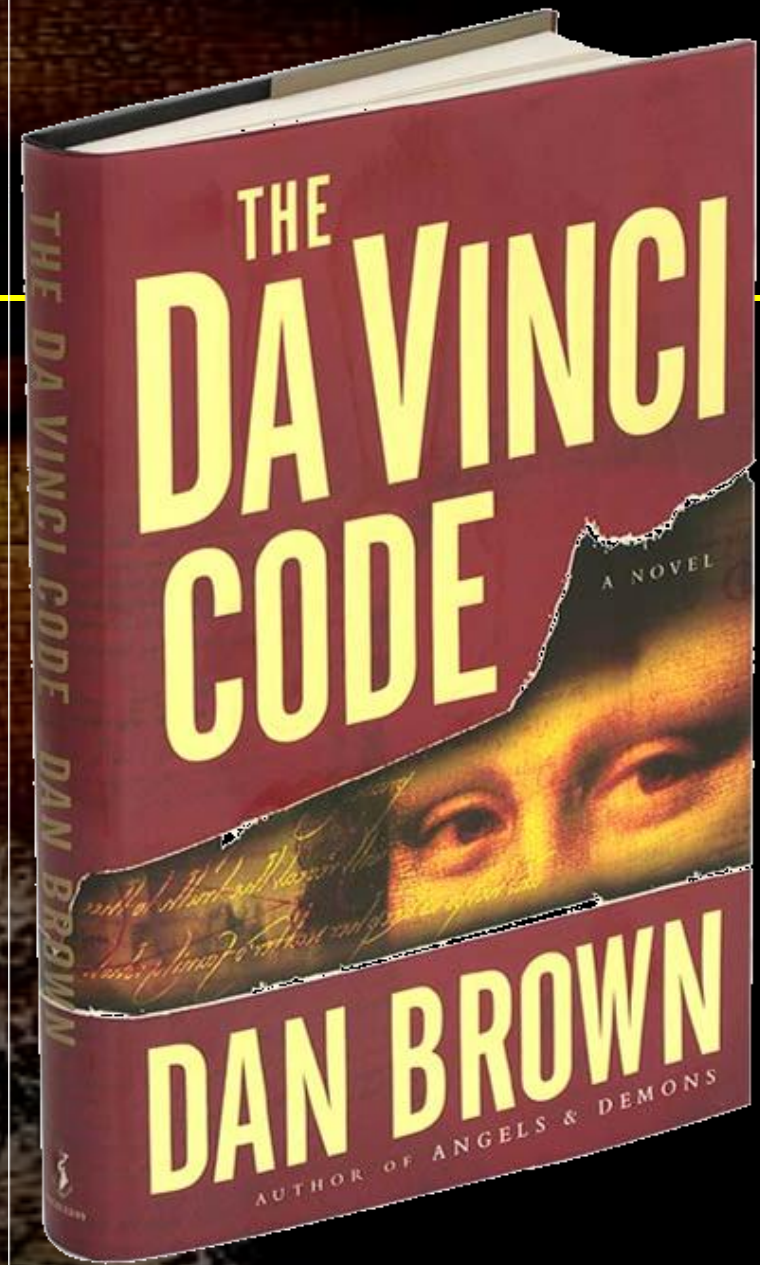

*Unveiling the Truth
Behind
The Da Vinci Code*

**Separating FACT from
FICTION**

THE
DA VINCI
CODE

- Most widely sold adult novel in the entire history of humanity

- 80,000 to 90,000 hard-cover copies per week.
- May 2004 - 56th printing, bringing the number of copies in print to 7.35 million.
- NY Times Best-Seller list
 - ◆ 76+ weeks
- Other languages
 - ◆ Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, etc.



Main Characters

- **Robert Langdon**, Professor of Religious Symbology, Harvard University
- **Jacques Sauniere**, murdered museum curator at the Louvre, Grand Master of the Priory of Sion, sworn protectors of the Holy Grail.
- **Sophie Neveu**, agent of the Department of Cryptography, a branch of the French state police
- **Sir Leigh Teabing**, wealthy grail researcher, British Royal Historian affiliated with Oxford University

Fact or Fiction?

- Presented as fact-based
- Media supports this notion:
 - ◆ “the most amazing thing about his novel is that it’s based on fact”
 - ◆ “One of the many qualities that makes The Da Vinci Code unique is the factual nature of the story.”

