

THE DA VINCI CODE

David C F Wright, PhD

The Da Vinci is a novel by Dan E Brown, who, apparently, is a failed pop star, which novel has become a worldwide best-seller. In fact, in my copy there are four opening pages of laudatory comments about this novel.

But it has to be stressed that it is entirely fiction but many people believe it is factual particularly those who ridicule Christianity. Its frontispiece has a page denoting facts of which there are only three, namely:

The Priory of Sion established in 1099

The Vatican prelature known as Opus Dei

Descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals are claimed to be accurate!

But the story itself is fiction, that is to say non-factual literature. To put it into common parlance it is a collection of make belief which makes up a story just like any novel by Dickens or Ian Rankin. But some people believe Brown's book is factual because of its attack on Christianity.

In fact, the author often portrays his fiction as facts and says that the Emperor Constantine in his book is solely his invention adding that his invented Constantine may seem to resemble the Constantine of history. Brown states that Constantine made an order to destroy all the so-called original gospels which merely portrayed Jesus as human and re-wrote them to deify Christ with the purpose to make Constantine's military exploits commendable now that he was a Christian fighting the heathen. All this is fiction but also an attack on Christianity.

There are people who state that the Bible has been tampered with and altered by the Church. The Church was not an established organisation until 315AD which was after the first Bible appeared namely the Septuagint, and if you compare that with the Authorised Version of 1611 there is no tampering as to the basic teachings. Of course, there have been many translations since but the basic doctrines have not changed. God is the Creator of the universe, Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God born of the Virgin Mary, and that He died for sinners so that all who believe in Him and obey Him will have everlasting life in Heaven. It is in this life we determine our eternal destiny. You choose whether to believe it or not.

The main theme of Brown's book is that Mary Magdalene was 'very close to Jesus' and, in fact, married Him and that they had children. None of this appears in the Gospels, the New Testament or in any of the reliable Christian writings including those written in the first two centuries of Christianity. Nor is it in Josephus, the Didache or in Jewish and Roman secular annals. Yet Brown talks of her being in Paris and that she was eventually buried in Rosslyn Chapel six miles from Edinburgh in Scotland. In a television programme conducted by Robert Beckford, The Secret Family Of Jesus, it is said that Mary was the co-founder with Jesus of Christianity.

The book claims that the Priory of Sion was founded in 1099 by a French Merovingian king, Godefroi de Bouillon. It is said that he was the possessor of a very powerful secret which had been in his family since the time of Christ and may have been in a collection of documents hidden in Herod's temple. The Merovingian kings of France are said to be descendants of Christ and Mary Magdalene. Brown claims that these documents are accurate which invalidates any claim that his novel is merely fiction. This powerful secret had to be guarded at all costs and this was originally achieved by the Knights Templar. Apparently this secret was that the Holy Grail, thought to be the cup Jesus used at the Last

Supper, had another meaning. The cup was shaped like a womb and so the Holy Grail spoke of a woman, one woman, a special woman and the story says that the Catholic Church had to prevent this information being made known. The Grail was an allegory of a woman and that woman was said to be Mary Magdalene. She was the vessel. This led to the false doctrine of a Divine female and the assumption of both a sexually immoral Jesus and Mary. Eroticism is raised to the level of spirituality and makes sexual union, including such union which is not with one's spouse, the key to spiritual enlightenment.

This is taken further in the outrageous film *The Last Temptation of Christ* which has Jesus attending brothels and marrying or having an illicit affair with Mary.

The infamous book, *The Da Vinci Code*, makes Mary the wife of Christ and the Grail is her womb to propagate the Divine blood line. The stories that devout knights were seeking the Holy Grail, the chalice used at the Last Supper, were ignorant men since the Holy Grail was the womb of Mary.

To return to the French king. As he was French and this secret had allegedly been in his family for a thousand years, Mary was said to be connected with Paris and lived there at some time. There were various locations in Paris where apparently there could be found coded clues about this and about Mary herself but these were guarded and kept secret.

Certain famous people have been said to members of the Priory of Sion including Botticelli, Sir Isaac Newton, Victor Hugo and Leonardo da Vinci. It is said that Leonardo invented a code of numbers which, if it could be interpreted, would tell us where the Holy Grail was which identified the burial place of Mary Magdalene.

This fiction continues that the Roman Catholic Church had to guard this secret since it would undermine their established beliefs and their veneration of the Virgin Mary. The book is not only an attack on the Roman Catholic Church but the Holy Bible itself.

He is not the only person to pursue this line. Clive Prince's book *The Templar Revelation* of 1997 and books by Margaret Starbird deal with such issues.

Brown writes that one of the many Catholic Inquisitions, which lasted for 300 years, was the persecution of free-thinking women. He asserts that the Roman Church taught that women were dangerous and instructed their clergy to torture and destroy any that posed a threat. They were deemed witches and this included all female scholars, priestesses, gypsies, mystics, nature lovers, herb-gatherers and midwives who alleged that they could ease pain in childbirth. It is said by Brown that, in 300 years, 5 million women were burned at the stake and this is why the Roman church will not allow female priests. While there was evil persecution of woman by Catholics and others some of what is said is nonsense. The real reason for there not being Catholic female priests is that the New Testament forbids women to be priests and bishops. However, the persecution of honest women, whether accused as witches or not, is both appalling and outrageous and to be condemned without reservation. It does seem to be a proof that the historical Roman Church of the past was not Christian at all.

