

And In Other News...

Exposing *The Da Vinci Code*

by Shaun Willcock

The Da Vinci Code, by Dan Brown, was first published in 2003. By April 2005, 17 million copies had been sold worldwide, in 44 languages; and sales show no signs of slowing down, but have reached 36 million copies according to Brown's agent, Heide Lange. This is a record for a work of fiction, with some claiming that it is the most successful work in history after the Bible. It has been on the New York Times' best selling list for three years. And now it has been turned into a movie as well.

Why Take Notice of this Novel?

Why are we even taking notice of this novel – a work of fiction? The reason we must expose it is because this book is *an attack upon the Lord Jesus Christ, His blessed Gospel, and His true Church*.

Paul wrote, *"I am set for the defence of the Gospel"* (Phil. 1:17); and Jude wrote, "it was needful for me to write unto you, and *exhort* you that ye should *earnestly contend for the faith* which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). We are to defend the Gospel, and the Name of our blessed Lord, against all heresies and blasphemies. Dan Brown's book represents a massive assault upon the true faith, and it must be exposed. It presents a false "christ" and a false presentation of what the Bible teaches, and *millions* have been deceived by it into believing that Christianity is a lie, built upon falsehood and deception. And as time goes by, it is likely that this powerful myth will take on the aura of truth in the minds of many millions more. Even if they understand that the book is a work of fiction, they assume that all or many of its background details concerning "Christianity" are true. Most people are extremely ignorant of both biblical truth and real history, and thus are unable to discern the difference between fact and fiction, in the story. And therein lies the immense danger of the book. It is a satanic lie which will damn multitudes to hell, believing as they do in its presentation of *"another Jesus"* and *"another gospel"* (2 Cor. 11:4).

A man who was a chairman of Sony Pictures (which is behind the movie of the book) before becoming a producer, said: "The amazing thing about this book is that it's provocative: is it all true? Isn't it true? As a history book it's extraordinary. As an exploration of the evolution of a particular religion, it's extraordinary."¹ One can thus see how this *fictional* work, then, is *already* being described as "a history book" – and thus not as fiction, but as *non-fiction!*

Certainly millions of those who have read it are so convinced that it is substantially true, even though presented as fiction, that large numbers of them visit the sites mentioned in the book, such as Westminster Abbey in England, the Louvre in Paris, Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland, the Chateau de Villette near Versailles, etc. The owner of the Chateau stated: "This book revealed the truth that the Catholics have been hiding for thousands of years.... The book is fiction, but it's based on truth."²

And the book has spawned copycat novels by others, as well as massively promoted interest in occult history books. The deception is going to go on and on.

The Book *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*

The Da Vinci Code draws quite heavily from a book which claims (falsely) to be a work of *non-fiction*, called *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, written by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln, and published by Jonathan Cape in 1982. This was brought to the attention of the public in a high-publicity court case which was concluded in April 2006, when the authors of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* brought a copyright-infringement claim against Dan Brown, claiming that his book “appropriated the architecture” of their book. The judge ruled that Brown did not steal ideas from their book, but he effectively called Brown a liar for minimising the extent to which he drew on *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*.³ Certainly Brown drew much inspiration, and various ideas, from this earlier book.

The cover of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* states that the subject “could constitute the single most shattering secret of the last two thousand years.” By way of explanation, the Holy Grail is, according to medieval legend, the cup or platter used by Christ at the Last Supper, and in which Joseph of Arimathaea received the blood of Christ; and it was the object of quests by knights. Of course, this is nothing but disgusting Papist superstition, but it is believed to be true by many.

It all began back in 1972, with a BBC TV broadcast of Henry Lincoln’s *The Lost Treasure of Jerusalem*. This was followed by *The Lost Tabernacle of Jerusalem?* And then *The Shadow of the Templars*. Pay careful attention to these words, found on the cover of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*:

“The response to these programmes was remarkable. A vast number of people became enthralled with the story of the nineteenth-century French priest who, in his mountain village at the foot of the Pyrenees discovered *something* which enabled him to amass and spend a fortune of millions of pounds. The tale seems to begin with buried treasure and then turns into an unprecedented historical detective story – a modern Grail quest leading back through cryptically coded parchments, secret societies, the Knights Templars, the Cathar heretics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and a dynasty of obscure French kings deposed more than 1300 years ago.”