→ *Need to examine Brown’s assertions*

3 Important REALITIES about the Da Vinci Code and its author

1. It is NOT just a novel...

- It's a novel that claims to be based on facts
- *"All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate." (p.1)*
- It has false teachings about Jesus, Christian faith, Mary Magdalene, paganism, sexual rituals, the Bible, history, secret societies, Opus Dei, witchcraft, and Leonardo da Vinci

3 Important REALITIES about the Da Vinci Code and its author

2. **The novel is full of sloppy thinking and is based on seriously flawed research...**
 - Dan Brown presents views that have been long discredited by experts.
 - He does not respond to the abundant proof of experts that he has been fooled by a few crackpot conspiracy theorists

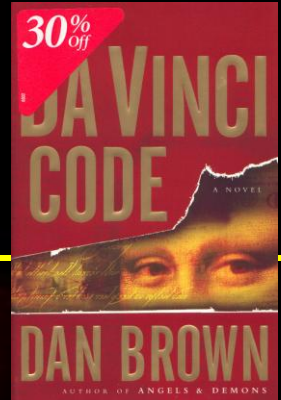
3 Important REALITIES about the Da Vinci Code and its author

3. **Brown does not seem to be concerned enough to deal with evidence and arguments against his radical and harmful views...**
 - Dan Brown has misled many by following theories that have no credibility.
 - His public statements show little ability to address the strong case against his views.

PART I – Answering Brown's lies regarding:

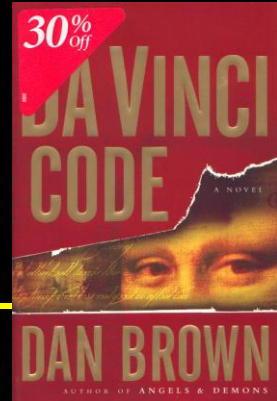
- **The Bible** is man-made
- Bible **Canon** was established by Constantine
- **Jesus** was made God by Constantine

DV Code on the Bible



“The Bible is a product of *man* ... not God. The Bible did not fall magically from the clouds. Man created it as a historical record of tumultuous times, and it has evolved through countless translations, additions, and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book.” (p.231)

DV Code on the Gospels

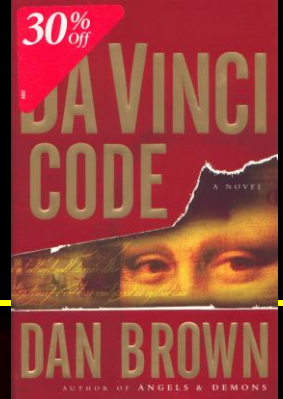


“More than *eighty* gospels were considered for the New Testament and yet only a relative few were chosen for inclusion — Matthew, Mark, Luke and John among them.”

“Who chose which gospels to include?”

“Aha! ... The fundamental irony of Christianity! The Bible, as we know it today, was collected by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great.” (p.231)

DV Code on Jesus

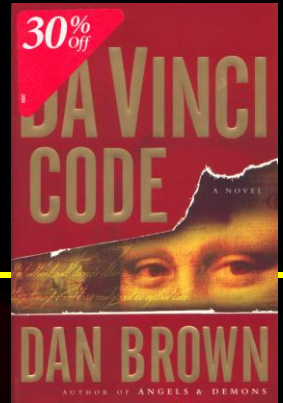


“... until that moment in history [AD 325, the Council of Nicaea], Jesus was viewed by his followers as **a mortal prophet** ... a great and powerful man, but a *man* nevertheless.”

“**Not the Son of God?**”

“Right ... Jesus’ establishment as ‘the Son of God’ was officially proposed and voted on by the Council of Nicaea ... a relatively close vote at that...” (p.233)

DV Code on Constantine & the NT Canon



“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 ... [He] commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels which spoke of Christ’s human traits and embellished those gospels which made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned.” (234)