Brown states that in the Old Testament Times the most sacred place in the tabernacle, and then in the temple, was the Holy of Holies and this contained "male and female" deities namely the God of the Bible, and Shekinah, whom he says is the female counterpart of God, a female God, in fact. This is blatant false teaching and therefore heresy. Shekinah was the supernatural light or cloud that appeared on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies named after the brilliant glory first seen on Mount Shekinah.

What is brown trying to achieve?

The story asserts that *Da Vinci Code* upheld and taught that there was one sacred female in Christianity and that was Mary Magdalene.

But this is all fiction. And yet because some of the characters in this fiction are real, such as Jesus, Mary and, the Knights Templar, as are the real named places, the novel contains some truth and whenever that happens it is easy for people to believe that all of it is true. Brown states that the documents mentioned in his book are accurate and so is elevating his book to be an honest account of historical facts. Catholics are visiting Rosslyn Chapel as acts of pilgrimage!

I cannot understand why anyone would make up a story like this. Is it to undermine the Christian faith? Is it to show up the Roman Catholics? Is it to be another falsity to be used to make people rejoice at another blatant and unfair attack on the Christian faith?

It is also blasphemy. Blasphemy is not counted for much, if anything today, but it is defined as irreverent talk or treatment of a religious subject or person. It is to treat something sacred and holy irreverently. Reverence is to value and treat a religious person or theme with deep conviction and affection. Irreverence is to devalue and treat a religious person or subject with scorn and contempt. To say that Jesus was the boyfriend or husband of Mary Magdalene is blasphemy and contemptuous as there is absolutely no proof whatsoever.

In the realm of the Islamic faith, to devalue Mohammed is also blasphemy particularly in Islamic countries. Although it is true that there is considerable evidence of the life, death and resurrection of Christ while some of the writings in the Koran are, frankly, questionable such as the Prophet cutting the moon in half. Of course, there are people who deny the miracles of Christ and say that they never happened, or, if they did, they were all magic tricks such as a modern day magician can make an elephant or a Jumbo Jet disappear before your very eyes!

Blasphemy is also heresy. A heretic is someone who denies a Christian teaching as set out in the New Testament, or adds something to Christian teaching which is not in the New Testament. That is the correct meaning, but its meaning has been altered to refer to someone who goes against orthodox teaching. As an example, Catholic teaching states that the Pope is infallible on all doctrine, that Virgin Mary did not die and, as this is orthodox Catholic teaching, the Roman Church could call anyone who disagrees a heretic.

But the notion that the Pope is infallible and that the Virgin Mary did not die but ascended into Heaven is not New Testament teaching.

Heresy is denying what the New Testament teaches or adding something that is not in the New Testament. The book, *The Da Vinci Code*, is heresy. It is all well very well saying it is just fiction but it is still heresy and grossly offensive to true Christians and to other members of society who are not Christians,

There are many people who are devoted to the British monarchy and many who have a very high regard for the Queen. If Dan Brown, or anyone else, had written a book about the Queen which was full of lies and was scandalous, the book would probably be banned. And yet we can publish books scandalising Jesus Christ.

Jehovah Witnesses believe that they are Christians and the only ones who will attain heaven. That is heresy. Mormons believe that an angel appeared to Joseph Smith and the result was a new book, *The Book of Mormon*, which is their Scriptures. That is heresy.

To the non-Christian, and to those who dismiss and ridicule Christianity, the book, *The Da Vinci Code* is welcome. Others will say that the Gospels are fictitious and, therefore, the *Da Vinci Code* is no different.

But it is the author's motive that raises the greatest question. Jesus never married Mary Magdalene or had children. Mary was not the co-founder of Christianity. She was not an evangelist. The New

Testament honours many women including women who were in Christian service after the resurrection of Christ such as Lydia, Priscilla and Phoebe, who was a deaconess, as well as the four unmarried daughters of Philip (Acts 21. 9). But no mention of Mary Magdalene in any Christian service or in any other matter. Nor is there any mention of her in Josephus or the Jewish and Roman writings which do record the death and resurrection of Jesus and the activities of Christians in the first 200 years of Christianity.

This book is a deliberate attack on Christianity and one which atheists will relish.

If I wrote questioning the existing of aliens and paranormal events and have been severely criticised and yet Dan Brown can attack Christianity, and be applauded.

The film of this book was directed by Ron Howard. Another director, Steven Spielberg, also ridicules Christianity with an Indiana Jones film with false information about the ark of the covenant and the film, ET, a creature who comes somewhere from the heavens, lives, dies, rises again and goes back to his heaven on a bicycle. The comparison with Christ is obvious as in the Monty Python film The Life of Brian which is also an attack on Christ however much people refute this.

Brian Cohen is born in a stable, is vested by three wise men and is crucified under Pontius Pilate to the accompaniment of the song Always look on the bright side of life. The film was banned in 39 local authorities in the UK and elsewhere. It is blasphemous.

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