The cover continued: “Their conclusions are persuasive, and to many will be shocking.... The secret is no mere historical curiosity. Its repercussions stretch all the way to contemporary politics and the entire edifice of the Christian faith. It involves nothing less than the Holy Grail – not as the mystical chalice of medieval legend, but as something more tangible, which has played a vital role in the shaping of Western history.”

A splurb like that is guaranteed to attract many curious readers! And the book became a great success – although nothing like the success of *The Da Vinci Code* which to a large extent draws upon it.

What is *The Da Vinci Code* About?

The author, rejecting the biblical truth about the Lord Jesus Christ entirely, writes that the divinity of Christ was a myth invented by the Roman emperor, Constantine, in the 4th century AD. And his novel lays out a huge supposed “conspiracy”: *that Mary Magdalene actually married Jesus Christ, that they had children – and that “the Church” covered this truth up, destroying Mary’s character by writing of her in the Gospel accounts as an immoral woman!*

Furthermore, the author claims that *the “Holy Blood” is the supposed bloodline from Christ and Mary Magdalene; and that the “Holy Grail” is not a chalice, but Mary herself!*

To support his theory, Dan Brown claims that the Dead Sea scrolls show a stronger association of Mary Magdalene with Christ than what we read in the Bible. He also has references to the so-called “missing Gospels”.⁴

The book claims that in the painting called “The Last Supper”, by Leonardo da Vinci, Mary Magdalene is depicted on the right of Christ – supposedly a female apostle along with the other

apostles. It claims that her place was usurped by a male hierarchy, thereby suppressing the “sacred feminine.” And it asserts that the Roman Catholic institution organised a massive cover-up of this truth.

The book makes reference to so-called Gnostic “gospels”, such as *The Gospel of Mary*. Other sources used by Brown to write his novel were: *The Goddess in the Gospels: Reclaiming the Sacred Feminine*, and, *The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. These give a good idea of where Brown’s intellectual and spiritual leanings lie.⁵

In the book, the royal historian, Sir Leigh Teabing, an eccentric obsessed with the “Holy Grail”, shelters Robert Langdon, a Harvard professor of Religious Symbology, at his French chateau. Another character is Sophie, a French cryptologist able to decipher codes and puzzles, working with Langdon. Teabing shows Sophie *The Gospel of Mary*, supposedly written in Greek in the second century AD. It would be best to quote directly from the book at this point:⁶

“I shan’t bore you with the countless references to Jesus and Magdalene’s union [said Teabing]. That has been explored *ad nauseam* by modern historians. I would, however, like to point out the following.’ He motioned to another passage. ‘This is from the Gospel of Mary Magdalene.

“Sophie had not known a gospel existed in Magdalene’s words. She read the text:

“‘And Peter said, “Did the Saviour really speak with a woman without our knowledge? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did he prefer her to us?”’

“‘And Levi answered, “Peter, you have always been hot-tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like an adversary. If the Saviour made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Saviour knows her very well. That is why he loved her more than us.”’”

Teabing explains that Peter was jealous of Mary Magdalene. “‘The stakes were far greater than mere affection,’ Teabing told Sophie, ‘because at this point in the gospels, Jesus suspects he will soon be captured and crucified.’” So he told Mary how to carry on his Church! Teabing added, “‘I dare say Peter was something of a sexist.’”

“‘This is Saint Peter,’” said Sophie; “‘the rock on which Jesus built His Church.’” To which Teabing replied: “‘The same, except for one catch. According to these unaltered gospels, it was not Peter to whom Christ gave directions with which to establish the Christian Church. It was Mary Magdalene.’”

The book continues: “Sophie looked at him. ‘You’re saying the Christian Church was to be carried on by a *woman*?’ ‘That was the plan. Jesus was the original feminist. He intended for the future of His Church to be in the hands of Mary Magdalene.’ ‘And Peter had a problem with that,’ Langdon said, pointing to The Last Supper. ‘That’s Peter there. You can see that Da Vinci was well aware of how Peter felt about Mary Magdalene.’” The suggestion was made to Sophie that in the painting by Leonardo, Peter was leaning menacingly towards Mary, and slicing his blade-like hand across her neck.

