

Outline Handout

Part 1: The Historical and Biblical Jesus

I. Who is Jesus Christ?

- A. According to *The Da Vinci Code*, the mystery of who Jesus is has been safeguarded by a secret society known as the Priory of Sion.
- B. Mary Magdalene became the wife of Jesus and that they had a child named Sarah who founded one of the royal bloodlines of France.
- C. The Holy Grail was not a literal cup, but rather a person, namely Mary Magdalene.
- D. Sir Leigh Teabing states that Christ was not considered divine until Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.

II. The Historical and Bible Truth.

- A. It is historically true that Constantine summoned various bishops to the Turkish city of Nicaea and that they did discuss the deity of Christ.
- B. However, the Council of Nicaea did not convene in order to debate Christ's divinity, which was universally accepted by almost all Christians at that time.
- C. Christians believed in the Deity of Christ long before 325 A.D.
 - 1. Ignatius in 107 A.D.
 - 2. Justin Martyr in 165 A.D.
- D. The New Testament calls Jesus God.
 - 1. The Apostles call Christ God (John 1:1; John 20:28; Matthew 1:23; Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:6-8).
 - 2. Christ established His Deity (John 14:9; Luke 22:30; John 18:36; John 8:58).

III. The Evidence of Prophecy.

- A. Statistics by Peter Stoner, professor of science at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California.
- B. For Christ to fulfill eight prophecies is 1 out of 10 to the 17th power.
- C. The chances of Christ fulfilling forty-eight prophecies by accident are 1 out of 10 to the 157th power.
- D. Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies from the Old Testament.

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Part 2: Ancient and Modern Gnosticism

I. Ancient and Modern Gnosticism.

- A. Ancient Gnosticism rebelled against orthodoxy. Modern Gnosticism revolts against conventional theology and biblical doctrine.
- B. Two distinctive beliefs which are identified with all forms of Gnosticism.
 - 1. The spiritual is good and the physical, or all that is made of matter, is evil.
 - 2. Salvation is gained through special knowledge given to the enlightened.
- C. Various Gnostics sprang up with some unusual ideas about Jesus Christ.
 - 1. *Docetism* stated that Christ was not physical.
 - 2. Gnostics denied the physical resurrection of Christ.
 - 3. Some Gnostics believed God was both Father and Mother.

II. The Sacred Feminine.

- A. The idea of God dwelling with a feminine counterpart appears in *The Da Vinci Code*.
- B. The book states that the sacred name for God, Jehovah, is derived from both masculine and feminine words.
- C. These statements lack historical evidence and are not found in Scripture.
 - 1. There is no record of early Jews behaving in the manner described in *The Da Vinci Code*.
 - 2. The Hebrew word *Shekinah* is not found in any of the Hebrew texts of Scripture.
- D. Some Gnostics practiced religious sex.
 - 1. *The Da Vinci Code* also refers to *hieros gamos*, a *sacred marriage* or *union*.
 - 2. It is possible that the *Gnostic Gospels* refer to this as “the bridal chamber.”

III. The Scriptural Truth.

- A. The Bible states that physical union is only to be enjoyed between a husband and wife (Hebrews 13:4).
- B. The Hebrew word *Messiah* and the Greek word *Christ* both mean the same thing; *the anointed One*.
- C. Ancient Gnosticism in its various modern forms is very much with us today by those who deny the physical resurrection of Christ, embrace diverse forms of spiritism, reject Jesus as Messiah, teach goddess worship and practice sacred sex.

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Part 3: The Real Words of Christ

I. In *The Da Vinci Code* we are told that more than eighty gospels were originally considered for the New Testament.

- A. The book states that the Gnostic Gospels and the Dead Sea Scrolls are the “earliest Christian records.”
- B. It should be made clear from the outset that the Dead Sea Scrolls do not contain Christian writings.
- C. In the second and third centuries Gnostic teachers produced their own Gospels laced with Gnostic doctrine and understanding.
- D. In 1945 Muhammad Ali and his brother discovered the lost gospels of the Gnostics.
- E. The claim that the Gnostic Gospels are “unaltered” is as false.

II. The *Gnostic Gospels* contain unorthodox doctrines and several strange teachings.

- A. They call the resurrection of Christ spiritual, not physical.
- B. The so-called *Gospel of Thomas* has Christ making some very un-Christ-like statements.
 - 1. At one point Christ advocates killing someone with a sword.
 - 2. The *Gospel of Thomas* also maintains that women are not worthy of eternal life and must be changed into males.
- C. The *Gospel of Peter* claims that a huge talking cross came from the tomb at Christ’s resurrection.
- D. *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas* has Christ causing sickness and even killing some in order to heal and resurrect them.

III. The four New Testament Gospels existed long before the fourth century.

- A. We have manuscripts of these books dating to the second and third centuries.
- B. The allegation that the Bible evolved “through countless translations, additions, and revisions” is terribly misleading.
- D. *The Da Vinci Code* fails to consider the divine mathematics found in Scripture.
 - 1. The letters in the Greek name for Jesus, $\text{I}\eta\text{C}\text{H}\text{O}\text{U}\text{S}$, has the numerical value of 888 and occurs 888 times in the Greek New Testament.
 - 2. Throughout the Bible certain numbers have significance.