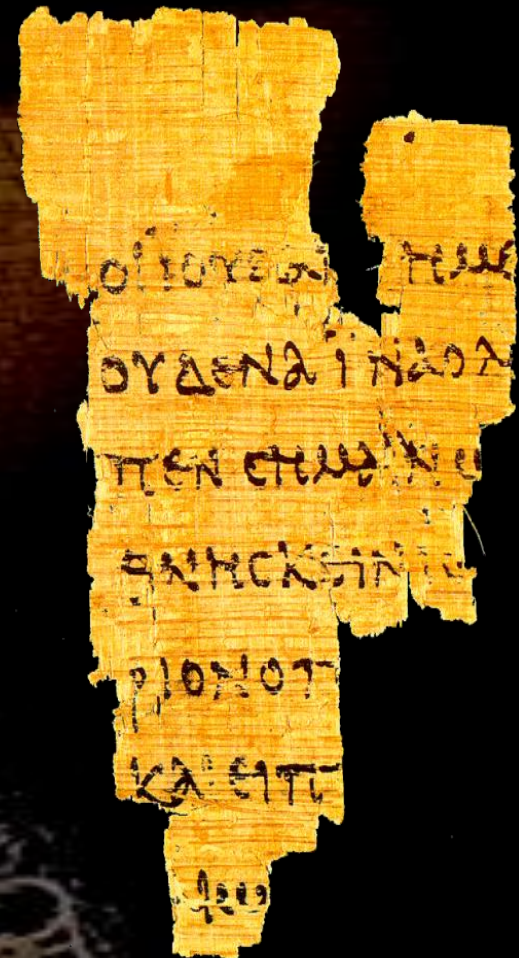
Are These Claims Warranted?

Let's consider:

- ◆ Early manuscripts of the Gospels
- ◆ Early references and quotations in the writings of Christian leaders (“Church Fathers”)

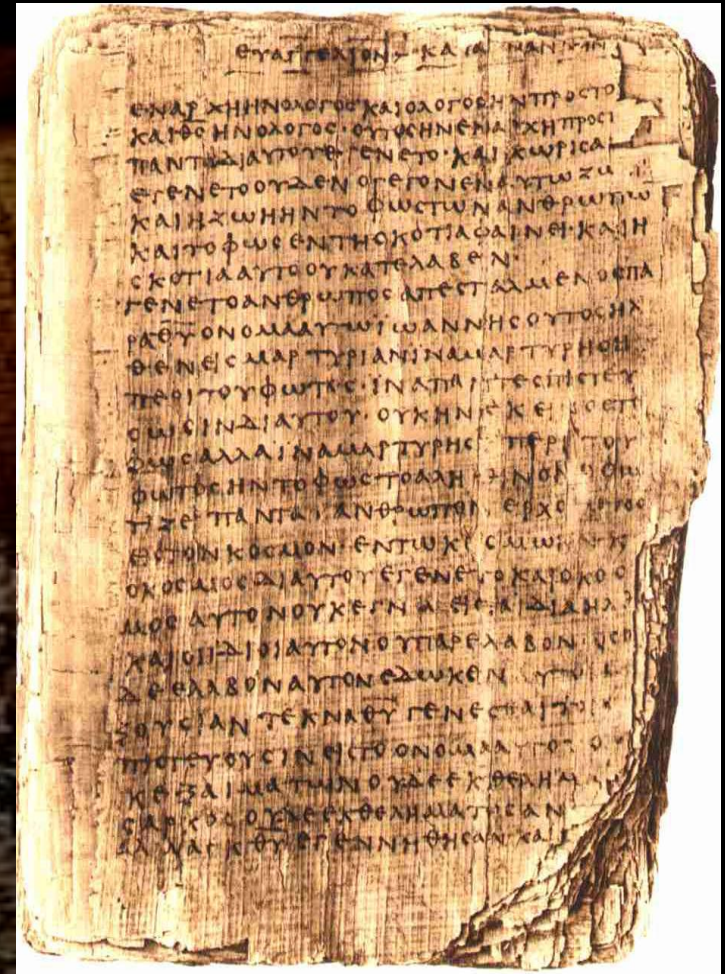
Early Manuscripts

- This is papyrus p⁵², the oldest known fragment of any gospel.
- The front is John 18:31-33 (shown), the back is John 18:37-38.
- It is dated about AD 125, only 35 years after this Gospel was written.



