



The Da Vinci Code

from Dan Brown's fiction

to

Mary Magdalene's Faith



GARRY WILLIAMS

CHRISTIAN FOCUS





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This free issue version
ISBN 1-84550-221-3
ISBN 978-1-84550-221-8

The retail version
ISBN 1-84550-121-7
ISBN 978-1-84550-121-1

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Published in 2006,
Reprinted twice in 2006
by
Christian Focus Publications,
Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire,
IV20 1TW, Scotland

www.christianfocus.com

Cover design by www.moose77.com

Printed and bound by
Norhaven A/S Paperback, Denmark

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Foreword

It is great pleasure to write the preface to Garry Williams' excellent book on *The Da Vinci Code*. If one of the most engaging aspects of Dan Brown's novel is the brevity of its chapters, brevity which makes the book a great commuter read, then Garry has done a great job of responding in kind: in this engagingly written short book, the reader will find in brief compass stacks of interesting thoughts and facts about both *The Da Vinci Code* itself and about the real story of Jesus Christ.

The Da Vinci Code is important, not just because millions of people worldwide have read the book or seen the movie, but because it raises in a most entertaining way some of the most fundamental questions which human beings can ask. Most important among these is the simple yet profound question, 'Who is Jesus Christ?' Many readers will have perhaps vague memories of stories they heard in childhood, of him as a good man or as someone who was wrongfully executed by the Romans; almost all will at least be aware that Jesus Christ is the central figure for the worldwide Christian



church. Thus, love it or hate it, it is hard to imagine that anyone will be entirely indifferent to *The Da Vinci Code*.

So hopefully Dan Brown's novel has provoked many readers and moviegoers to think again about Jesus, about who he was and is, about what that means for men and women, boys and girls, at the start of the twenty-first century, and about how the church has presented him and his teachings over the years. Was his divinity the result of a very narrow vote at some obscure council in the fourth century? Did the church use the Bible to oppress women? And did Jesus get married, and was this all covered up by what must be the greatest and most wicked conspiracy in human history? If so, then this book is for you, for here you will find a sure-footed guide to the basic facts about Jesus's life and ministry, set in the context of the claims which Dan Brown has made about him.

Garry Williams is a first-rate theologian and scholar; but he is also someone with a humble faith in Jesus Christ, the ability to speak with simple clarity on important issues, and a passionate desire to see the claims of Christ expressed clearly and accurately to all those, whoever they may be, who are interested in finding out the facts behind the fiction when it comes to Jesus Christ. It is to be hoped that this little book will do just that.

Carl R. Trueman
Westminster Theological Seminary





To the Reader



I have written this short book for anyone who has been intrigued by Dan Brown's portrayal of Jesus Christ, Mary Magdalene, and the church in his book *The Da Vinci Code*.

If you are a real *Da Vinci Code* hack then there are plenty of books to keep you busy that are longer and more detailed than this. With the help of a range of authors from quite different perspectives you can get behind





it, you can unlock it, you can crack it, you can break it, you can de-code it. For many readers, however, the interest is real, but it is not sufficient to sustain such detailed reading. As I surveyed the range of books available, it occurred to me that a shorter treatment might actually be more accessible for many readers, even if only as a starting point. So if you would appreciate a piece which interacts with Dan Brown's story in a more succinct fashion, then I hope that you will enjoy what I have written here.

This book is also for you if you have been made to think about the identities of Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene afresh by reading the novel.

For many today, the New Testament is a dim memory from childhood and school, if that. You may recall rewriting the parables in a modern setting, but not much more. You might ask yourself, for example, when you last sat down as an adult and read through one of the Gospels from beginning to end. It can be done in little more than an hour, but increasingly many adults have not done it for years, if ever. Yet perhaps *The Da Vinci Code* has rekindled an interest in this man Jesus





To the Reader

Christ. Perhaps you have been made to think again, to ask who he was, to ponder on what he said and did. Jesus himself once asked his disciples: ‘Who do you say that I am?’. For many people Dan Brown has put that supremely important question back on the agenda. If it is a question on which you have found yourself musing, then considering the argument of this piece may prove to be for you more than just an enjoyable read.

If you would like to look up my references to the text as you read, they are from the 2004 edition of *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown, published by Bantam Press/Corgi. The material is reprinted by permission of The Random House Group Ltd.

