

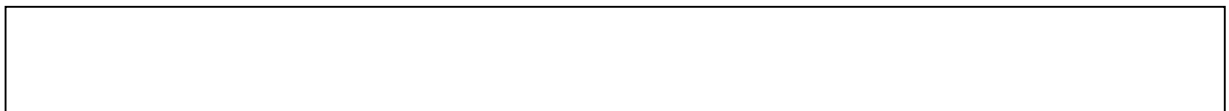
— *REASONS TO BELIEVE...AND TO HOPE* —

Session 3

UNVEILING THE DA VINCI CODE

COVENANT Evangelical Free Church

Speaker: Rev Dave Geisler



This material was based partly on the research of Christian Scholar Mike Licona in his DVD *Exploring The DaVinci Code*, which can be ordered through Covenant Evangelical Free Church, Singapore. Mike is a Biblical Scholar and co-author with Dr Gary Habermas of “The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.” This material is designed to answer many of the claims of Dan Brown in the book *The DaVinci Code*. Additional information has been added to supplement the main points mentioned in Mike Licona’s DVD and to clarify a few more details about statements in his presentation that some have questioned. Further material has been added to highlight other important questions and or concerns raised by the *DaVinci Code*.

Unveiling the DaVinci Code

Introduction.

- * Why should we be concerned with a novel?

Major Claim # 1

The Bible as we know it today was collated by the Roman Emperor Constantine.

“*More than Eighty gospels were considered for the New Testament, and yet relatively few were chosen for inclusion including Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Bible as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great (DaVinci Code (DC) p. 231)...(who) omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ’s human traits and embellished those gospels that made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned. (DC p. 234)*

Response:

- Actually there are a little more than 50 pseudepigraphal gospels, which are books rejected by virtually all, according to *General Introduction to the Bible* by Geisler and Nix, p. 302 (listed on p. 309-311)

- * Mike Licona in his video says there are less than 20.

- Yet “many are known only by name and others by a few scattered citations in the church fathers.” *General Intro.* p. 302

Clarification:

Mike Licona says “I got my figures from Ben Witherington's book *"The Gospel Code"* (*Email correspondence from Mike Licona to Dave Geisler sent on Oct 24th, 2005*).

Ben Witherington's book *"The Gospel Code"* (p. 21) says "In fact, there were less than twenty documents that might be called Gospels (telling the story of Jesus' life) . . ."

Mike Licona says “I attempted to verify this statement by going to Bart Ehrman's book *Lost Scriptures*. Since Ehrman is an agnostic scholar, I thought he might be prone to include more Gospels in his list which goes beyond the Nag Hammadi find. To my surprise, he lists only 13. I have the book at home. But you may view these in his TOC at

http://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0195141822/ref=sib_rdr_toc/102-2763209-4976928?%5Fencoding=UTF8&p=S00A&j=0#reader-page....

Bart Ehrman is a skeptic who wrote a book on *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*.”

(*Email correspondence from Mike Licona to Dave Geisler sent on Oct 24th, 2005*).

Ron Rhodes says “Aside from the four canonical gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), history reveals there were only *twelve* other gospels in circulation during this general time, and these clearly not ‘inspired Scripture.’ There were also Gnostic gospels that emerged later,

but these are too late to be counted.” See Ron Rhodes, p. 13 “Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code.” <http://www.ronrhodes.org/DaVinci.html>

Pseudepigrapha refers to the books rejected by virtually all Christians

All Christian writings can be categorized into four basic groupings.

1. Books accepted by virtually all (Homologoumena)
2. Books disputed by some (Antilegomena)
3. Books rejected by virtually all (Pseudepigrapha)
4. Apocrypha (books accepted by some as canonical or semicanonical)

1. Books accepted by virtually everyone as canonical (part of inspired writings)

- There are 20 of the 27 books of the New Testament that have never been disputed.

“A disputed book is characterized as one that is retained and yet questioned, not merely one that is not quoted nor included in a given list.” (*General Introduction to the Bible*, by Geisler and Nix, p. 298)

* Those seven that have been disputed, have been those which mostly have been written last in the order of the New Testament canon.

2. Books disputed by some

- There are seven of the N.T. Books that have at one time or another been disputed but were seldom considered anticanonical (uninspired)
- These books we considered disputed because these books possessed neither uniform nor universal recognition in the early church. Yet these books were never given an anti-canonical status.
- “The seven books that came into question for various reasons are Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation.” (*General Introduction to the Bible*, p. 298)

- **Why Certain Books Were Questioned**

- Hebrews – Doubted because the author was unknown (but it did have Apostolic authority).
- James – Doubted for apparent contradiction with Paul’s teaching that salvation was by faith alone apart from works.
- 2 Peter - Doubted because style of writing was different than 1 Peter.

- 2 and 3 John - Doubted because the author is called elder not apostle. (Yet Peter was also called an elder and an apostle (1 Pet. 5:1).
- Jude – Doubted because it referred to two non-canonical books (The book of Enoch and the Assumption of Moses).
- The Book of Revelation – Doubted for its teaching on a thousand year reign of Christ and apocalyptic literature.

See N. Geisler & W. Nix, *General Introduction To the Bible* 2nd ed. 298-300

3. Books rejected by virtually everyone as unauthentic

“During the first few centuries, numerous books of a fanciful and heretical nature arose that are neither genuine nor valuable as a whole....Virtually no orthodox Father, canon, or council considered these books to be canonical and, so far as the church is concerned, they are primarily of historical value. These books indicate the heretical teaching of gnostic, docetic, and ascetic groups, as well as the exaggerated fancy of religious lore in the early church. At best these books were revered by some of the cults and referred to by some of the orthodox Fathers, but they were never considered canonical by the mainstream of Christianity.” (*General Introduction to the Bible*, p. 301)

4. Books accepted by some as canonical or semi-canonical (Apocrypha) - we will talk more about this later.

Question:

Are these gospels earlier than the four New Testament Gospels?

Response:

- There is no evidence that any of these “Gnostic” gospels were written in the First Century during the period that nearly all New Testament scholars say the New Testament was written.

- Most liberal as well as conservative biblical scholars accept that the whole New Testament was written in the first century.

Irenaeus Bishop of Lyons (2nd century) - who sat under the teachings of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John the Apostle) said, “Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews (i.e., Jews) in their own tongue, when Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel in Roman and founding the church there. (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, eds. James Donaldson and Alexander Roberts (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 3.1.1.

- Historians believe that Paul was in Rome between 60-64 A.D.