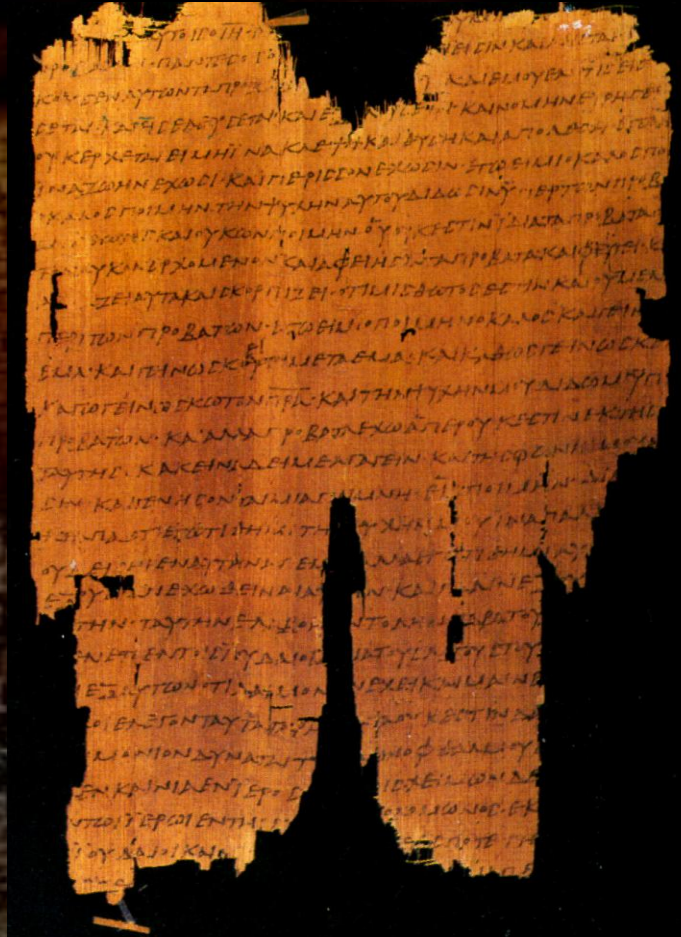
Early Manuscripts

- This is papyrus p⁶⁶, a manuscript of John in which nearly all of the Gospel has survived.
- It is dated about AD 200.
- This picture shows the first page.



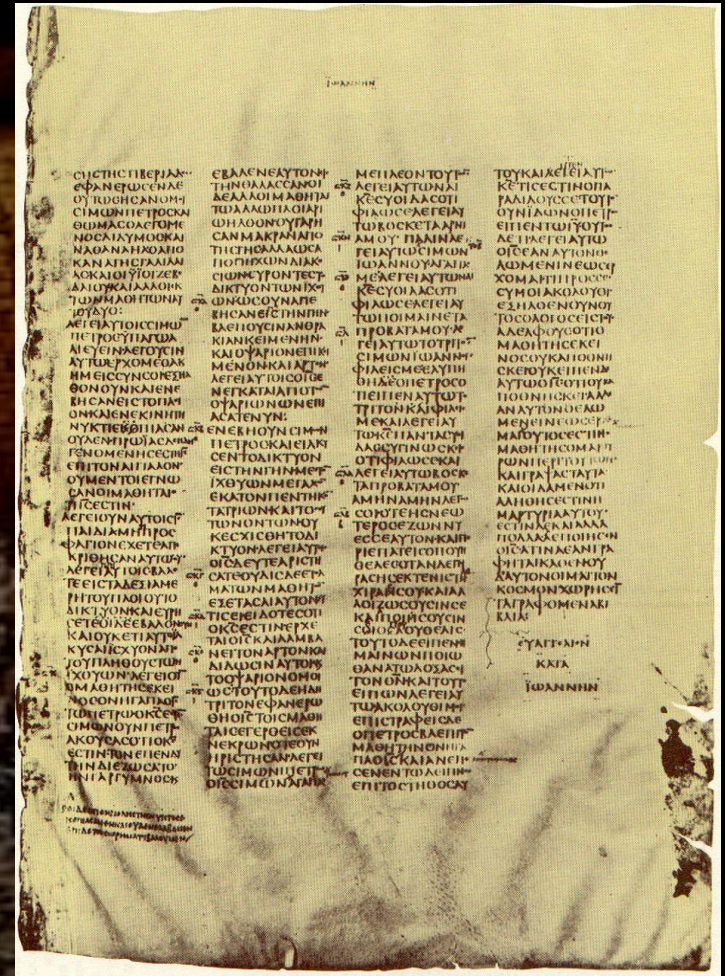
Early Manuscripts

- This is one page of papyrus p⁴⁵, which contains all four canonical Gospels and the book of Acts.
- It is dated from the 3rd century, so before AD 300 and before Constantine.