Next, Teabing pulls out a chart of genealogy, and shows Sophie that Mary Magdalene was of the House of Benjamin, and thus of royal descent. Sophie is told that Mary Magdalene was not poor, but that “she was recast as a whore to erase evidence of her powerful family ties.” “But why,” she asks, “would the early Church care if Magdalene had royal blood?” It is explained to her that it was her consorting with Christ that concerned the early Church, rather than her royal blood. “As you know, the Book of Matthew tells us that Jesus was of the House of David. A descendant of King Solomon – King of the Jews. By marrying into the powerful House of Benjamin, Jesus fused two royal bloodlines, creating a potent political union with the potential of making a legitimate claim to the throne and restoring the line of kings as it was under Solomon.”

Then Teabing dropped his bombshell: “The legend of the Holy Grail is a legend about royal blood. When Grail legend speaks of the chalice that held the blood of Christ, it speaks in fact, of Mary Magdalene, the female womb that carried Jesus’ royal bloodline.”

“‘But how could Christ have a bloodline unless...?’ Sophie paused and looked at Langdon.

Langdon smiled softly. ‘Unless they had a child.’”

“Behold,’ Teabing proclaimed, ‘the greatest cover-up in human history. Not only was Jesus Christ married, but He was a father. My dear, Mary Magdalene was the Holy Vessel. She was the chalice that bore the lineage, and the vine from which the sacred fruit sprang forth!’”

O what fire Dan Brown is playing with! And how many millions he is leading astray! Let the Bible refute his lies:

Refuting the Lies

Firstly, *the divinity of Christ was not invented by the emperor Constantine in the fourth century.* The Bible is full of clear references to His divinity. To list just a few of the many, many passages of God’s Word which reveal His divinity: Psa. 45:6,7 with Heb. 1:8,9; Isa. 7:14 with Matt. 1:22,23; Isa. 9:6; Jn. 1:1; Acts 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:16. Dan Brown shows both his utter contempt for God’s Word, and his abysmal ignorance of the Bible and of history, in making this absurd claim.

Secondly, *the Lord Jesus Christ did not marry Mary Magdalene, nor beget children by her or anyone else.* The Son of God came into this world *to save sinners* – this was His divine mission (1 Tim. 1:15). Mary Magdalene was one such sinner saved by God’s grace through faith in Christ. He cast seven devils out of her (Mk. 16:9; Lk. 8:2).

The Bible tells us very little about Mary Magdalene. She was with Mary the mother of the Lord, and some other women, by the cross when Jesus was crucified (Jn. 19:25). She sat over against the sepulchre when Jesus was laid in it (Matt. 27:6); and very early on the first day of the week, the day of His resurrection, she came to see the sepulchre, and to anoint Jesus’ body with spices, and found it empty; and she was the very first to whom the risen Jesus showed Himself after His resurrection (Matt. 28:1-10; Jn. 20:1-18; Mk. 16:1-11; Lk. 24:1-10). She was a devoted and faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus, a woman who had been at one time possessed by seven devils, but who had been gloriously saved by Christ, and delivered.

But there is not a word about her being of the House of Benjamin! And Jesus certainly did not marry her! Dan Brown’s fantasy is not the first to suggest that the Lord Jesus married Mary Magdalene – it is a lie that has cropped up many times before. This is because of a supposition (for that is all it is) that Mary Magdalene was the prostitute mentioned in Lk. 7:37-50. There is nothing whatsoever to support this supposition. They were two different women. But wicked men love to put forward this suggestion of a marriage between Christ and a supposed prostitute, for then it makes Christ appear to be a man of loose morals! They paint the entire scenario in their brains: the founder of a new sect physically attracted to a very worldly woman. They entirely ignore the fact that we are nowhere told Mary was a prostitute, and besides, the Lord Jesus *set her free* from Satan’s power, and she became a devoted, holy disciple! That is not “juicy” enough for their sinful minds!

When Jesus met Mary Magdalene after He rose from the dead, what did He say to her? **“Touch me not;** for I am not yet ascended to my Father” (Jn. 20:17). He would not so much as let her touch Him! He told her to go and tell His disciples that He was going to ascend; and this is what she immediately did (Jn. 20:17,18). And thereafter He did not appear to her alone again, although she certainly would have spent time with Him in company with all His other disciples, before His ascension.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not marry anyone! Marriage was ordained by God for the good of mankind. Christ was God from all eternity; and He came in the flesh, without laying aside His divinity, but taking a human nature into union with His divine nature; and He came into this world to purchase a “bride” with His own blood. But His “bride” consists of ALL the elect, ALL those

for whom He laid down His life and shed His blood! The true *Church* is the mystical bride of Christ! He has no *physical* bride, nor ever any need of one! (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:6-9; 21:9).

