachings; the idea of light verses darkness, the Spirit versus the flesh. And, you know, Paul will talk about, you know, we’re not saved by the law. We’re only saved by God’s grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. But he’s not slamming the law. He even says the law is good.

A guy who is moving towards...well, he may have been a forerunner of the Gnostics in some sense, but Marcion was a heretic and he didn’t believe in salvation through secret knowledge so you cannot call him a Gnostic. Some scholars to this day it drives me nuts.

They call him a Gnostic. How can the guy be a Gnostic if he doesn't believe you're saved by the Gnosis.

Marcion was a heretic in the 140s and 150s and 160s AD who taught that we're saved through faith in Christ alone, saved by grace, but he believed that Jesus didn't really become a man; the material realm was totally evil and that the Old Testament God was an evil God. The Creator God was an evil God. And the Gnostics picked up on a lot of his ideas.

But whatever the case, he said that in his canon, in that which he accepted as Scripture was only Luke's gospel and Paul's gospel. But he removed all the Old Testament passages because it went against his view.

And the ancient Gnostics picked up on that and they were very anti-Jewish and they condemned the Old Testament. In fact, the Christ becomes not the Messiah – which is what Christ means – but it becomes more of a cosmic Christ, a spirit being sent from the heavenly realm that pretended to be a man but shows us, gives us the knowledge, the Gnosis, the knowledge, the secret knowledge through which the elite can be saved.

You take Christianity away from its Jewish roots and you can't make any sense out of Christianity at all. You take Gnosticism away from, you know...if you don't acknowledge that Gnosticism began as a perversion of some of John's and Paul's teachings you end up with no explanation for how it ever got started. It just popped into existence.

But whatever the case, the Gnostics believe the Old Testament God is evil and Creation is evil, the flesh is evil. So I don't know where Dan Brown gets this idea of sensual things like spiritual enlightenment through sexual intercourse. That's totally contrary to what the Gnostics taught.

Dan Brown teaches, he states, that every faith is based on fabrication and metaphors. Well, that's self refuting. That means that his faith is based on fabrications, lies and metaphors. So if we embrace Dan Brown's belief system we would have to embrace it as not being literally true or just being straight out false. So it's a self refuting statement. And if that were the case then faith in anything...you know, it's a denial of absolute truth. And the denial of absolute truth is self-refuting because of the statement: there is no absolute truth. The only way for that to be true would be if it was an absolute truth. But then it can't be true because it refutes its own statement.

But whatever the case he's gotten DaVinci's Last Supper...he claims that the character for John – the apostle John – who, you know, when you look at it you have to admit that the face does look rather feminine and long hair no facial hair – he claims that that's not really the apostle John; that DaVinci was one of the guys of this secret order and he knew about the royal blood line and that type of thing and so that Leonardo DaVinci was actually painting Mary Magdalene into that picture.

Several things could be said. Leonardo DaVinci, based on his other paintings, he knew what the female anatomy looked like. Look at the body of this character. It's a young boy. It's not a female. He knew how to paint females. This is not a female. It's a male – a skinny male body, but it's a male body.

The other thing is that at that time the...it was common....the ultimate disciple was considered a small skinny boy who looked a little feminine who was very submissive to the teachings of his teacher. And then it was expected that as he would, you know, age and get out of his teens he was expected to put on some weight, to grow some facial hair, to get a haircut, whatever. But the medieval painters, the renaissance painters for some reason, they thought of the ultimate disciples, the ultimate pupil as being very...you know, rather wimpy or rather feminine looking male.

If we try to argue that the apostle John is not really the apostle John, it happens to be Mary Magdalene, then you're missing one of the apostles because the whole scene of the Last Supper, by the way, is not the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the whole focus of the painting the Last Supper is when Jesus says, "One of you is going to betray me." So Judas is still there and they're all asking, "Is it I? Is it I?" And this and that. And that's why John is pulling away from Jesus and he's talking with Peter and the other apostles. But when he pulls over that forms a "v" between Jesus and him. And supposedly that "v" is a secret symbol for the sacred feminine. And so this guy is just way out there and doesn't even get his occultic symbols right in some areas. But, whatever the case, that's how he sees Leonardo DaVinci's Last Supper.

Let me close with this, too. The Holy Grail...throughout the ages there has been a search even the Nazis, not just the Knights Templar, the Nazis like the Knights Templar. Dan Brown likes the Knights Templar. And I don't know how far we should go with that parallel belief. But whatever the case, the Knights Templar, they were these occultic guys and they thought if they could find the chalice that Jesus had at the last supper that contained the wine and all, if they could find that that they could get this mystical power from it. Again, Roman Catholicism, the Knights Templar were Roman Catholics. The Knights Templar were doing what Roman Catholicism was doing. They were blending occultism and pagan beliefs and pagan myths with Christianity. So if you could find the Holy Grail it would give you an enormous amount of power.