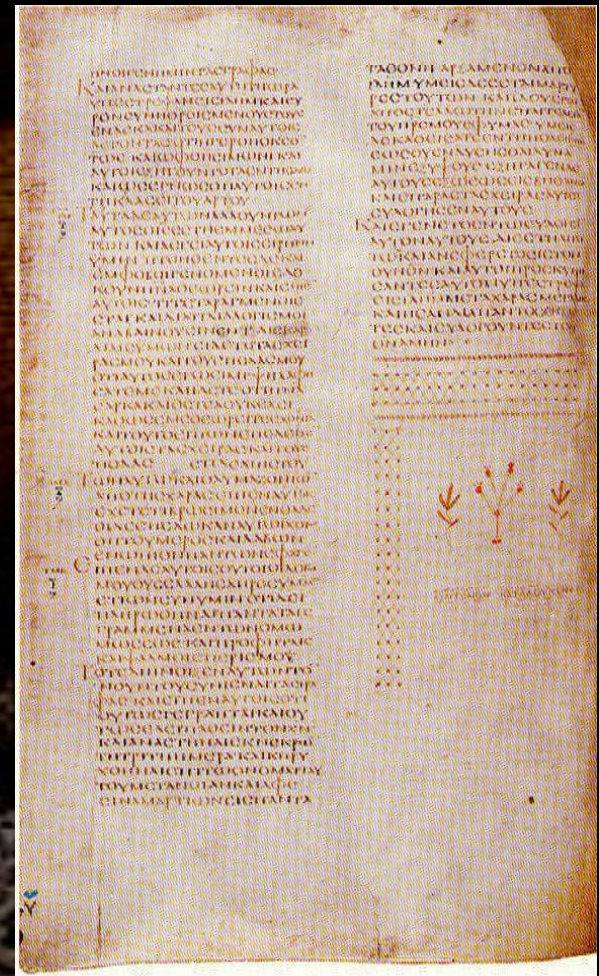
Post-Constantine Manuscripts

- From Constantine and onwards, we have the entire New Testament preserved on parchment, much more durable than papyrus.
- This is Codex Sinaiticus, from the 4th century.
- This was originally a complete Bible, though parts of the OT are now lacking.



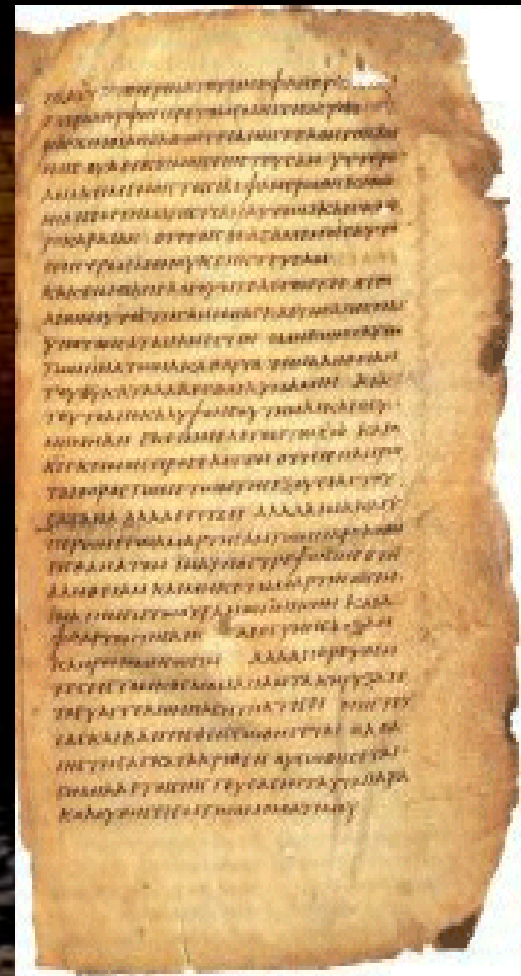
Post-Constantine Manuscripts

- This is Codex Alexandrinus, from the 5th century.
- It was originally a complete Bible, but now lacks most of Matthew & part of John.