Nor did the Lord Jesus beget children physically. The Bible says that His *spiritual* “children” are His elect people, for whom He died (Heb. 2:13).

It is nothing less than heresy and blasphemy to say that the perfectly sinless Son of God married a woman, and begat children. This is proclaiming “*another Jesus*” indeed (2 Cor. 11:4) – not the true Jesus Christ revealed in His Word! It does not matter in the least if there are scrolls supposedly showing a stronger association of Mary Magdalene with Christ than what we read in the Bible – it is the *Bible* that is divinely inspired (2 Tim. 3:16). We did not have to wait till the twentieth century and the discovery of certain scrolls to ascertain the truth about Christ and Mary Magdalene! – the books that comprise the Holy Scriptures, divinely inspired, were written in the first century AD, during the lifetime of the apostles, and furthermore were *known* to the true Church from that time on (see, for example, Col. 4:16; 2 Pet. 3:15,16; Rev. 1:1-3,10,11). God’s Word is *settled*. No more writings are ever to be added to it.

As for the so-called “Gnostic gospels”: one of the characters in Brown’s book says of them that they are the “unaltered gospels”. In saying this, he implies that the four Gospels found in the New Testament were altered, and therefore cannot be trusted. Of course, he cannot give any evidence for this; but millions of readers will accept it anyway.

Gnosticism, the word being derived from the Greek word meaning “knowledge”, was a heresy that arose in the early centuries of the Christian era. Gnostics claimed to possess special occult knowledge relating to God, salvation, etc. Gnosticism is not Christian in any sense, for it is unbiblical and anti-biblical. Aspects of it were exposed and refuted by the inspired writers of the New Testament Scriptures (e.g. Col. 2:8-23; 1 Tim. 1:4; Tit. 1:14; 1 Tim. 6:20; 1 Cor. 8:1). Unregenerate men are always seeking extra knowledge, and there is a particular attraction towards supposed knowledge that is “hidden” from the majority and known only to a select few. ***Herein lies the attraction of Gnosticism, in all its forms including modern ones; and herein lies also the attraction of Dan Brown’s book to many: the attainment of “knowledge” supposedly hidden for centuries, occult “clues” hidden in mysterious places, tantalising hints of something beyond the awareness of the masses.***

Men will eagerly sift *through* the Bible for supposed “hidden” messages or information (such as popularised in the book, *The God Code*), all the while ignoring, or failing to see, the *plain, straightforward* message of the Bible – the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of salvation; or they will eagerly search *outside* the Bible for supposed “hidden” messages that to their minds contradict and overthrow the truth of the Bible (as in *The Da Vinci Code*). Either way, Satan is the winner. For by such means he keeps men from knowing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of sinners. For, ***“Neither is there salvation in any other [than the true Christ of God]: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”*** (Acts 4:12). Lost men eagerly search for “hidden” knowledge here, there, and everywhere; but the *true, saving knowledge* of the Gospel is *hidden from them*, unless and until the Lord opens their eyes. Truly, truly, ***“if our gospel [the TRUE Gospel of Christ] be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”*** (2 Cor. 4:3,4).

Thirdly, ***it is a total fallacy to claim, as Dan Brown does, that Mary Magdalene was supposed to carry on Christ’s Church, for “Jesus was the original feminist”; but that her place was usurped by a male hierarchy, thereby suppressing the “sacred feminine”; and that “the Church” covered up the “truth” about Christ and Mary Magdalene, destroying her character by writing of her in the Gospel accounts as an immoral woman!*** One fantasy after another, from Dan Brown’s brain!

There was, after all, no such “truth” to cover up! Christ was *not* married to Mary, and they did *not* have children. Furthermore, as we have seen, the Gospel accounts do not say much about Mary Magdalene at all. Jesus cast seven devils out of her; but more than that we are not told. So if the writers of the Gospels had wanted to depict her as an immoral woman, they did a very poor job of it! No details of her life are given.

