



Da Vinci Revisited

Deciphering the religious controversy

by KEN R. ABELL

➔ WITH NEARLY 40 MILLION COPIES IN PRINT, *The Da Vinci Code* EXCITES A DEEP HUNGER IN OUR CULTURE. THE fast-paced novel takes readers on a controversial pilgrimage that denies the deity of Christ, yet has mass appeal because it nourishes a desperate flaw in humanity's genetic makeup. Jesus explained it this way: "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).



The worldwide bestseller begins with a grisly murder. The author, Dan Brown, uses art history and religious paranoia to stitch together some cryptic anagrams and number puzzles

that tap into our latent curiosity. However, the plot unravels when the far-fetched premise becomes clear; at the end, all that remains of the intricate patchwork of intrigues is a tattered collection of loose ends.

The storyline is that the Catholic Church has created a complex conspiracy to cover up the truth about Jesus. The renaissance genius Leonardo Da Vinci is featured because supposedly he was one of the keepers of the secret, which he encoded in hidden messages

within his famous works, most prominently *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper*.

In this revisiting of Da Vinci, Jesus survived the cross, then skulked away to wed Mary Magdalene and they had a family together. Their descendants settled in France and the bloodline prospered; the Vatican has

suppressed this version, knowingly spinning its lies to maintain and consolidate power. The novel is a sometimes-interesting read that often looks and feels like history, but is,

in the most basic sense, a work of fiction. Brown assures his readers that "all descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate," but a scholarly examination reveals that at best the novelist is merely inaccurate; at worst he has rewritten and fabricated history.

Indeed the verdict is in: This popular fascination with stripping Christ of His divinity is human-centric imagination preferring darkness to light. This summer, *The Da Vinci Code* is being released as a major motion picture directed by Ron Howard and starring Tom Hanks. Given their track records, it has the potential to be box-office gold, attracting believers and seekers alike. We can decode this convoluted tale by presenting the ancient mystery of God's everlasting love for humanity with no disclaimers and no riddles.

➔ **seeking more?** For a study guide on the *Da Vinci Code*, visit www.bic-church.org/seek.



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