Well, Iain Wilson, an expert on the Shroud of Turin who argues that the Shroud of Turin is authentic; he went from being an agnostic who questioned God's existence to becoming a Roman Catholic by his study on the Shroud of Turin. But Iain Wilson, the British historian, he tried to trace back and find out: When did the Holy Grail legend begin? And what he found was: The first mention – which goes back to probably the second or third century AD – the first mention of what became known later known as the Holy Grail, the holy chalice that supposedly contained the blood of Christ and all was actually – and he couldn't understand why was Joseph of Arimathaea constantly mentioned as at one time as having the Holy Grail when he wasn't at the Last Supper. Well, what he found was that there was this one passage in ancient writings that the earliest passage that dealt with what later became know as the Holy Grail was supposedly

the knowledge that Joseph of Arimathea at one time in his life had something that contained the blood of Jesus. So later on as the legend began to develop they figured, well, that something would have to be the chalice from the Last Supper. Iain Wilson says, "Who says it has to be that?" And that's the problem with legends. When legends develop they add fairy tales to truth until it becomes almost impossible to find the truth.

So Iain Wilson makes a strong case...doesn't argue for it dogmatically, but makes a strong case in his writings that the original Holy Grail may not have been a chalice at all, but may have been the burial cloth of Christ which contained Christ's blood stains on it.

So we don't know for sure where the Holy Grail legend came from. Some would argue in that direction. But whatever the case, this is what Dan Brown talks about.

What we're going to do next week is argue that the New Testament, there is strong evidence that the New Testament that we have today should be the New Testament; that the list of books in our Protestant New Testament, the 27 books that we have there should be there. There's overwhelming evidence in favor for these books. And all the evidence goes against any of these Gnostic writings being added to our New Testament or replacing other books. So we'll look at some of the evidence for the New Testament canon and we'll talk about the tests. What tests had to be passed in order for a book to get into the New Testament. And we'll explain how God guided the early Church to recognize his written Word; and that the early Church did not get it wrong. The early Church did not get it wrong when they recognized Paul's writings as belonging in the Bible rather than, you know, the gospel of Thomas or the gospel of Philip or the gospel of Mary or some of these other bogus writings that Dan Brown is arguing for.

So we'll talk about the canonization of Scriptures and why we can be confident that the New Testament we have today is the completion of the Old Testament Bible. And, you know, I'll close with this: Ben Witherington, III in his work – and lo and behold, it's the one I didn't bring – Ben Witherington, III in his work refuting...but, oh, I have it listed here on the back...his work *The Gospel Code*, he points out that we know beyond the shadow of a doubt the first books to make it into the canon of the early Christian Church. The first books were the books of the Old Testament, the Jewish Old Testament.

We also know beyond the shadow of a doubt that the early Gnostics – who were about 100 years after the early church was founded. But the early Gnostics, one of their main premises was they rejected the Old Testament as being God's Word.

So basically what I'm saying is, and what Ben Witherington, III is saying is: Right out of the starting gates, right at the beginning there was a different canon to begin with. The Christians accepted, universally, the Old Testament Scriptures. And now they had to look at the writings of the apostles and their colleagues and determine whether or not these belonged in the canon. Well the Gnostics started right out by saying, "We reject the entire Old Testament." So even if the Gnostics tried to accept some of the writings of the apostles, they had to immediately censor them of any Old Testament quotes or allusions.

So right at the start you have a whole different religion and has no way...there's no...the only way to explain the start of Christianity is by saying that it started within first century Judaism. The only way to explain the start of Gnosticism is by acknowledging it as a perversion of some of the key teachings of Paul and John. Gnosticism is not Christianity in its earliest, unadulterated form. Gnosticism is a perversion of early Christianity that probably began as a religion at the earliest about 140, 150 AD.

So we'll talk about that next week, how we can argue for the New Testament Canon. Again, this may seem wearisome but we'll finish this study next week. It may seem like I'm just beating a dead horse, but let me tell you: There are going to be an awful lot of people that are going to be asking you: "Well, how do you even know the gospel of John belongs in the Bible. You prefer the gospel of John. You prefer Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. I prefer the gospel of Thomas, the gospel of Peter, the gospel of Mary. I prefer these other writings. You're just biased against my writings. How do you know your writings belong in the Bible and mine don't?"

If we can't answer that question there's going to be an awful lot of Americans and Europeans that we're not even going to be able to get off first base with when we're trying to witness to them. And so it's sad that we have to get into all this ugly...just a big trashcan filled with lies. But, unfortunately, that's where the attack of the evil one is coming right now and we need to respond to it.

Daniel Brown is just one little brick – a very influential brick, but one little brick – that is being thrown in to build a foundation with many other bricks, the foundation of a new world religion which is neo-paganism, the new age movement, the new spirituality which is anti-Christian at its core and is very eclectic. It accepts many different contradictory beliefs. The only thing it cannot accept is traditional Christianity, traditional Judaism and traditional Islam because Christians Jews and Muslims acknowledge there is a God and we're not him.