- The Earliest of these is the Gospel of Thomas but most scholars date it no sooner than the early second century.

“Most Scholars agree that the Gnostic Gospels date far too late to be reliable. The earliest Gnostic Gospels may date as early as A.D. 150, but most date in the third and fourth centuries. Further, there are no historical or geographical elements in these “gospels” that can be objectively verified, as is true in the canonical gospels....Moreover, no one—not even liberal theologians—believes The Gospel of Thomas was written by the biblical Thomas, and that The Gospel of Philip was written by the biblical Phillip.” (Ron Rhodes, “Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code.” p. 17 <http://www.ronrhodes.org/DaVinci.html>)

The Gnostic Gospels cannot really be called Gospels.

“Neither The Gospel of Truth nor The Gospel of Philip, as case examples, contain an orderly account of the birth, life, deeds, and resurrection of Christ.” (Ron Rhodes, “Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code.” p. 20 <http://www.ronrhodes.org/DaVinci.html>)

Questions:

Was the Bible, as we know it today, collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine?

The O.T. cannon was already accepted

- The Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament was created between 250 and 150 B.C. (See N. Geisler and W. Nix, *General Introduction the Bible*, p. 24)
- In A.D. 90 Jewish Scholars meet in Jamnia to affirm the 39 Old Testament books (None of the Apocrypha was accepted)

By 200 A.D. the majority of the New Testament Books had already been accepted by Western Christendom.

Former Yale Professor of Ecclesiastical History says, “By about 200 A.D., according to the witness of the Muratorian fragment, Western Christendom had a New Testament canon embracing Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Romans, Philemon, Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy, Jude, 1 and 2 John, Revelation, and the so called Apocalypse of Peter.”

(See Williston Walker in *A History of the Christian Church* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1970), 59-60.

The list of 27 New Testament books was not officially accepted in the West until the council called The Synod of Hippo in A.D. 393.

How did the books of the New Testament become one volume and why were certain books and letters left out?

Response:

Jesus determines which books to be accepted as part of sacred scripture

Jesus affirmed the Old Testament

1. Jesus defended himself from Satan's attacks three times with the phrase, "It is written" (referring to the Old Testament, Matt. 4:4ff).
2. Jesus said "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of the letter of the Law to fail." (Luke 16:17)
3. Beginning at Moses, he expounded to them from the scriptures the things concerning himself (Lk. 24:17)
4. Jesus said "The Scriptures . . . testify of Me." (Jn. 5:39)
5. Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets . . ." (Mt. 5:17-18)
6. Jesus said, "It is written . . ." The authority of the OT is cited that way 92 times in the NT.

Jesus promised the New Testament

1. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would teach the Apostles "all things" and lead them into "all truth" (Jn. 14:26) and guide them. (Jn. 16:13).
2. The Apostles claimed to continue in Christ's teaching, being directed by the Holy Spirit.
3. The qualification for being a member of the twelve apostles was that they must be an eyewitness of the ministry and resurrection of Christ, (Acts 1:21-22)
4. The New Testament church itself is said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and New Testament prophets." (Eph. 2:20; cf. 3:5).
5. The Apostles claimed divine authority for their words (Jn. 20:31; I Jn. 1:1; 4:1, 5-6).
6. Peter acknowledged all Paul's writings as "scriptures" (2 Peter 3:15-16).
7. Paul says in 1 Thes. 2:4 that "we" are entrusted with the gospel.
8. Paul quoted from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 10:7) and refers to it as scripture (1 Tim. 5:18).
9. Luke claims to give an accurate account of what "Jesus began to do and teach."
10. Therefore, only books and letters that were associated with an apostle or associate were considered acceptable into the New Testament Canon.

The Apostolic Father's recognized these writing as coming from the Apostles

Question:

But how do we know we have the correct books?

Between 70 – 150 is the period called the Apostolic Fathers

- Some of the Apostolic Fathers knew some of the apostles and continued in their teachings.

- Clement is understood to be a Disciple of Peter.
- Polycarp was known to be a disciple of John and Papias was a hearer of John and a friend of Polycarp (See Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 5:32 vol.1 p.154).
- ☑ The Apostolic Fathers specifically quoted from at least 17 books and letters in the New Testament. (It is 18 if you include Polycarp quoting ¼ a verse of Galatians “God is not mocked” - 3 out of 14 Greek words)
 - A.D. 125 Polycarp quotes Ephesians twice and refers to it as “Sacred Scripture.”
 - Ephesians 4:26 “For I trust that ye are well versed in the Sacred Scriptures, ...It is declared then in these Scriptures, ‘Be ye angry, and sin not,’ and , ‘Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.’” (12/12 words of the verse) *Polycarp’s Letter to the Philippians* ch.12 p.35
 - He quotes from Ephesians 2:8,9 in Polycarp’s Letter to the Philippians 1:33
 - He also alludes (but does not quote) from Ephesians 6:11 in ch.4 p.34

Response:

- ☑ *We have lists of Authoritative Works that confirm some of the accepted writings*
 - A.D. 140 Marcion compiled a canon that included one Gospel (a large portion of Luke that had been altered and 10 of Paul’s letters).
 - * He did not believe in the supernatural.
 - A.D. 180 Muratorian Canon Fragment (at least 22 books)
 - * Mike Licona says there maybe 23 books
 - A.D. 185 Irenaeus recognized at least 22
 - * It maybe as many as 25 books
 - * Darrell Bock says it was 21 books (See Darrell Bock, *Breaking The DaVinci Code*, p. 121)
 - A.D. 200 Tertullian recognized at least 22 books
 - A.D. 215 Clement of Alexandria 25 books
 - A.D. 225 Hippolytus recognized at least 21 books
 - A.D. 230 Origen recognized 23 books*
 - * Mike Licona says there maybe 22 books

A.D. 250 Cyprian recognized 23 books

A.D. 325 Eusebius lists 22 books

A.D. 367 Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, lists the 27 books of the N.T. we now have today.

A.D. 380 Amphilocius of Iconium lists 22 books

A.D. 382 Synodin in Rome Pope Damascus lists 27

A.D. 397 3rd Council of Carthage, lists 27 books

A.D. 1442 Council of Florence lists 27 books

A.D. Council of Trent lists 27 books

Clarification:

* Mike Licona does not mention Clement in his presentation

(See Early Christian Bible References by Steve Morrison for further clarification of issues below located at <http://www.davincicode.org.sg/>)

Muratorian Canon Fragment – (Steve Morrison says 22, every book but Hebrews, James, 1 or 2 Peter, or 3 John).