Outline Handout

Part 4: Jesus, Mary, and the Role of Women in the Early Church

I. Was Jesus Christ a married man?

- A. *The Da Vinci Code* clearly presents Christ as a married man, the husband of Mary Magdalene.
- B. Dan Brown is not the first to make this claim, nor the only one to impact our society with this view.
- C. Robert Langdon, the hero and Harvard professor in *The Da Vinci Code*, tells us that Christ would have been married because it was the cultural norm of his day.

II. Historical facts reveal that such arguments are fictional.

- A. The thought of an unmarried Rabbi being unheard of or unusual is historically false.
 - 1. The Essenes were responsible for writing the Dead Sea Scrolls. This group practiced celibacy and most male members were unmarried.
 - 2. Jesus was not an official Rabbi recognized by the Jewish Sanhedrin.
- B. The argument that the *Gnostic Gospels* show Mary Magdalene as Christ's wife is false.
- C. Another fallacious claim is that the *Gospel of Philip* says that Jesus often kissed Mary Magdalene on the mouth.

III. The New Testament, Jesus, and Mary.

- A. If Christ had been married, why is there no mention of his wife?
- B. The name Mary Magdalene means she was the Mary from the town of Magdala.
- C. In 1 Corinthians 9:5 Paul notes that Peter and other apostles were married and that their wives traveled with them.
- D. The Gnostic Gospels.
 - 1. The Gnostic Gospels do not claim Christ was married.
 - 2. Some of the statements in the *Gnostic Gospels* are disparaging to women.
 - 3. The New Testament is tremendously liberating to women and men.

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Part 5: The Messiah, the Myths, and the Holy Grail

I. The Da Vinci Code and the worship of the mythical god Mithras.

- A. *The Da Vinci Code* claims that Christians in the fourth century redefined Jesus Christ from the pagan god Mithras.
- B. *The Da Vinci Code* fails to note the differences between the Persian and Roman mythology of Mithras.
 - 1. The ancient Persians worshipped Ahura-Mazda.
 - 2. Mithras was believed to be the chief angel of Ahura-Mazda, and later was thought to be his son.
 - 3. The Persians taught that Mithras was born from a rock and engaged in the great battle between good and evil (or light and darkness) by fighting evil.
- C. Roman worship of Mithras did not occur until the second century AD.
 - 1. The Roman military took him as their god and limited it to males only.
 - 2. It is not until the third and fourth centuries that we find the Roman worship of Mithras making reference to a virgin birth, resurrection from the dead, the celebration of December 25, and the taking of wine and bread.
 - 3. Early Christian writers make mention of the parallels between Roman Mithras worship and the Christian faith, pointing out that Roman Mithras worship took some of its theology and practices from Christianity.

II. The Da Vinci Code and the Holy Grail

- A. Dan Brown claims that the Holy Grail was Mary Magdalene.
- B. The story of the Holy Grail is itself a myth, originating around the twelfth century.
- C. The New Testament only mentions that at the Last Supper Christ took a cup and blessed its contents.

III. The Da Vinci Code and The Last Supper

- A. The book claims that the person to the right of Christ is not John the Beloved, but is instead Mary Magdalene.
- B. *The Da Vinci Code* claims that between this person and Christ there is a “V” shape and an “M” symbol.
- C. In order to interpret the painting in this fashion one has to overlook a great number of facts.
 - 1. The person to Christ’s right is really the Apostle John.
 - 2. While a “V” or “M” can be drawn this overlooks the balance.
 - 3. The real hidden message is that the painting is based on John chapter 13.

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Part 6: Reaching the Da Vinci Code Society

I. The Da Vinci Code has become a pop culture phenomenon since its release in 2003.

- A. Our culture is hungry for insight on how to find meaning and fulfillment in life.
- B. One question many Christians ask is, “If the book is contrary to our belief system, why should we read it?”
- C. There is a valuable lesson for Christians today as we try to find a balance between living for God and living in a fallen world.
- D. Two import lessons to learn.
 - 1. Even secular works can be used as a tool to reach people for Christ.
 - 2. Be ready to give an answer (1 Pet. 3:15).

II. Questions from *The Da Vinci Code*.

- A. Jesus a married man with children?
 - 1. To understand why this is important, we have to think about God’s divine nature.
 - 2. The Bible tells us that Jesus was God. If He married and had children, then his offspring would have part of Christ’s divinity within them.
- B. How do you know the Bible contains the real message about Jesus?
 - 1. There is more evidence for the Bible than any other book in history.
 - 2. The Bible has remained the same throughout the centuries.
 - 3. The Bible presents the Jesus we know and accept as Savior.
 - 4. These other gospels present Jesus as someone who was angry and sinful.
- C. How do you know Jesus is the one true God?
 - 1. Mythological gods did not emphasize a personal relationship.
 - 2. Many religions and belief systems patterned their expressions and rites of worship after the early Christians.
- D. Is the Holy Grail real?
 - 1. The Bible does not mention the Holy Grail.
 - 2. It only refers to the cup Jesus used at the Last Supper.
- G. Doesn’t the Jesus of the Da Vinci code seem more liberating and accepting of women than the Jesus of the Bible?
 - 1. The Bible was a very liberating book for its time.
 - 2. In an age where women garnered little rights or respect, the Bible elevated them to having equal footing with men in God’s eyes.
 - 3. The Bible tells us of women who were used to expand the ministry of the first century church.