The New Testament makes it very clear that Christ chose the apostles, and that they were all *men*. They were *His* choice. Mary’s place was not usurped by a “male hierarchy” – she never had a place to begin with, as one of the band of apostles! She was a faithful servant of the Lord, but she was not chosen as an apostle.

As for the “sacred feminine”, this is all hogwash. It is very appealing to many in our day, for we live in a time of militant feminism, and of goddess-worship by New Agers, witches, and others. Millions today are turning to the worship of a female deity, and anything that promotes that concept in the minds of the general public is very acceptable to them. Warbling on about the “sacred feminine” was a sure-fire way for Brown to up the sales of his book.

Besides, to believe the absurdity of this “cover-up” is to believe that the four Gospels were written by “the Church” (i.e. in Brown’s mind, the Roman Catholic “Church”), rather than by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This, if true, would mean that the four Gospels are mere fabrications, to which were attached the names of the four men to give them authenticity. But it is not true. The Gospel accounts were written by men who lived in the first century AD, and who were Christians, disciples of Christ. The Roman Catholic “Church”, which only came into existence centuries later, had absolutely nothing to do with their authorship. The Roman Catholic institution is guilty of very many cover-ups throughout its history, but this was not one of them! It could not “cover up” when it did not even exist!

And as for the “evidence” in the famous painting called “The Last Supper”, by Leonardo da Vinci: let us for a moment assume that da Vinci really did depict Mary Magdalene on Christ’s right side, supposedly as being a female apostle. We are sure that authorities on the painting would deny that he did any such thing, but let us, just for a moment, suppose that he did. *So what?* Are we to be so foolish as to make a mere painting, by a Roman Catholic artist (however brilliant), our authority? Are we to set aside the testimony of God’s own Word, the Bible, attested by many infallible proofs, on the basis of this supposed “hidden clue” in a *painting*? Has the world gone mad? Evidently it has, when millions of gullible readers can reject the truth of God’s Word on such flimsy “evidence” as this!

The book presents Peter as a “sexist”, jealous and scheming man (for he supposedly knew Christ wanted Mary to establish His Church, but was very opposed to this), and even a man who contemplated the murder of Mary Magdalene. What a terrible distortion of the truth about the godly apostle, Peter, a faithful Christian and minister! A simple reading of Peter’s own epistles, or of his sermon on the day of Pentecost, will provide the reader with an accurate picture of this humble, zealous servant of Christ. Nothing in the biblical account presents Peter as jealous of Mary Magdalene, scheming, with murderous thoughts towards her; and as for that modern-day, “politically-correct” term, “sexist”, it is too pathetic for words.

Summary: an Attack on Christ, His Gospel, and His Church

Thus, *this book is an attack upon the Lord Jesus Christ*, for it depicts Him as a mere man, who fathered a child by Mary Magdalene.

And *it is an attack upon the Gospel of Christ*, for obviously anyone who believes in, and follows, Jesus Christ, if He was who the book says He was, is following a mere man. In addition, as *The Da Vinci Code* makes reference to so-called Gnostic “gospels”, which are *not* divinely inspired but merely the works of enemies of the truth, people will be drawn to accepting such lies as the “Gospel truth.”

But also, *it is an attack upon the true Church of Christ*. Some might say, “But it’s an attack upon the Roman Catholic institution, not the true Church!” They might expect us to be happy to see Rome attacked in the book. However, it is not that simple:

Nothing Dan Brown writes could ever expose even a fraction of the lies, false beliefs, human traditions, and massive cover-ups that characterise Roman Catholicism. The *truth* about Roman Catholicism is far more horrifying than anything in Dan Brown’s fiction. He writes of how the Roman Catholic institution supposedly invented a story about Mary Magdalene and got this story incorporated in the Gospel accounts of the life of Christ. This is fiction, not fact. Rome did no such thing. But what *did* the Papal system do? It baptized the heathen doctrine of the mother-goddess worshipped around the world, calling this false deity “the Virgin Mary”, and exalted her to a position even superior to that of its own false “christ”! It gave “Mary” powers that the true Mary, the mother of the Lord, never had, it commands its blinded adherents to pray to her, sing hymns to her, build shrines in her honour, and it sets her up as assisting Christ in the salvation of the world! *Truly, Roman Catholicism has invented a tale about Mary: not the “Mary Magdalene” of Dan Brown’s imagination, but the “Mary” worshipped by over a billion Roman Catholics worldwide as the “Mother of God”!* The truth, dear reader, is stranger than fiction indeed.