Irenaeus refers to 22 books, plus he quotes from 2 more and alludes to content in one more or every book except Philemon and 3 John.

Tertullian mentions by name or author 22, plus he quotes 4 more (See Early Christian Bible References by Steve Morrison)

Origen – He may have recognized according to Mike Licona as many as 24 books

But how do we know when they quotes this passages they were referring to them as Scripture?

"In many cases they gave quotes without saying anything about them, just assuming the audience knew they were inspired. Sometimes they prefaced it with "Jesus said", "scripture says", "God says", "the gospel says", etc. They all revered Paul as an apostle from God, and so when they say "Paul says", or "the Apostle says", I think we can take that as divinely inspired. This is in contrast to Tertullian mentioning 1 Enoch. He mentions it as scripture, but he acknowledge that some do not regard this as scripture, and it is not in the Jewish canon either. See On the Apparel of Women book 1 ch.3 p.15-16."

Steve Morrison, Apologetic Specialist, Meekness and Truth Ministries (Email correspondence from Steve to Dave Geisler sent on January 16th, 2006).

Remember:

Dan Brown said these issues were decided in 325 A.D. at the Council of Nicaea. Yet the Council of Nicaea did not deal with the issue of scripture, it had to do with whether Jesus as God was created or eternally existed as God.

- ☑ Common agreements from all lists
 - All lists accepted the 4 New Testament Gospels as the true Gospels (except Marcion)
 - All accepted Paul's letters as authoritative
- ☑ The four New Testament Gospels were considered as authoritative by the early church.
 - Justin Martyr (A.D. 150)

In Justin's First Apology [i.e., First Defense], he writes, "For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, 'This do in remembrance of Me, this is My body;' and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, 'This is My blood;' and gave it to them alone." (Justin, *First Apology*, chapter 66.)

- So Justin calls the Gospels the "memoirs" of the apostles and then quotes from them.
 - In his *Dialogue With Trypho*, Justin makes mention of the "memoirs" another 14 times. (Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, chapters 100-107)
 - In Dialogue 106.3 he refers to the gospel of Mark as the "memoir of Peter."
 - In every instance he either quotes from a Gospel or relates a story from them.
 - When referring to these "memoirs" he never cites a story that is found in the
 - "other" N.T. gospels.
 - Irenaeus (A.D. 185) taught that the Gospel is "quadriform" (Four Forms) (See his work *Against Heresies* 3.11)
 - He said, "It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are." *Against Heresies* 3.11)
 - The eminent Manchester scholar Dr. F. F. Bruce says "It is evident that by A.D. 180 the idea of the fourfold Gospel had become so axiomatic throughout Christendom that it could be referred to as an established fact as obvious and inevitable and natural as the four cardinal points of the compass (as we call them) or the four winds." (F.F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments: How We Got Our English Bible* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1950), 109.
- ☑ Even those considered "Heretics" used the four gospels

- Ebionites used a shorten form of Matthew (2nd Cent)
- Marcion used Luke (A.D. 140)
- Certain Gnostics used Luke (2nd & 3rd cent.)
- Valentinus used John (A.D. 110)
- Titian (Gnostic) combined Matthew, Mark, Luke, John into the Diatessaron. (A.D. 172) (This was the first attempt to combine the four into one continuous Gospel. Yet none of the other Gospels were included)

All of these predated the Council of Nicaea by 153 – 215 years

Certain gospels were clearly rejected by the church prior to Nicaea

- Origin (A.D. 185-254)

He wrote: "I know a certain gospel which is called the Gospel according to Thomas and a Gospel according to Matthias, and many others have we read... never the less among all these we have approved solely what the church has recognized, which is that only the four gospels should be accepted."

(Cited from Darrell Bock's book *Breaking The Da Vinci Code* (p. 119) where he quotes from Origin's "first homily on Luke 1:1, according to the Latin translation of Jerome.")

Note: Eusebius cites a similar statement by Origin that speaks of four Gospels (Ecc Hist 6.25.4): "Among the four Gospels, which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven . . ."

- Tatian (110-172 A.D.)

He was an ascetic Gnostic made his own scripture called the Diatessaron (meaning 'The Four') where he combined the four gospels into one He did not add anything we do not have today, he only left out parts. However, the heretic still quoted verbatim about 79% of the gospels.

Here is a summary of what he left out:

Details: Here are the verses absent from each chapter of the Diatessaron. These numbers were computed from Ante-Nicene Fathers volume 9 p.34-138.

* This data was collected by Steve Morrison, Apologetic Specialist, Meekness and Truth Ministries. See www.inerrancy.org for more details.

Chapter Work	Total Verses	In the Diatess.	Absent from The Diatess	% of Verses included in the Diatess.
Gospels	3779	2995	784	79.0%
Matthew	1071	819	252	76.5%
Mark	678	402	276	59.3%
Luke	1151	919	232	79.8%
John	879	855	24	97.3 %

- ☑ *General Introduction to the Bible* p.423-425 points out that every single New Testament book was referred to prior to 150 A.D., with the possible exception of Philemon and 3 John.
 - **Irenaeus** (170-202 A.D.) made about 1,800 quotations and references from the New Testament, (except possibly Philemon and 3 John) and his writings show the books in his New Testament were the same as ours today.
 - **Clement of Alexandria** (wrote 193-217/220 A.D.) made about 2,400 quotations and references of every New Testament book except Philemon, James, 2 Peter, and possibly 3 John.
 - **Cyprian** (200-258 A.D.) made about 1,030 quotations and references from the New Testament. His quotes include every book except Philemon and 2 John, and possibly 3 John, which are the three shortest books in the New Testament.

For the preceding, see *General Introduction to the Bible* p.425-427 for more info.

Question:

What should we conclude about the “other” books that were not included?

- ☑ They were written in the second and third centuries and therefore did not exist when the gospels were written in the first century.
 - The only book thought to exist prior to the middle of the 2nd century is the Gospel of Thomas. (All the others were written more than 100 years after Jesus.)
 - The earliest fragments of the Gospel of Philip are dated by most scholars as no earlier than 180-200 AD. (See Philip Jenkins, *Hidden Gospels* (Oxford Press, 2002), p. 139.
 - Barh Ehrman, chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at Univ. N.C at Chapel Hill says about the Gospel of Phillip: “It is difficult to assign a date for this work, but it was probably compiled during the third century.” Barth D. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures: Books That Did Not Make It Into the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 38
- ☑ Their teachings differ from the four gospels.
 - Example: *The Gospel of Thomas*, p.114
“Simon Peter said the them: Let Mary go forth from among us, for women are not worthy of the life. Jesus said: Behold, I shall lead her, that I may make her male, in order that she also may become a living spirit like you males. For every woman who makes herself male shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.”
- ☑ They were never quoted by a known author during the first 30 years after Christ.

