

## The Deity of Jesus Christ

I have watched the History Channel, and read review after review on the bestselling novel The Da Vinci Code, by Dan Brown. The novel is said to have put over \$75 million into Brown's bank account. The movie spells major success, in the millions, for Sony Pictures, director Ron Howard, and actor Tom Hanks. Filled with a tale of sex, intrigue, and conspiracy, it's destined to success.

However, from what I have seen on the History Channel, The Da Vinci Code, is a blatant attempt to cast doubt upon the historic record of Christianity, and in particular the historic record of the deity of Jesus Christ.

Whether Dan Brown intended this in the beginning, I do not know. But, it appears now that this is the case. It seems to me that there is a silence that many are overlooking. Where are all the Atheists, and liberal theologians who would love to see the deity of Jesus Christ crushed? Why are they not speaking out loud for The Da Vinci Code? Do they understand that the book has fatal flaws? I believe they do understand.

Let us go back in the history of the Council of Nicaea in 325 in order to see a major error in the novel The Da Vinci Code. In the novel the fictional historian Teabing asserts that Constantine canonized the myth of Jesus' divinity in the Bible. At the Council of Nicaea, Constantine and a group of bishops voted on two important subjects: first, which books would be included in the canon of Scripture, and second, to suppress the truth about Jesus and invent the idea of Christ's divinity. However, any student of history knows that these claims are false. The canon of Scripture was never mentioned at the Council of Nicaea, nor, is it mentioned that a vote was taken to invent the deity of Christ. These issues were settled by the apostles long before the Council of Nicaea.

The Council of Nicaea was held because of the false teachings of a pastor in Alexandria. The pastor was known as Arius of Alexandria. He taught that Christ was not fully God. He said that Jesus was neither eternal nor omnipotent, and thus He did not possess the same nature as the Father. Christ was, in fact, a created being, a kind of super-angel, more than mere humanity but less than deity. Alexander, the local bishop, and his friend Athanasius would have no dealing with such a teaching. Therefore, the fight was on.

News of the turmoil in Alexandria caught the ear of Constantine. Constantine who was not a theologian, summoned church bishops to the little town of Nicaea, not far from Constantinople, to settle the issue and restore the peace of the church. In 325 a little over three hundred bishops, some of them bearing scars from the Great Persecution, arrived in Nicaea, and the proceedings began under the emperor's watchful eye.

Constantine began by reading letters from bishops about the Arian issue and urging them to find a path toward unity. Many were willing to compromise on the nature of Christ, but Athanasius refused, demanding a statement supporting Christ's complete deity. At one point the Arians

blew their case by reading a statement directly denying the deity of Christ. The majority of the bishops were aghast. Any confusion there may have been about the Arian view disappeared.

The debate raged on and eventually swung on one statement: Christ is true God, begotten of the Father, not made by the Father, and He is of “one substance” with the Father. All but two bishops signed on, and the issue was settled.

However, the fundamental premise of Dan Brown’s novel is rooted in sinful skepticism. The book, and from what I viewed on the History Channel, encourages people to question the truth about what Christians say and believe, to which I have no problem. I only ask, that the people who question, search the records of Biblical History before accepting historical skepticism.

Even though Dan Brown has attacked the Bible and the Lord Jesus Christ, Christians must not view the revival of paganism as a threat, but as an opportunity to share the gospel.

I very seldom address issues of this nature, because issues like this have always been around. My approach has been, that error is exposed by biblical exposition, and to that I still hold. However, in this case I made an exception. An exception, because when it comes to Biblical History most Christians are in the dark, and I felt it my duty to speak.

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