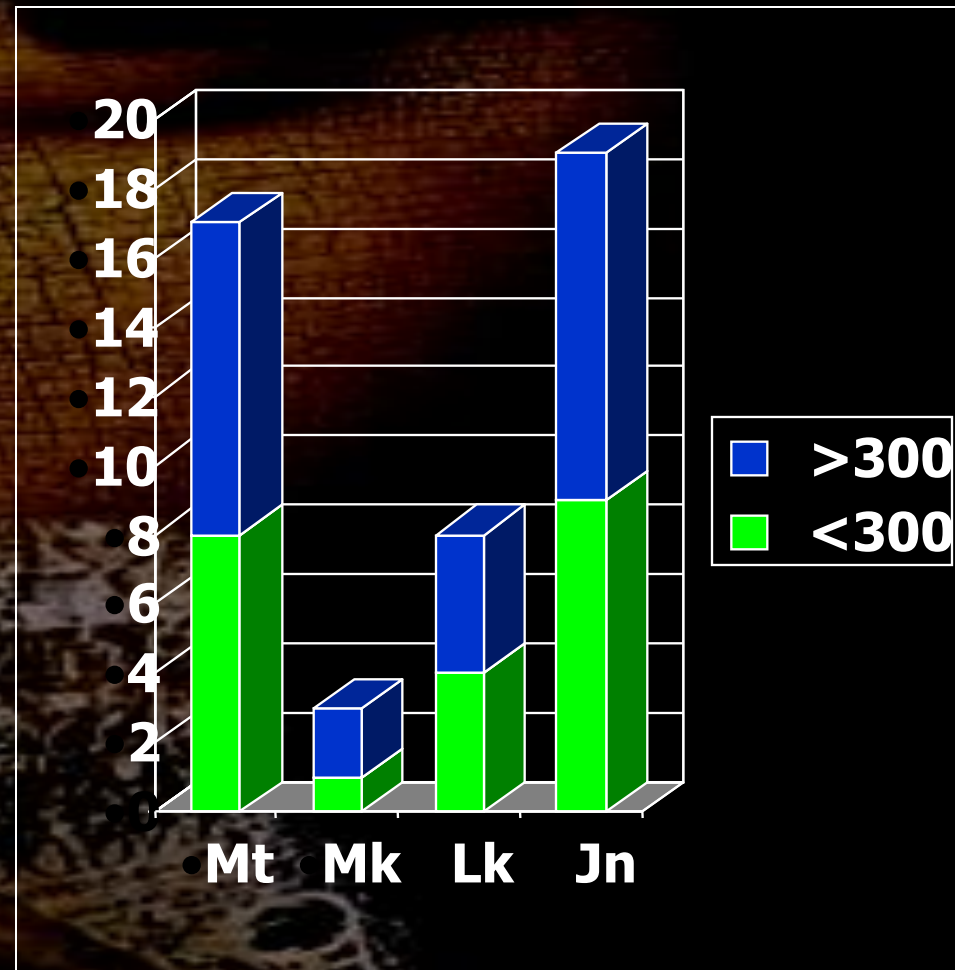
Post-Constantine Manuscripts

- This is the Freer (or Washington) Codex, from the late 4th or 5th century.
- It is a one-volume copy of the four Gospels.
- Though its text is a mixture of the main text-types from antiquity, it shows no variations of the sort alleged in *The Da Vinci Code*.



Summary of Papyri

- The graph at right lists the number of surviving manuscripts written on papyrus for the four Gospels.
- The green indicates the number from before AD 300, and thus before Constantine. There are 22 of these.



Summary of Papyri evidence for Jesus' Deity



- The papyri, because of their age and their fragility as writing material, have all survived in only fragmentary condition. Still, before AD 300, we have 22 papyri.
- Comparing these texts with post-Constantine texts → the papyri show no evidence of tampering.
 - ◆ Thus, the claim Constantine upgraded Jesus in the Gospel accounts is unwarranted.
 - ◆ At most, he could only have selected the Gospels that fit the program he was trying to advance.
 - Is there any evidence he did this? Let's see.

Evidence from Early Christian Leaders

- Besides the evidence from manuscripts, we have the testimony of early Christian leaders regarding what gospels were in use in their churches.
- This was, in fact, one of the criteria used to verify the authentic Gospels after persecution ended (at Constantine's time).

Apostolic Fathers

- Some eight Christian leaders between AD 95-130 wrote letters and other writings that have survived.
- Three of these explicitly quote NT passages as ‘Scripture,’ and one such passage quoted is from the Gospel of Matthew.
- All of them make allusions to NT passages, including all four of the canonical Gospels and no others.

Justin Martyr (130-160)

- A student of the Greek philosophers, Justin was converted to Christianity as an adult by talking to an elderly believer. He spent the rest of his life as a traveling Christian philosopher and died as a martyr.
- In his two *Apologies* to the Roman emperor and his *Dialogue* with the Jewish scholar Trypho, Justin speaks of the “Gospels” and calls them “memoirs of the apostles and those who followed them.”
- He uses our four Gospels and no others.

Irenaeus (~180)

- Irenaeus was bishop of Lyons in southern France, but he grew up in Asia Minor, an early stronghold of Christianity.
- He had studied under two students of the apostle John — Papias and Polycarp.
- He wrote an extensive book *Against Heresies*, responding to the Gnostics, quoting from all the NT but a few of the shorter letters.

Irenaeus (~180)

- Irenaeus takes our four Gospels for granted, and even seeks to give symbolic reasons for why there are exactly four of them.
- He also says, “So firm is the ground upon which these Gospels rest, that the very heretics themselves bear witness to them, and starting from these documents, each one of them endeavors to establish his own peculiar doctrine.”