- They were never read in Christian assemblies.
- They were not included in the list of accepted books and letters.
- They are not the subject of commentaries.
- Some were specifically rejected by the church and were not included in the New Testament Canon.

Question:

Why aren't these books in the Bible?

Response:

- This raises the question, about the nature of the New Testament canon.

Response:

"The canon is the list of those writings which were acknowledged by the church as documents of the divine revelation." F.F. Bruce

Question:

What sort of criteria did the early church fathers apply as helpful aids in recognizing those writings, which were truly inspired by God?

Response:

Canonicity is determined by God and discovered by man (Principles taken from Norman Geisler, *From God to Us*, p.67-71)

Criteria:

1. Is the book authoritative - does it claim to be of God?
 - Does it say "Thus says the Lord"
 - Unless they were convinced of Divine authorship, the book was rejected
2. Is it prophetic- was it written by a servant of God? (2 Pet. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:1)
 - Inspired books came only through Spirit-moved men known as prophets
 - Paul argued in Galatians that his teachings should be accepted because he was in fact an apostle "not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father." (Gal. 1:1)
 - 2 Peter was questioned because it was written in a different style than 1 Peter until it was accepted that for writing 1 Pet. he dictated his letter to someone else who recorded what he said. All 2 Peter was claimed to have been written by Simon Peter (2 Pet. 1:1)

3. Is it authentic-does it tell the truth about God, man, etc.? (Acts 17:11)
 - The Apostle Paul considered the Bereans more noble because they searched the Scripture to see whether what Paul taught them was consistent with God's revelation in the Old Testament. (Acts 17:11)
 - The letter of James was questioned because it seemed to contradict Paul's teaching on justification by faith not by works.
 - Others questioned Jude because of its citation of an Pseudepigraphal book which was rejected by virtually all. (Vv. 9, 14)
4. Is the book dynamic-does it possess the life-transforming power of God? (Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)
5. Is this book received or accepted by the people of God for whom it was originally written - is it recognized as being from God?
 - Since communication and transportation was what it was in ancient times, sometime it took much time and effort on the part of the later church fathers to determine this.

Question:

Why did the church need to recognize certain writings as authentically inspired and others as spurious?

- Because they believed that the writings of the prophets and apostles were truly "the Word of God." Therefore only those recognized as such should be preserved.
- The rise in Heretic writings led early Christians to clearly define what had been recognized as inspired. Therefore there was a need for agreed upon canon or list of authentically inspired books.
- The persecution of Emperor Diocletian in his edict in A.D. 303 (The edict of Diocletian) called for the destruction of the sacred books of scripture by Christians. As a result, Christians needed to know what were the books that were truly inspired by God to know that were worth suffering persecution for.

Question:

Why does the Catholic Bible have some books that the Protestant Bible does not have?

- They included those books called the Apocrypha (Hidden)
- These were Jewish Apocrypha and listed between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- These documents were respected by Jews for historical significance but never considered by them to be inspired.

- When the Hebrew O.T. was translated into Greek in Alexandria Egypt, the Apocrypha was translated and included into the Greek OT (Septuagint)
- When the Catholic Church translated the Old Testament into Latin (Vulgate), they use the Greek Septuagint rather than the Hebrew O.T. As a result the Apocrypha was also included
- Protestants by in large rejected them as authoritative though some considered them helpful devotionally. They believe that since the O.T. was originally written in Hebrew it is probably more reliable than the Greek O.T. since it was the original language and since the Jews would have a much better idea as to what books were considered authoritative in the O.T.
- This is why the Protestant English translations today do not include the Apocrypha

Summary:

1. There is no evidence that these gospels were written prior to the middle of the second century except for the Gospel of Thomas that is dated no earlier than the early second century.
2. Yet virtually all scholars believe that all four New Testament Gospels were written in the first century.
3. The four gospels and Paul's letters were recognized as authoritative since the second century: 150 years prior to the council of Nicaea. (Eusebius of Caesarea, the Christian historian who chronicled the details of the first three centuries of the Christian church) provides abundant evidence that the cannon was established well before the time of Constantine. See Eusebius, *Church History*, 3.3-4, 24-25: 5.8; 6.14, 25.
4. The debate over other disputed books was not solved at the council of Nicaea. It wasn't till A.D. 367 when Athanasius, Father of modern orthodoxy, listed the 27 books and letters of the N.T. that this issue was mostly resolved.

Major Claim # 2

The Bible has evolved through countless translations additions and revisions.

Response:

Multiple checks and balances have occurred to insure this did not occur.

- The number of Greek copies (5, 686) Norman Geisler, *The Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* p.532

5,386 Bruce Metzger p.54 (1976)

5,366 Manuscripts of the Greek Bible p.54 (1981)

5,254+ A General Introduction to the Bible p.387 (1986)

5,176+ Aland et al. The Greek New Testament 4th edition (1998)

(There are 14,000 non-Greek manuscript copies of the New Testament) Taken from Norman Geisler, *The Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* p.532

Note:

Mike Licona says, "As of Sept. 2005 Dr. Daniel Wallace (Dallas Theological Seminary) says there are 5,745 Greek manuscripts & more than 10,000 Latin manuscripts. Daniel Wallace is an expert in this area. He teaches at DTS, has written the most used Greek Grammar (*Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*), and actually works with the old manuscripts."

(Information obtained via e-mail from Mike Licona to Dave Geisler Jan. 23rd 2006)

- The time interval between the original and the existing copies

For example:

- John Ryland fragment (117-138 A.D.) - one generation
- Bodmer Papyrus (150-200 A.D.) - whole books
- Chester Beatty Papyri (250 A.D.) - most of the N.T.
- Codex Vaticanus (325-350 A.D.) - nearly all the Bible

- The degree of accuracy of the copies

- Only 5% of the New Testament has been even questioned as a textual variant.

Keith Elliot and Ian Moir in *Manuscripts and the Text of the New Testament* page 8 says "Most modern textual critics can agree on the bulk of the text (some **95** per cent of it, perhaps). It is the remaining 5 per cent or so where disputes occur and differing conclusions may be found."