But the problem with the book’s attack on Roman Catholicism is this: it presents the Roman Catholic institution as “the true Church”; thus, anything in the book exposing the falsehood of the Roman Catholic “Church” is seen as exposing true Christianity, by the millions who read it! *And thus, by presenting Roman Catholicism as “the Church”, it leads its readers to believe that Christianity is a lie; a deception!*

Playing into Rome’s Hands

And last but not least: *in a backhanded way, The Da Vinci Code, despite its anti-Romanism, may in the long run actually play right into Rome’s hands!* Now this may surprise many; so let us go into this in some detail.

The first way in which this may occur, can be seen by the way Opus Dei, for example, is already turning the book to its own advantage. Dan Brown writes of Opus Dei in the book. Opus Dei (Latin for “God’s Work”) is a secretive Roman Catholic organisation, extremely powerful and wealthy. Opus members include priests and non-priests, men and women, married and unmarried people, and many hold key positions in business, politics, etc. Often their affiliation to the organisation is unknown to others. These are *facts!* And so, in writing his book, Brown saw an opportunity: to make Opus Dei a part of his conspiracy book, as being deeply involved in protecting “the Church” from its enemies: murdering, drugging people, etc. Opus Dei, of course, denied all these things: as sales of the book soared, the Opus website stated, “Opus Dei is a Catholic institution and adheres to Catholic doctrine, which clearly condemns immoral behaviour, including murder, lying, stealing, and generally injuring people”.

Such disclaimers notwithstanding, anyone with an understanding of the true history of Roman Catholicism knows that Roman Catholic doctrine has never stood in the way of the Roman Catholic institution being involved in murder, lying, stealing, etc.! History is replete with the evidence. The Jesuit Order alone has been guilty of all these things and more – and although the impression is given that the Jesuits and Opus Dei are enemies, behind the scenes this is not the case. The fact is that Opus Dei, like the Jesuit Order, *is* a dangerous organisation that will stop at nothing to achieve its goals! So Brown was correct in this. This is why his book has become so popular: there is just enough truth in it to make it all seem plausible, in the minds of millions.

Amazingly, however, although *The Da Vinci Code* does not depict Opus Dei in a good light at all, *there are indications that the organisation is actually turning the book to its own advantage!* For example, in Britain a Radio 4 programme on 27 October 2005 claimed to have been granted

“unrestricted access” to Opus Dei; and Channel 4 TV’s “Opus Dei and the Da Vinci Code” aired on 12 December 2005. But the interviewers on both programmes treated Opus Dei with kid gloves. “The interviewers did not press issues and did not probe. This was presumably a condition of access to Opus. One investigator was a former monk. The alleged ‘unrestricted access’ was stage managed and – mostly limited – to the women’s quarters. (The women in Opus are entirely separate and inferior to the men.)... Channel 4 had posed the question, ‘Does Opus Dei deserve its sinister portrayal?’ The programme’s tame verdict was a foregone conclusion”.⁷

Given the huge influence Opus Dei members exert in all fields, including the media, this is not surprising.

But Opus was not finished turning Dan Brown’s book to its advantage. On the TV programme, 60 students at the London School of Economics were shown attending a lecture on 5 May 2005, entitled “The Da Vinci Code and Opus Dei: the Da Vinci Code Fact or Fiction? Opus Dei Tells All.” And the lecturer was Andrew Soane, Director of the Opus Dei Information Office in Britain. Another Opus director, Jack Valero, said: “A few years ago Opus Dei was virtually unknown outside Catholic circles. Now 70 million people have heard of Opus Dei. They have heard a pack of lies. We can now explain what Opus Dei is and what it does.... It is a great opportunity.”

Valero also said, “People read the book and phone in.” When the interviewer suggested to him, **“Dan Brown is your best recruiting agent,”** Valero replied, **“Maybe he has done something he did not intend to.”**

In addition, Roman Catholic journalist, John L. Allen, wrote a book entitled *Opus Dei: Secrets and Power Inside the Catholic Church*. He was granted access to Opus personnel and records to which others were not permitted. *But*: “Allen uses the fictional caricature of Opus in *The Da Vinci Code* to make points in Opus’ favour. Even where criticism of Opus is unavoidable it is muted and over qualified. This book could lead many Roman Catholic parents to take a more favourable view of Opus”.⁸

Thus Opus Dei has managed to actually use the unprecedented interest in Brown’s book to get people interested in the organisation, and even to recruit new Opus members!

