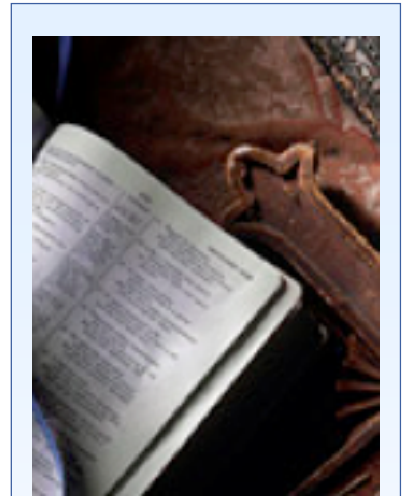


The Da Vinci Code is prefaced by a page that gives, under the title “FACT,” a list of what is supposed to be actual facts in the novel. Dan Brown says, “All descriptions of art-work, architecture, documents and secret rituals in this novel are accurate.” In addition, he adds a bibliography of works that he uses to stamp his novel with historicity. In an interview on “The Today Show” (6-9-2003) Matt Lauer asked Dan Brown, “How much of this is based on reality in terms of things that actually occurred?” Dan Brown responded: “Absolutely all of it. Obviously, there are—Robert Langdon is fictional, but all of the art, architecture, secret rituals, secret societies, all of that is historical fact.” And on “Good Morning America,” Charlie Gibson asked: “If you were writing it as a nonfiction book, how would it have been different?” Dan Brown’s response was, “I don’t think it would have. I began the research for *The Da Vinci Code* as a skeptic. I entirely expected, as I researched the book, to disprove this theory, and after numerous trips to Europe and two years of research, I really became a believer.” He goes on to tell Gibson, “When I first heard it I said this is a cracked pot theory. I began researching it. After two years I decided this theory makes more sense to me than what I was taught as a child.”

This theory relates to the person Jesus Christ. Brown has his character Leigh Teabing, a British Royal Historian and Grail scholar, tell Sophie Neveu, “...*Until* that moment in history [i.e. The Council of Nicea in A.D. 325], Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet...a great and powerful man, but a man nonetheless. A mortal” (p. 233). False! Just a quick look at the evidence shows a completely different story. We have a plethora of writings from those who lived long before the Council of Nicea who spoke explicitly on the subject of the deity of Christ. Below is just a short list of quotes from such people.

Origen: (c. 248): “No one should be offended that the Savior [i.e. Jesus Christ] is also



Then He [Jesus Christ] says to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands and put out your hand and place it into My side. And quit disbelieving, but believe. Thomas responded and said to Him, “My Lord and my God.”

—John 20:27-28

God” (A-N¹ 4.250)

Novatian (c. 235): “He [i.e. Christ] must be believed to be God” (A-N 5.620).

Tertullian (c. 213): “For although the Word was God, He was *with* God, for He is God of God (A-N 3.610).

Letter to Diognetus (c. 150-225) “As a king sends his son, who is also a king, so God sent Him [i.e. Christ]. He sent Him as God” (1.27)

Clement of Alexandria (c. 195): “Our instructor is the holy God Jesus, the Word” (A-N 2.281).

Irenaeus (c. 182-188): “Very properly, then, did he say, ‘In the beginning was the Word,’ for He was in the Son; ‘and the Word was with God,’ for He was the beginning; ‘and the Word was God,’ of course, for that which is begotten of God is God” (*Against Heresies* 8.5).

Melito (c. 170): “God was put to death, the King of Israel slain!” (A-N, 8.758)

Justin Martyr (c. 160): “For Christ is King, Priest, God, Lord, Angel, and Man” (A-N 1.184).

Aristides (c. 125) The Christians trace the beginning of their religion to Jesus the Messiah. He is called the Son of the Most High God. It is said that God came down from heaven. He assumed flesh and clothed Himself with it from a Hebrew virgin. (*ibid.* 9.265)

Polycarp (c. 110) In his letter to the Philippians he refers to Christ as having been raised from the dead (Polycarp to the Philippians, 1.2). Polycarp was burned at the stake for not denying Christ. (Martyrdom of Polycarp).

Ignatius (c. 105): “God Himself was manifested in human form for the renewal of eternal life” (A-N 1.58).