- Even with over 20 thousand NT manuscripts, they are so close that we are virtually certain of 97% - 98% of the New Testament.
- Almost ½ are 1 and 2 word variants for spelling, adding "the", etc.

None of these affect doctrine.

For details: www.BibleQuery.org

- Thousands of quotations of the church fathers (Over 36,000 citations)

"Indeed so extensive are these citations that if all other sources for our knowledge of the text of the New Testament were destroyed, they would be sufficient alone for the reconstruction of practically the entire New Testament."

Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 86

- Significance of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

- The Dead Sea Scrolls demonstrated the meticulous care in recording the manuscripts for Jews.

- The Dead Sea scrolls attest to textual accuracy
- The earliest manuscripts up until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls was the Cairo codex dated about A.D. 895 containing both the later and former prophets.
- The Dead Sea Scrolls date from the third century B.C. to the first century A.D.

“The two copies of Isaiah found in the Qumran caves, “proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95% of the text. The 5% of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling.”

A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, p.19 Gleason Archer, Jr.

Question:

What about the different translations?

Response:

- Usually do to the different purposes of the translations

NASB – Very literal translation (very wooden)

ESV – Literal but smoother

NIV – 20 cent. U.S. English (not a word for word translation) How would they say it today in the U.S

NLT (New living translation) – Simpler than NIV (8th grade level)

Living Bible – Paraphrase

Amplified – Expanded meaning

Summary:

- The Bible we have today is a near perfect representation of what was originally written. No part in question has an impact on any major doctrine or practice.
- For the most part, translations are attempts are attempts to present the biblical text from different angles according to different needs.

Major Claim # 3

The doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God was invented and approved at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. (Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* p. 233)

Questions:

Did Christians only view Jesus as just a great man?

Was the vote a close one?

Response:

Nearly every scholar holds that the Gospels and Paul's letters were written in the 1st century. If these Gospels and letters refer to Jesus as the divine Son of God, then we know Christians thought of him this way more than 225 years prior to Nicaea.

- Paul wrote Romans probably in AD 60. So by at least A.D. 60 we know that Jesus was thought of as the Son of God.
- Yet scholars recognize that these verses are an earlier oral tradition which Paul included in his letter.
- Jesus identified himself as the Son of Man, a phrase which is associated with a divine figure in Daniel 7.
- Paul in 1 *Cor.* 8:4-6 offers a revised version of the Jewish *Shema* which includes Jesus in the identity of Yahweh, the God of the Jews.
- A variety of New Testament passages affirm the absolute and full deity of Christ and the identity of Yahweh.

Such as John 1:1 ("the Word was God"), "Titus 2:13 (our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,)", Romans 9:5 ("God over all, blessed forever"), and Colossians 2:9 ("within Him dwells all the fullness of being God in bodily form"), and etc..

- Jesus asserted He was God by claiming to be:
 1. The great "I Am." Ex. 3:14 – Jn. 8:58
 2. Yahweh (LORD). Shepherd, First & Last, Judge, Bridegroom, Light, Savior, God's Glory, Giver of Life
 3. Equal with God. – To forgive sins Mk 2:5-7
 4. One with the Father. (Jn. 10:30)
 5. The Messiah-God. (Claimed to be the Messiah Jn. 4:25)
 6. Worthy of honor due only God
 7. Worthy of worship (and accepted it from)
 8. Equal in authority with God.
 9. The object of prayer like God.

Major Claim # 3 (continue)

The doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God was invented and approved at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.

(Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* p. 233 - Continued)

Clarification:

- This is a half-truth. The Council of *Nicaea* did seriously consider alternating views of Jesus, yet not whether he was merely mortal or divine, but rather whether he was created or eternal. It was not a choice between "human" versus "God" but as "eternal" versus "created."

- ☑ In A.D. 318 in Alexandria Egypt, Arius argued that Jesus was created by God.
- ☑ The most important theological belief refined at the Council of Nicaea was in response to the heretical views of *Arius and his followers* who maintained that Jesus was not divine by nature, but was created in ages past by God.

Summary

DaVinci Code: The Doctrine that Jesus is the Son of God was invented and approved at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325 (p. 233)

Fact Check:

- ☑ Jesus himself asserted He was God in a number of ways.
- ☑ Within 30 years of Jesus' crucifixion Paul and even earlier traditions were presenting Jesus as the divine Son of God.

Question:

Was it a rather close vote?

Response:

In actuality only **two** out of 318 bishops at the Council did not sign the resulting creedal statement affirming the full deity of Christ and condemning any view of Him that was less! Yet there were only 28 that were clearly Arians from the outset. The others ended up voting with the majority.

For more details see Albert Mohler, "Deciphering the DaVinci Code," *Albert Mohler is an author and the president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.* <http://www.crosswalk.com/fun/1212187.html>

* Note however that Mohler say there were 300 but Olsen says there were 318.

Clarification:

"According to Roger Olsen in his book *The Story of Theology*, 'Of the 318 bishops present at the opening of the council, only 28 were clearly Arians from the outset.' (p. 153). Later he writes, 'The emperor required all bishops to sign the new creed or be deposed from their sees and sent into exile. Several Arian bishops signed it reluctantly. Only two refused to sign it, Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicea' (156). So it is better to go with the 28 figure rather than the 2 figure. When 26 of 28 Arians signed the Nicene Creed for fear of being deposed and exiled, that seems to be unfair compulsion to say the least."

Biblical Scholar Mike Licona (and co-author with Gary Habermas of *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*) in remarks he made in an e-mail conversation with Dave Geisler on 10/25/2005.

Major Claim # 4

Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and it was covered up.

Clarification:

“Supposed proof” from the DaVinci Code, p. 245 -246

“And the companion of the Savior is Mary Magdalene. Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often on her mouth. The rest of the disciples were offended by it and expressed disapproval. They said to him, ‘Why do you love her more than all of us?’” (246).

Response:

- The Bible doesn't say that marriage is sinful
(Paul opposed those who forbid marriage pointing out that everything created by God is good (1 Tim. 4:3-4))
- Jesus points out that if one wants to remain single for the sake of the kingdom, he or she should do so (Matt. 19:12)
- There is no indication in the New Testament or early Christian writing that Jesus was ever married.
- The New Testament does mention his mother, father, brothers and sisters. Yet Jesus being married or having a wife was never mentioned.
- Jesus was always portrayed as being single

Other Evidence To Consider

- Mary is not tied to any male anywhere when she is named in Scripture (Mt. 27:55-56; Mk. 15:40-41; Lk. 8:2; Jn. 19:25).
- Jesus shows no special concern for Mary Magdalene at the cross (Jn. 19:25-27).
- Other disciples were married, but Jesus is not named especially when it would have helped reinforce the point that Paul was making (1 Corinthians 9:4-6).
- Although it was typical for Jewish men to marry, some of those who didn't to better serve God were highly regarded.
- Jesus talks about “eunuchs for the kingdom” (Matthew 19:10-12) and appears to model it after Himself.
- The Essenes were known for their emphasis on celibacy (Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.1.5.21; *Jewish War* 2.8.2.121-122; Philo, *Hypothetica* 11.14-18).