The Muratorian Canon (~180)

- This is the oldest canonical list preserved from the orthodox side.
- It is anonymous, but was written from Italy in the late 2nd century by a Christian leader there.
- Our only manuscript is broken at the beginning, but it starts with Luke as the 3rd Gospel, followed by John as the 4th.
- It rejects the writings of the Gnostics and the Montanists.

Clement of Alexandria (~200)

- Clement was head of the Christian school in Alexandria, which trained new converts and Christian leaders.
- He uses some of the non-canonical Gospels, but he distinguishes them from those “that have been handed down.”

Others...

- Origen (~230 AD)
- Eusebius (~325 AD)

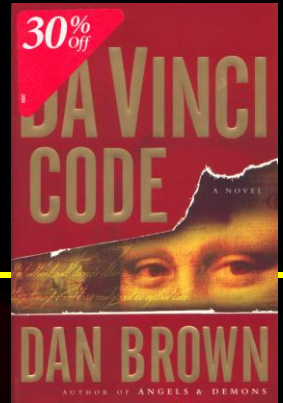
The entire NT can be reconstructed from the Church Fathers' & from Christian Philosophers' writings

Writer	Gospels	Acts	Pauline	Catholic	Revelation	Totals
Justin Martyr	268	10	43	6	3	330
Irenaeus	1,038	194	499	23	65	1,819
Clement of Alexandria	1,107	44	1,127	207	11	2,496
Origen	9,231	349	7,778	399	165	17,922
Terullian	3,822	502	2,609	120	205	7,258
Hippolytus	734	42	387	27	188	1,378
Eusebius	3,258	211	1,592	88	27	5,176
Grand Totals	19,368	1,352	14,035	870	664	36,289

Summary on Canon

- Thus the evidence is clear that Constantine did not suddenly set off in a new direction, putting together a new Bible.
- Rather, the **four Gospels** had been recognized by orthodox Christians as authoritative for at least 150 years.

On Constantine & the NT Canon



“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 ... [He] commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels which spoke of Christ’s human traits and embellished those gospels which made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned.” (234)

Conclusions

- We have restricted our discussion of *The Da Vinci Code* to its allegations about the canon of the New Testament.
- It fares very poorly here.
- Whatever the merits of its treatment of Leonardo da Vinci or the Priory of Sion, it is not good history for the first centuries of the Christian era.

PART II – Answering Brown's lies regarding:

- The real Jesus was a nature loving pagan
- Mary Magdalene was married to Jesus
- The disciples were jealous of the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene
- There is a secret society called the Priori of Sion which was created since the 11th century to protect the bones of Mary and the secret documents about her

Claim: The real Jesus was pagan

- When you read the gospels:
 - ◆ Jesus is firmly rooted in his Jewish heritage.
 - ◆ A child of the synagogue
 - ◆ A rabbi of the Jewish scriptures
 - ◆ A Son of Jewish parents
 - ◆ A participant in the wider Jewish community
- All NT scholars whether conservative or liberal, whether orthodox, protestant, catholic, Jewish or secular agree that Jesus will never be understood until he is recognized as a person of Jewish environment.

Claim: The real Jesus was pagan

- Dan Brown argue that early ideas about Christ were copied from pagan mythology:
 - ◆ The idea of Christ' Virgin birth is said to be borrowed from the story of the miraculous conception of Horus by his mother Isis.
 - ◆ The pre-Christian God Mithras –called the Son of God and the Light of the World- was born on Dec. 25, died, was buried in a rock tomb, and then resurrected in three days.

Claim: The real Jesus was pagan

- The novel makes 2 major errors:

- ◆ **Error in LOGIC:** assuming Brown to be accurate →

- similarities of basic idea and not copying from one tradition to the next.
- There is no evidence that Matthew and Luke had ever heard of Horus or Mithras.
- Difference between legend and historical reality (Josephus)

- ◆ **Error in FACTS:** Brown misrepresents the legend and its connection to Jesus' story →

- Brown does not mention that the legend also includes that Horus cut off the head of his mother or that Isis was both wife and sister to Osiris, Horus's father.
- Mithras was not born on Dec. 25th or on anyday (he is not a real figure)
- Scholars of Mithraism themselves do not claim that there is even a legend of birth on Dec. 25th.
- Mithras does not rise from the dead and more