If you want to be part of the new world order, if you want to be part of the new Tower of Babel, if you want to be part of the new world religion, you have to believe that man is God. And Dan Brown plays a little role there. He is influential on the lives of millions of people. But it's an attack against Christianity as he proclaims his lies and tries to build this new world religion.

He probably doesn't even understand the role he plays, but it's a significant enough role to where we need to refute these ideas and refute those who contradict. And sometimes you cannot proclaim the truth until the lies have been disproved. And so we need to begin to disprove some of these lies.

It's sad. This book...if it were just recognized for the fraud that it is and if it just sold 10 copies we wouldn't have to talk about it. But it's selling in the millions. It continues to sell in the millions. And because of it, tens and maybe, you know, probably over 100 million books being copies of books being sold that are either *The DaVinci Code* itself or books about *The DaVinci Code* or books promoting something *The DaVinci Code*

promotes. And so in the end you're going to have tens of millions of people, if not hundreds of millions of people, who need to be confronted in love with the gospel message and their errors in their lives need to be refuted.

Ok, let's close with a word of prayer.

Yeah.

[Off Mic Voice]

It's probably the most scholarly, but if you're not a New Testament scholar I wouldn't say it's... I think Garlow and Jones' *Cracking the DaVinci Code* I would probably say that's the first one I would pick up. Maybe Lutzer's *The DaVinci Deception* would be second. If you want the most scholarly works on it Witherington's *The Gospel Code* and Bach's *Breaking the DaVinci Code*, you know, it's more than a coincidence that the two New Testament scholars – two of the world's leading New Testament scholars – wrote two of the more scholarly refutations of this.

But, if you want to refute everything, if you want a quick refutation of everything false Dan Brown utters in *The DaVinci Code*, because I mean, even when he's promoting occultic symbols he doesn't even get their meanings right. So, not only does he misrepresent Christianity, he misrepresents every religion he talks about. And so Richard Abanes just really goes to town on refuting all of that stuff as well. And he goes into the Knights Templar and what they were really about and the Priory of Scion and all these other things that just don't interest me that much. But he does a dynamite job on it.

But I say Garlow and Jones' work is probably the first book I'd pick up and then second would be Lutzer's. The other ones are good. Now, if a guy can handle the heavier stuff, then Witherington, III and Bach's books are dynamite books. But they just, you know, they'll talk about a lot of stuff without even defining what it is, assuming that you've been reading, you know, the latest 30 or 40 books on New Testament research.

[Off Mic Voice].

Yeah. You could do that, too. You could leap frog from the books written from the lay people to the books that are little bit heavier. And Witherington, III and Bach are trying to write for lay people. When you're as brilliant as they are it's difficult to do that. They're just way up there. That's all I could say about that.

Ok. Let's close with a word of prayer.

Father, in Jesus' precious name we thank you, Lord, that when we refute the complexities of false religions and the lies of false religions and that claim only the elite can be saved and secret knowledge that only the initiated can receive; when we refute these lies that we could take comfort in knowing that your gospel message is so simple even a little child could understand it; that we could take comfort that we don't have to worry about

complexities. Yes, there's complexities in your Word that we need to deal with, but it doesn't deal with salvation; that all we have to do to be saved is to acknowledge that we're sinners, that we can't save ourselves and then to trust in your Son, the true Jesus of the Bible alone for salvation. And if we trust in Jesus for salvation rather than trusting in ourselves or someone else, if we trust in Jesus for salvation we will not be disappointed. We will be saved.

So we thank you, Lord, for keeping the gospel message simple for us to understand. We pray, Lord, that you would open the eyes of those deceived by *The DaVinci Code*, that you would give courage and boldness to your people so that we would not retreat from a work such as this, but instead that we would boldly defend the truth of the Christian faith, the truth of the Bible, the truth of the gospel message. And so I pray, Lord, that you would give us the boldness and the courage to proclaim the true Jesus of the Bible and to acknowledge that that's our number one task no matter what our jobs may be, no matter where our interest's lie that our number one task is to know Jesus, the true Jesus of the Bible and to make him known.

And so I pray that your Holy Spirit would empower us to proclaim the true Jesus of the Bible to a world that may not even want to hear about Jesus, but that we would be able to refute lies and proclaim the truth and have the courage to do so whether people applaud us or pick up stones to stone us; that we would proclaim your Sons name until he returns in power and in glory to reign upon the earth.

Lord, I thank you for these people here that they long to serve you and they love you. And they not only want to proclaim your truth, but they want to refute the lies of the evil one. I just thank you for this flock. I thank you that they love you. I thank you that they love your truth. And I thank you that they love their neighbors, they love other people they come in contact with whether they are believers or non-believers. They desire to see as many people saved as possible. So give them your courage and your boldness, your truth and your love to be all that you've called us to be. In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.

Transcription by Audioposting: (www.audioposting.com/transcription.php)