Further Clarification:

Brown claims that “companion” means spouse

Response:

This portion of The Gospel of Philip is damaged. We don't actually know *where* Christ kissed Mary.

Clarification:

Teabing claims that the Nag Hammadi texts are “the earliest Christian records” (Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* p.245).

Question:

What are the Nag Hammadi texts and when were they written?

Response:

- Discovered at Nag Hammadi in Egypt in 1945. They were an important archaeological find. They yielded 52 Coptic works. (See James Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library In English* (New York; Harper and Row, 1977).
- Only five however were called “gospels.” (Gospel of: Truth, Thomas, Egyptians, Philip, and Mary)
- The Nag Hammadi texts were written “no earlier than A.D. 400.” (See Craig Blomberg, “Where Do We Start Studying Jesus” in *Jesus Under Fire*, p. 23) Many are Gnostic.
- A few of the texts are cited in *The DaVinci Code* to prove that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene including the Gospel of Mary (2nd Century) and the Gospel of Philip (3rd Century).
- The earliest fragments of the Gospel of Philip are dated by most scholars as no earlier than 180-200 AD. (See Philip Jenkins, *Hidden Gospels* (Oxford Press, 2002), p. 139.
- This means that the Nag Hammadi texts do not meet the criteria of being early or apostolic.
- Yet the Gospel of Philip is a Gnostic text, and Gnostic thought would have no place in first century Palestinian Judaism.

Further Clarification:

Darrell Bock says the Nag Hammadi Library consisted of 45 separate titles (see *Darrell Bock, Breaking The DaVinci Code*, p.61)

Question:

What is Gnosticism?

Response:

- They believed the God of the Old Testament was an evil god, who was different from the God of the New Testament. Some were very libertine and immoral, others were very ascetic.
- In a nutshell, Gnostics were people, who believed that every Christian was a “christ” and therefore every Christian was “divine.”

- Jesus was thus Christ and divine only in this sense, not in any unique sense.
- The Gnostic Jesus was believed to not free us of our sins, but to free us from our ignorance because we don't realize who we really are—we are divine.
- Brown believes the Gnostics were the original disciples who came before those we now consider to be Jesus' disciples, such as Peter, James, and John and etc.

Major Claim # 4

Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and it was covered up.

Statement:

“Ask any Aramaic scholar and he will tell you, the word *companion*, in those days, literally meant *spouse*” (246).

Response:

This statement is not valid

- Although it does mean spouse in Aramaic, the Nag Hammadi manuscripts were not written in Aramaic.
- They were written in Coptic and Egyptian language and they imported the use of a Greek term *koinonos*. “companion”
- This term can mean “wife” in a spiritual sense, but it's not the common Greek term for wife. The word for wife or spouse is *gyne*.
- Koinonos* is most often used in the NT of a “partner,” “Joint owner,” “colleague,” “accomplice,” “companion.” (2 Cor. 8:23; 1 Pet. 5:1)
- Luke uses this term to describe James and John as Peter's business “partners” (Luke 5:10).
- Contrary to Teabing's claim, the statement that Mary was Jesus' *companion* does not at all prove that she was His wife

Summary of Nag Hammadi Manuscripts

1. These gospels were written neither by apostles, nor by companions of the apostles. All of these people were dead by the time these documents were written.
2. These gospels are not orthodox in their theology. They teach a different view of God, Christ, man, salvation, and what happens to a person after death. These gospels are not consistent with the original teachings of Jesus and His earliest followers.
3. Unlike the four canonical gospels, these gospels were never widely accepted or recognized as authentic and inspired by the early Christian church.
4. Even the non-canonical gospels cited by Brown, when examined very carefully, are seen NOT to support his theories. Nowhere do these gospels actually teach that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene. Nowhere do they teach that he fathered a child by her. And

nowhere do they teach that Jesus intended Mary to lead the church after his death. These gospels simply don't support Brown's theories in the novel.

Other Outrageous Claims of Dan Brown

(These were supposedly take from The Gnostic "Gospels" of Philip and Mary Magdalene)

- Leigh Teabing says that these gospels either teach or imply the following:
- Mary was the wife of Jesus.
- The mother of His child.
- She was to lead the church after Jesus' death

(Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* p. 244-48).

"And Levi answered, 'Peter, you have always been hot-tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like an adversary. If the Saviour made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Saviour knows her very well. That is why he loved her more than us'" (Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* p. 247).

The "Gospel" of Mary actually teaches:

- Mary received a special revelation from Jesus that the male disciples did not.
- Levi implies that Jesus (*who knows her very well*) considered her worthy.
- Jesus loved Mary more than his male disciples.

What does this text NOT teach?

- That Mary was Jesus' wife.
- That Mary was the mother of Jesus' child.
- That Mary was to lead the church.

Further information about this passage in The "Gospel" of Mary

- It's possibly symbolic. Peter may represent "Orthodoxy"; Mary "Gnosticism".
- If this is so, then "Mary" (*Gnostics*) are claiming special revelation even if "Peter" (*Orthodox*) can't believe it.

When was the Gospel of Mary written:

- Composed in the late second century - one hundred years after NT gospels.
- It's almost certainly not historically reliable

Concerns about the Nag Hammadi Writings

- A generation of scholars who studied the fifty-two Coptic scrolls (five of which are called gospels) and produced an English translation in 1977. (See James Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

Yet since then a handful of radical or extreme New Testament Scholars associated with a group called the Jesus Seminar have sought to pull off a Biblical revolution by:

- Redefining who Jesus is
- Rewriting the origins of the Christian faith
- Rewriting early church history
- Redefining the content of the already accepted New Testament Cannon
- Reinterpreting the Christian faith in a way to prefer the Gnostic version of “Spirituality.”

Brown also claims that Christianity borrowed heavily from Mithraism: (see <http://www.answers.org/issues/davincicode.html> for more details)

“The pre-Christian God Mithras – called the Son of God and the Light of the World – was born on December 25, died, was buried in a rock tomb, and then resurrected in three days.” (DVC, p. 232)

Not surprisingly, scholars of Mithraism know nothing of any of this.