This is just a brief sample of testimonies from those who held to the deity of Christ during the second and third centuries. A full testimony would fill pages—pages that give a lie to Dan Brown’s claim that the council of Nicea in the fourth century was the first time such a position was held. We even have the testimony of a Roman official, Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia-Pontus from 111-113. He wrote letters to the Roman Emperor Trajan asking him what to do with Christians who “sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god.”

So far we have looked at testimony that shows many who believed in the deity of Christ from the early second century through the third century A.D. But our evidence takes us right back to the first century. We have the testimony of a Jewish historian of the first century, Josephus, who wrote:

Now it happened at this time that Jesus, a wise man, if actually he ought to be called a man, for he was a doer of incredible work...And when Pilate condemned him to the cross and the chief men among us informed against him those who loved him at the first did not stop, for he appeared to them again alive the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these things and myriad other wonderful things. (*Antiquities of the Jews* 18.3.3)



¹ Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub Co., 2001).

Then there are the canonical writings, which were originally individual inspired documents written by Christians during the first century.

The Revelation (late 1st century)

Look, He is coming with the clouds and every eye will see him even those who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn for Him. Yes! Amen! “I Myself am the alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “the One who is and was and is coming, the Almighty.”

The Gospel of John (late 1st century)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. (John 1:1)
And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (v. 14)

The Gospel of Luke (middle of the 1st century)

Now as He blessed them, He left them and was taken up into heaven. And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. (Luke 21:51-52)

The Gospel of Mark (middle of the 1st century)

Now when Jesus saw their faith, He says to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven. Now some of the scribes sitting there were reasoning in their hearts, “Why does He talk like this? He is blaspheming. Who can forgive sins, but God?” (Mark 2:5-7)

The Gospel of Matthew (middle of the 1st century)

Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and they will call His name Emmanuel, which translated is, “God with us.” (Matt. 1:23)

The Letter of Hebrews (c. 68)

But to the Son [i.e. Christ] He [i.e. God the Father] says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. (Hebrews 1:8, NKJV).

The First Epistle of the Apostle Peter (c. 64)

Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: (2 Peter 1:1, NKJV).

The Letter of the Apostle Paul to Titus (c. 62-64)

Looking forward to the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:13).

The Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Philippians (c. 60-62)

You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. (Phil. 2:5-7, NET)

The Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians (c. 60-62)

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and on earth, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things were created through and for Him. (Col. 1:16; cf. Gen. 1:1: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”)

OT Prophecies About the Coming Messiah

Hundreds of years before He came the Old Testament prophets indicated that the Messiah who was to come would in fact be God.

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. (Micah 5:2, NKJV; cf. Isa. 7:14, 8th century B.C.)

6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6, NKJV, 8th century B.C.)

Once again this is only a brief representation of the testimony of Scripture on the subject of the deity of Christ, all written long before Constantine. So much more could be given, but this is enough to expose the folly of Dan Brown and the wild imagination of those like Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, the co-authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* on which *The Da Vinci Code* was based. Brown named his character Leigh Teabing after them—Teabing being an anagram for Baigent. They returned their thanks with a lawsuit against Random House Publishers for plagiarism, which they lost. Richard Leigh, is a fiction writer and Michael Baigent, who has an undergraduate degree in psychology and now has a masters in mysticism, is a novelist. They are hardly historians. One online encyclopedia calls Michael Baigent a “conspiracy theorist.”

The Da Vinci Code says that Constantine changed the wording of the NT to make it teach the deity of Christ. But Constantine was emperor of Rome 306-337. We have Greek manuscripts that long predate Constantine that read just as those after his time on the subject of the deity of Christ.

This is just a brief look at only one of the many errors perpetrated by this novel. One wonders how Brown could have spent two years researching all this and come up with such a glaring blunder. Two hours looking at ancient writings, now amply available on the Internet, could have exposed this as nonsense. Certainly, in this case the facts are greater than the fiction.

Reject the fiction and accept the fact. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to die for your sins, lived the perfect life, died the death that you deserve and rose again from the dead the third day. He left us with overwhelming proof of His resurrection. And He has promised forgiveness of sins and eternal life to all who place their trust in Him.