

Discussion Starters

Preface

The DaVinci Code is a work of fiction. Why are people taking its claims so seriously?

What is the harm in a fiction book like *The DaVinci Code*?

Do you believe that the author, Dan Brown, has an agenda in writing this novel? If so, what is it?

What might be some clues that the author has crossed the line between a purely fictional story and a propaganda piece?

How likely is it that orthodox Christian theology is merely a sinister hoax perpetrated on innocent people?

Why do you think some people are attracted to conspiracy theories?

Chapter 1: Christianity, a Politician, and a Creed

Before Constantine's conversion to Christianity, what was life in Rome like for Christians?

Constantine is credited with making Rome safe for Christians as a result of converting to Christianity himself. What were the circumstances of his conversion?

Why did Constantine convene the Council of Nicea?

What effect were various doctrinal disputes having on Constantinople in Constantine's day?

What heresies did the Council of Nicea address?

What arguments were made against these theories?

Why is it unlikely that Christ's divinity was "invented" at the Council of Nicea?

How did the biblical canon come to be chosen? Was it a function of the Council of Nicea?

What philosophies were the church leaders supposedly promoting, according to *The DaVinci Code*?

Erwin Lutzer states that the Romans were "tolerant of everyone except those who were intolerant" (see page 16). Do you find this attitude to be in evidence today? How so?

Chapter 2: That Other Bible

What is *The Gnostic Bible*, and what is its attraction for readers?

Is the Gnostic Bible as reliable as the Bible?

What did the Gnostics believe?

Why are those beliefs so popular today?

Chapter 3: Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and the Search for the Holy Grail

What is the Priory of Sion, of which Leonardo DaVinci was purported to be a member?

According to *The DaVinci Code*, how did DaVinci supposedly carry out the work of the Priory?

What is the biblical evidence that Mary Magdalene was a harlot?

Was Jesus a feminist?

What evidence does *The DaVinci Code* use to support a marriage between Jesus and Mary Magdalene? Is this evidence credible? Why or why not?

What reasons are there that Jesus could not have been married?

Chapter 4: Banned from the Bible: Why?

Why were some books included in the biblical canon and others rejected?

How is it possible that a fallible church could choose an infallible set of books for the New Testament?

Chapter 5: A Successful Search for Jesus

How can we respond to people who tell us that the New Testament is unreliable?

Why do the Jesus Seminar scholars have such a hard time believing that Jesus is divine?

Augustine wrote, "If you believe what you like in the gospels and reject what you don't like, it's not the gospel you believe, but yourself" (page 83). Is this statement valid in our culture as well as in Augustine's time?

What are three tests that can be applied to verify the historical accuracy of the New Testament?

Chapter 6: Divergent Paths: The Church and Its Competitors

What can we say to someone who thinks that all religions are the same

Why is our culture so attracted to Gnosticism and its teaching?

What are some ways that Christian beliefs are different from other religions?

What can we say to someone who says, “I’m into God, but not Jesus”?

What advice would you have for someone who is considering reading *The DaVinci Code*? How would you respond to the statement, “It’s only fiction”?