“He was called the Son of God and the Light of the World.”

This is simply false. Neither of these titles is noted by *Mithraic* scholars.

(See See J. P. Holding, “Mighty Mithraic Madness,” http://www.tektonics.org/tekton_04_02_04_MMM.html)

“He was born on December 25.”

“This may be true, but it is of no relevance, for the New Testament, as the New Testament does not associate Dec. 25th with Jesus’ birth at all. When the Christian Church chose December 25 as the birthday celebration for Jesus Christ, they did so in direct opposition to the pagan mid-winter festival of Saturnalia, not because they believed Jesus was born, like the pagan god(s), on that date. Again, this is not borrowing, but rather giving the formerly pagan masses a holiday rooted in Christianity in place of their old pagan holiday.”

James Patrick Holding, “Not InDavincible A Review and Critique of *The DaVinci Code*” <http://www.answers.org/issues/davincicode.html>

“He died and was buried in a rock tomb, and then resurrected in three days.”

“This is simply false. The *Mithraic* scholar Richard Gordon says plainly that there is “no death of *Mithras*” (Richard Gordon, *Image and Value in the Greco-Roman World Variorum*, 1996, 96) which means, there can be no burial of *Mithras*, and no resurrection of *Mithras*. Some amateur writers cite the church writer of the fourth century, *Firmicus*, who says that the *Mithraists* mourn the image of a dead *Mithras*, but this is far too late to have influenced Christianity (if anything, the influence was the other way around). After reading the work of *Firmicus*, I personally found no such reference at all. More relevant perhaps is the late second-century church writer

Tertullian's Prescription Against Heretics, chapter 40, which says, "If my memory still serves me, *Mithra*...sets his marks on the foreheads of his soldiers; celebrates also the oblation of bread, and introduces an image of a resurrection, and before a sword wreathes a crown..." The argument therefore relies on *Tertullian's* memory, and it isn't the initiates of *Mithra*, but *Mithra* himself who introduces an "image" of a resurrection(?) – he is not "resurrected" himself."

James Patrick Holding, "Not InDavincible A Review and Critique of *The DaVinci Code*" <http://www.answers.org/issues/davincicode.html>

"Mithraism did not gain a foothold in the Roman Empire until after A.D. 100."

Josh McDowell, *A Quest For Answers: The DaVinci Code*, 38; See Edwin Yamauchi, *Pre-Christian Gnosticism*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI; Baker Book House, 1983), 112

"Christianity honored the Jewish Sabbath of Saturday, but Constantine shifted it to coincide with the pagan's veneration day of the sun." (See Brown, 232-233)

"This is also simply false. All available evidence indicates that Christianity was honoring Sunday long before Constantine. Brown is perhaps confused because certain New Testament passages, for example, record Paul going to the synagogue on the Sabbath to preach to the Jews. (If one wants to preach to the Jews and the Gentile God-fearers who attended with them, then it is logical to look for them where they are found on the Sabbath—in the synagogue!) It is clear, however, that Christian observations are held on the "first day of the week" (Acts 20:7, 1 *Cor.* 16:12; cf. Rev. 1:10), and there is also ample evidence of Sunday being observed well before Constantine." James Patrick Holding, "Not InDavincible A Review and Critique of *The DaVinci Code*" <http://www.answers.org/issues/davincicode.html>

1. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (110 AD), wrote: "If, then, those who walk in the ancient practices attain to newness of hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but fashioning their lives after the Lord's Day on which our life also arose through Him, that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ, our only teacher." Ignatius specifies the "Lord's Day" as the one on which "our life arises through Him"—the resurrection day, which was a Sunday.
2. Justin Martyr (150 AD) describes Sunday as the day when Christians gather to read the scriptures and hold their assembly because it is both the initial day of creation and the day of the resurrection.

He also wrote: "And on the day called Sunday there is a gathering together to one place of all those who live in cities or in the country and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits." (First Apology, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, eds. James Donaldson and Alexander Roberts (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 1.67.

3. *The Epistle of Barnabas* (120-150) cites Isaiah 1:13 and indicates that the "eighth day" is a new beginning via the resurrection, and is the day to be kept

4. The *Didache* (70-75) instructs believers: "On the Lord's own day, gather yourselves together and break bread and give thanks."
5. Other later testimonies from Irenaeus, Cyprian, and Pliny the Younger, which pre-date Constantine significantly, testify that Christians worshipped on Sunday.

James Patrick Holding, "Not InDavincible A Review and Critique of *The DaVinci Code*" <http://www.answers.org/issues/davincicode.html>

So Brown is misrepresenting the facts of history.

Conclusion:

Unveiling the DaVinci Code

- Not ancient
- Not apostolic
- Not orthodox
- Not accepted
- They don't support his theories.
- Remember these gospels (unlike the four canonical gospels) were not written during the time of Jesus and His earliest followers (i.e. in the first century). Rather, they are later, second and third century productions.

What can we say about the DaVinci Code?

- If you enjoy reading conspiracy theories, you may enjoy reading the DaVinci Code.
- As a serious historical treatise on Jesus' life and the History of the Christian Church, at best it contains too many untruths to real identify any real kernel of truth.
- At worst, it is a deliberate attempt to deconstruct and then reconstruct the biblical view of Jesus and present it in a story form which in a postmodern culture is an acceptable and highly successful way to sway others to your view point, no matter how false or destructive.

For Further Reading:

Richard Abanes, *The Truth Behind the Da Vinci Code*

Darrell Bock, *Breaking the DaVinci Code*

James Garlow and Peter Jones, *Cracking Da Vinci's Code*

Erwin W. Lutzer, *The DaVinci Deception*

James Patrick Holding, Not InDavincible: A Review and Critique of The Da Vinci Code, at <http://www.answers.org/issues/davincicode.html>

Ron Rhodes, "Crash Goes The Da Vinci Code."
<http://www.ronrhodes.org/DaVinci.html>

Darrell L. Bock, "Was Jesus Married."
<http://www.leaderu.com/theology/wasjesusmarried.html>

Sandra Miesel, "Dismantling the DaVinci Code," Crisis
<http://www.crisismagazine.com/september2003/feature1.htm>

Albert Mohler, "Deciphering the DaVinci Code,"
<http://www.crosswalk.com/fun/1212187.html>

http://www.alpheus.org/html/articles/esoteric_history/richardson1.html

"The DaVinci Code" Questions and Comments

Developed by Dave Geisler, Meekness and Truth Ministries (www.meeknessandtruth.org)

1. Many people today believe that truth (especially religious truth) is relative to one's particular culture or situation. However can the truth about who Jesus is be specific to one's culture or situation and at the same time, that Dan Brown also be correct that "almost everything "our fathers taught us about Christ is false"? (DVC p. 235)
2. Did you know that many Christians were persecuted for their beliefs for the first 300 years of the church?
Why then were these Christians willing to die for these beliefs if they were just "a lie."
3. How could "Christians" have wiped away any traces of the real Jesus from *secular literature* if they were not "the winners" even at the time these things were written?
4. If Jesus was just a "mortal prophet," what was the focus of the Church for the first 300 years if nobody was worshipping Jesus as God?
5. There are two pillars of Christianity that are not even questioned by Dan Brown in his book. They are: That God exists and that Jesus really did die on the cross.