And the second way in which the book may actually play into Rome’s hands, is as follows: some of the things Brown writes about the Roman Catholic institution, Opus Dei, etc., are true. But the trouble is that his book is such a mixture of some truth and much error. So, on the one hand, there are those who have no idea what is fact and what is fiction, and therefore they believe the lies and fantasies of the author relating to the Lord Jesus Christ, His Gospel, etc. But on the other hand, there are those who understand that it is fiction, and who come to the following conclusion: “The book is a work of fiction, by its author’s own admission; it’s just a story; it is not meant to be taken seriously; and thus there is no reason whatsoever to believe that there is *anything* sinister about the Roman Catholic ‘Church’. He was writing a story, nothing more.” And as a result, they will in the future view the works of *serious* researchers into Rome’s wicked doings, intrigues, plots, schemes, assassinations, etc., in the same light! Whenever a serious work appears, exposing some aspect of the dark deeds of the Papal system, the tendency will be for many to dismiss it lightly as “a *Da Vinci Code*-type conspiracy theory”. *Especially* as, in the light of all the negative publicity generated against it by the book, the Vatican in the days ahead goes out of its way to present itself as nothing like the kind of institution portrayed in the book. It is a past master at slick make-overs. As Opus Dei has already begun to do, it will claim to grant further “unrestricted access” opportunities to investigators that will be anything but unrestricted; it will exert its massive influence in the media to make certain that interviews are carefully stage-managed; etc., etc.

Alberto Rivera, a fraud who claimed to be “an ex-Jesuit priest converted to Christ”, but who was never the former⁹ and gave no evidence of being the latter,¹⁰ played right into Rome’s hands in much the same way. The comic book series which purports to be based on his life, published by

Chick Publications, contains, like Brown's book, certain true things about the Roman Catholic institution. But, again like Brown's book, they are such a mixture of truth and error. And on the one hand, many believe everything in them, being unable to discern between truth and error; and on the other hand, many others come to the conclusion that as he misrepresented the facts on so many points, there is no reason to believe that there is *anything* sinister about the Roman Catholic institution.

Either way, Satan's purposes have been served. And the same is true of Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code*.

Let all true believers "*earnestly contend for the faith*" (Jude 3) against the *Da Vinci Code* fantasy! As millions turn against the true Christ of God revealed in the Bible as a result of Dan Brown's assault, let all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only Lord and Saviour, "hold fast the faithful word" (Tit. 1:9) and "hold forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:16) to a dying and deceived world!

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Shaun Willcock is a minister of the Gospel, and lives in South Africa. He runs Bible Based Ministries. For other articles (which can be downloaded and printed), as well as details about his books, tapes, pamphlets, etc., please visit the Bible Based Ministries website. If you would like to be on Bible Based Ministries' email mailing list, to receive all future articles, please send your details.

Bible Based Ministries

info@biblebasedministries.co.uk

www.biblebasedministries.co.uk

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42055 Crestland Drive

Lancaster, CA 93536

USA

ENDNOTES:

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1. *The Da Vinci Deception*, by Roy Livesey. Bury House Christian Books, Kidderminster, UK, 2005, pg.8.
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 4. *Opus Dei Versus The Da Vinci Code – Opus the Winner?* 1/14/2006. www.ianpaisley.org. Taken from the *British Church Newspaper*, 6 January 2006; and *The Da Vinci Deception*, by Roy Livesey.
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 6. Quoted in *The Da Vinci Deception*, pgs.18-20.
 7. *Opus Dei Versus The Da Vinci Code – Opus the Winner?* 1/14/2006.
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 9. “Alberto” – *Comic Book Con Man*, by Roy Livesey. Bury House Christian Books, Kidderminster, UK, 2005.
 10. *Alberto Rivera – a False Brother* (tape), by Shaun Willcock, and *Is Alberto Rivera for Real?* (tape and documentation package), by Donald R. Blanton. To order these materials, go to the Bible Based Ministries’ website: www.biblebasedministries.co.uk.