



Calvary Bible Church  
“Unlocking *The Da Vinci Code*”  
Pastor Rick Howe

## Was Jesus married to Mary Magdalene?

### ➤ *The Da Vinci Code*

“Jesus as a married man makes infinitely more sense than our standard biblical view of Jesus as a bachelor” . . .  
“Because Jesus was a Jew. . . and the social decorum during that time virtually forbid a Jewish man to be unmarried. According to Jewish custom, celibacy was condemned, and the obligation for a Jewish father was to find a suitable wife for his son. If Jesus were not married, at least one of the Bible’s gospels would have mentioned it and offered some explanation for His unnatural state of bachelorhood.” (p. 245)

“Teabing pointed to a passage. ‘The Gospel of Philip is always a good place to start. . . .’ *And the companion of the Saviour is Mary Magdalene. Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often. . . .*”

“As any Aramaic scholar will tell you, the word *companion*, in those days, literally meant spouse.” (p. 246)

### ➤ **The Facts**

1. This claim ignores celibacy in the Jewish prophetic tradition: Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist.
2. This claim ignores the Essenes – a celibate Jewish sect during the lifetime of Jesus.
3. The Gospels say nothing about Jesus being married.
4. Even the Gnostic gospels say nothing about Jesus being married.
  - *The Gospel of Philip* is **not** written in Aramaic, but in Coptic (Egyptian with Greek letters). The word translated “companion” is a Greek loan word that was **not** used of spouses.
5. This claim ignores the most famous of the Gnostic gospels, *The Gospel According to Thomas*:
  - “Simon Peter said to them: Let Mary go out from among us, because women are not worthy of the Life. Jesus said: See, I shall lead her, so that I will make her male, that she too may become a living spirit, resembling you males. For every woman who makes herself male will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”

## Did the Roman emperor Constantine create our New Testament in 325 A.D.?

### ➤ *The Da Vinci Code* (p. 234)

“Because Constantine upgraded Jesus’ status almost four centuries after Jesus’ death, thousands of documents already existed chronicling His life as a mortal man. To rewrite the history books, Constantine knew he would need a bold stroke. From this sprang the most profound moment in Christian history. . . . Constantine commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ’s human traits and embellished those gospels that made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned.”

### ➤ **The Facts**

1. The first list of all 27 books in our New Testament came in 367 A.D. in a letter from Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, 30 years after the death of Constantine. The first official endorsement of all 27 books was at the Synod of Hippo in 393 A.D., 56 years after the death of Constantine.
2. The first attempt to establish an authoritative list of Scriptures and to exclude some books was not made by orthodox Christianity, but by the Gnostic heretical teacher, Marcion, in ca. 140 A.D., who rejected the Old Testament, and the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John.

3. Paul Achtemeier, Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, on the evidence of the Apostolic Fathers (the generation after the apostles).

"From these writings it is evident that the four canonical Gospels not only pretty well exhausted the reliable traditions about the sayings of Jesus, but also that all four were already well known in widely scattered Christian communities. **A consensus had therefore emerged by the end of the first century that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were primary sources for, and authoritative expressions of, the Christian faith.**"

4. F.F. Bruce, Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis, University of Manchester:

"In the **first half of the second century**, then, collections of Christian writings which were one day to be given canonical status were already taking shape -- notably **the fourfold gospel** [Matthew, Mark, Luke, John] and the corpus of Pauline letters."

### Did the Council of Nicea invent Jesus as the "Son of God?"

➤ *The Da Vinci Code* (pp. 233-234)

"My dear . . . until that moment in history (325 A.D.), Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet. . . a great and powerful man, but a *man* nonetheless. A mortal."

"At this gathering . . . many aspects of Christianity were debated and voted upon – the date of Easter, the role of the bishops, the administration of sacraments, and of course, the *divinity* of Jesus."

"Jesus' establishment as 'the Son of God' was officially proposed and voted on by the council of Nicaea." "Hold on. You're saying Jesus' divinity was the result of a *vote*? . . . A relatively close vote at that."

➤ **The Facts**

1. In the Arian Controversy – the centerpiece of the Council of Nicea – both sides of the debate affirmed the deity of Christ. **The issue was not whether Christ was human or divine, but how the deity of the Son was related to the deity of the Father.**
  - The Arians claimed that the Son of God was the first and highest creation of the Father, after which the Father and the Son created the rest of the universe.
  - The Arians claimed that the deity of the Son was *similar* to, but not the *same* as, the deity of the Father.
  - This position was rejected by a vote of 300 to 2 (Not exactly a close vote!)
2. Based upon the documentary evidence that has come down to us, there is a consensus among scholars – liberal and conservative -- that **within 50 years** of the crucifixion, there was a widespread belief in the deity of Christ, and a willingness to face persecution and martyrdom for that belief.
3. The best explanation for this early belief in the deity of Christ, for which men and women were willing to die, is that it was based on the claims of Jesus himself. C.S. Lewis concluded:

*"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic -- on a level with a man who says he is a poached egg -- or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."*