Furthermore it is a well established fact of history that Jesus' tomb is empty.

Can you think of any way of explaining the fact of the empty tomb and yet believe that Jesus was in fact just a man as Brown claimed in his book? (See DVC p. 233)

6. One of the key questions that Dan Brown does not address is that whether Jesus died willingly or not.

If Jesus did not claim to be the Son of God, why do you think Jesus did not speak up before Pontius Pilate put him to death?

7. Does it make more sense to you that man sins because he has forgotten that he is in fact god, or is it more likely that man sins because he has fallen short of measuring up to the standards of a Holy God?
8. Let's say for the sake of argument that everything we have been taught about Christianity is a lie and that the Gnostic gospels came before Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and were the true Gospels.

Do you know what kind of story would it tell us about Christianity?

- That Salvation equals liberation from the body
- That Jesus came to bring us the true gnosis (knowledge)
- That not every one can obtain this true knowledge
- That Jesus only appeared to be physical but was not really a human being.

How then does this belief fit with Brown's assertion that "Jesus was just a man?"

9. How can Brown say that the Christian writers of the N.T devalued the rights of women when the Gnostic gospels he uses to devalue the writing of the gospels actually devalue women even more? (See *The Gospel of Thomas* 114)
10. The Christian writer C.S. Lewis has pointed out concerning the New Testament claim that Jesus was God that this proves that he either was a liar, a lunatic, or actually Lord (savior). Others have also suggested that he was actually a legend.

Do you think it is possible that Jesus Christ could be something more than what the movie portrayed him to be? Why or why not?

11. How does a painting painted 15 centuries after the time of Christ (The Lord's Supper by Leonardo DaVinci - 1495 – 1497) have anything to do with verifying whether the New Testament documents are a reliable record of the things that Jesus said and did?
12. Has anyone ever explained to you the difference between Christianity and all other religions in the world? (explain Do verse Done)

If not would you be interested in hearing?

For example:

Muslims believe that salvation depends upon man measuring up and not on God's grace. (Do)

Buddhism teaches that salvation comes about when one desires to stop desiring. (Do)

Hinduism teaches that if one does enough good he can pay off his karmic debt and escape the cycle of reincarnation. (Do)

Jesus says accept the gift I offer. It has already been "Done" for you (you can do nothing to earn God's gift). Invite me to come into your life and change you from the inside out (Jn. 1:12; Phil. 2:13).

Something to think about...

“...I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him, ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg - or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. “

C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 56

Did you know that:

1. Did you know that the main dispute at the Council of Nicaea was not whether Jesus was God or man but whether as God he was created or not?
2. Were you aware of the fact that two-thirds of all the New Testament books were accepted as sacred Scripture by the middle of the second century?
3. Did you know that the Priory of Sion was not founded in Jerusalem in 1099 but in 1956 and was officially registered in France?
4. Did you know that the cache of documents that were discovered in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris were planted there by a man named Pierre Plantard? (Documented in James Garlow and Peter Jones, *Cracking Da Vinci's Code* (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications, 2004), p. 112.
5. Did you know that these deceptions were exposed in France in the 90's and in a BBC Documentary in 1996?
6. Did you know that Plantard was determined to be an anti-Seimite with a criminal record for fraud who formed a social group over 50 years ago?
See Laura Miller, “The Da Vinci Con,” *The New York Times Book Review* (Sunday, February 22, 2004), 23.
7. You may have heard that “Constantine converted the world from matriarchal paganism to patriarchal Christianity by waging a campaign of propaganda that demonized the sacred feminine, obliterating the goddess from modern religion forever.”

However are you aware that there never has been a matriarchal society?

8. Did you know that not only were the books of the Bible not “voted on” during the council of Nicaea in 325 but that none of the four gospels nor the Apostle Paul’s letter were ever questioned as authentic scripture?
9. Did you know that the Council of Nicaea did not debate over whether Jesus as divine or mortal but whether he was co-eternal with God the Father?
10. Did you know that the term “Shekinah” in Hebrew refers to the Glory of God in His indwelling in the temple not his female counterpart?

11. Did you know that the Jewish Tetragrammaton (YHWH) was the sacred name for God that was not derived from the word Jehovah?
12. Did you know that the word Jehovah was not formed from the physical union between the masculine Jab and the pre-Hebraic name for Eve, Havah" (As DVC implies p. 309) but came about by taking the Consonants of YHWH and combining them with the vowels of the word Adonai (Lord) which resulted in the word "Jehovah"?
13. Brown said that "The pre-Christian God Mithras – called the Son of God and the Light of the World – was born on December 25, died, was buried in a rock tomb, and then resurrected in three days."

Did you know that scholars of Mithraism know nothing of any of this?

14. Did you know that the documents that Brown cites to verify his claims about Christ teaches that salvation can only be attained through higher knowledge ("*gnosis*") and that few every actually can achieve this?
15. Did you know that the documents that Brown cites to verify his claims that Jesus was just a man actually teach that Jesus was not a man for gnosticism teaches that Jesus could not be involved with a corrupt material existence?
16. Did you know if Dan Brown is right about what he says about the sacred feminine the Jews have been wrong about their belief in worshipping one God?
17. Did you know that the Gospel of Phillip and the Gospel of Mary does not teach that Mary Magdalene was married to Jesus?
18. Did you know that the Gospel of Phillip was not even written in Aramaic but Coptic (a late form of Egyptian) so the use of the word companion in the Gospel of Phillip does not imply that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene? (The word companion in Aramaic means wife)
19. Did you know that the Edict of Milan in 313 did not make Christianity the state religion only declared that Christian worship was to be tolerated?