

CHRISTIANITY AND THE DA VINCI CODE

Introduction

WELCOME

to a 4-part series on
Christianity and the *Da Vinci Code*

Thank you - all of you –
who care enough about Christianity
whether as a worshipper or as an inquirer
to learn the difference
between fact
and fiction

in Dan Brown's
suspense thriller
The Da Vinci Code

THIS SERIES

stands in a long line of
challenges
to Mr. Brown
on his so-called "facts"
all of which he *invites*
by stating,
on the opening page of his novel

"All descriptions of art work, architecture, documents and
secret rituals in this novel are accurate."

WOW!

When I read *that*
and *then* what he wrote
about the Bible,
about Christianity,
about Jesus,
about Judaism,
I had to respond !!!

BUT, to take on Mr. Brown's
mountain of misinformation
would be not only exhaustive (and exhausting!)
but would also be far out of my range of scholarship

(I have listed several good internet articles for you that include art history critiques, etc,
as well as the books that I read to summarize for you...)

But I am neither a Christian historian
nor an art historian,
and I know absolutely nothing about secret societies (since they are *secret*)

I am just a local pastor
very concerned

that American Christians
have become so blasé about Christianity
that we honestly
cannot tell
fact from fiction

IN FACT,
the incontrovertible tip off to me
that Mr. Brown was
woefully misinformed
was when he put this sentence in the mouth of one of his main characters:

“The vast majority of educated Christians know the history of their faith” !!!
(p. 234)

If that is true,
then why have I gotten more phone calls about this book
than any other novel
in my 15 years of pastoring

and from *worshipping* Christians
who *don't know*
and who are deeply troubled by this novel
even know that it is a novel.

SO, Let's dig in

This will be like a college lecture (“College for a Day”)
map
outline
very few anecdotes (very unlike sermons)
“Just the facts, Ma'am”

BUT FIRST: one little story about our family

Years ago, when our children were young,
Rolf and I did our parent-duty
and took the children to Washington DC
After seeing *all* the regular sights,
Rolf wanted to take them to the Mint !#*!
and to my amazement, it was fascinating!

The thing we all remember is the **Counterfeit Room**
Peering through glass doors,
we saw long tables
with bright lights running down the middle of the tables
and people seated on both sides of the tables
carefully examining money !
looking at it,
feeling it,
holding it to the light to see the water marks

We could only *imagine*
how many counterfeit bills they must have to study...

but then learned, to our surprise,
that *all* they were studying was US Currency !
the REAL THING

because, as the guide explained,
there would always be new counterfeits,
but once you knew the Real Thing,
you could always spot a fake.

EXAMINE with me the Real Thing
as best I can summarize it for you

starting with
The Birth of Christianity and the Formation of the Bible

DON'T get overwhelmed with facts !!
Just listen for the big picture

(I've given you a detailed outline,
all backed up with historical data)
much of which I will gloss over
but which you can refer to later if you care to
(or you can throw it all away :)!
but just listen for the main themes
and then (over lunch)
see if you can spot
what is True or False
in the attached sheet
of quotes
from Mr. Brown's
Da Vinci Code

AS THIS is "College for a Day",
let's begin by taking a good look at the Map
(see attached Map of the Roman Empire 12 CE, at time of Jesus)

Notice the vastness of the Empire around the Mediterranean
and notice the major cities/provinces from one side of the empire around to the other
Gaul, Rome, Corinth, Antioch, Judea, Alexandria, Carthage, etc
all of which we will hear about later...