- ◆ **BUT DAN BROWN ONLY MENTIONS THE BITS AND PIECES THAT CAN DECEIVE ENOUGH AND GIVE AN IMPRESSION THAT JESUS'S STORY IS A PAGAN ONE**

DV Code claims (Priori of Sion / Mary Magdalene)

- A secret society (*Priory of Sion*) established ~900 years ago
- The “Secret”:
 - ◆ Mary Magdalene...
 - Was wife of Jesus Christ
 - Was chosen by Jesus to lead His church
- Mary fled to France
 - ◆ Descendants of Christ lived secretly protected by *Priory of Sion*

The Da Vinci Code

- Catholic Church...
 - ◆ Is destroyed if this “secret” is revealed
 - ◆ Thus tried to cover-up for 2000 years
- Constantine manipulated Christianity to secure & remain in power



The Da Vinci Code



- Leonardo da Vinci (1500's)
 - ◆ A leader of *Priory of Sion*
 - ◆ Passed the “secret” in various art works
 - e.g., “The Last Supper”

Dan Brown's assertion: *Christianity is a lie that has been created by the Catholic Church in order to remain in power*

Q) Is *Priory of Sion* as written?

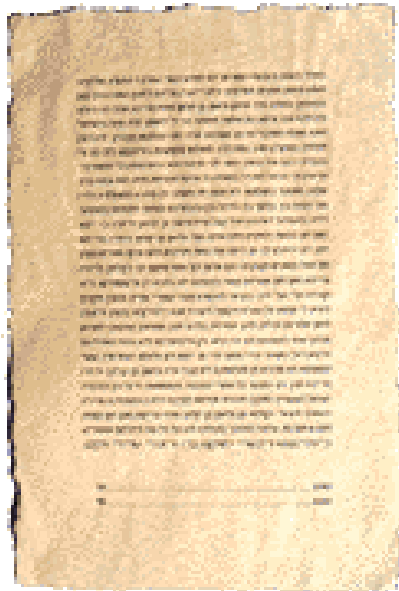
Brown asserts: (DVC 1)

- *Priory of Sion* is a secret society founded in 1099

- ◆ In 1975 Paris's National Library discovered documents known as "The Secret Record (Dossiers Secrets)"...

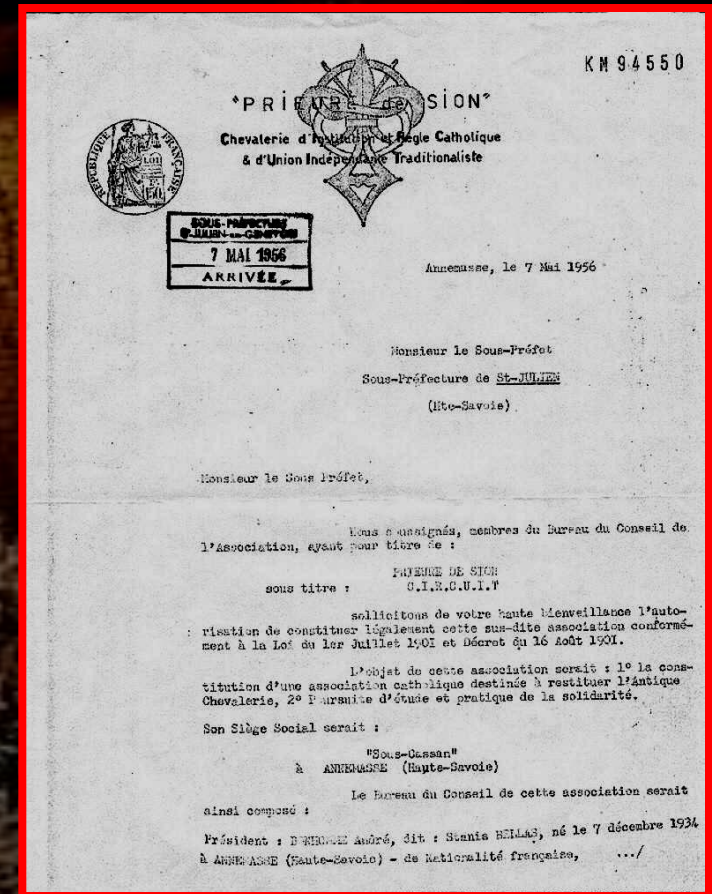
identifying numerous members of the *Priory of Sion*

- Sir Isaac Newton, Botticelli, Victor Hugo & Leonardo da Vinci



Prior Priory of Sion's

- 3 Priory of Sion's
 - 1) Roman Catholic Monastic Order (1100-1617)
 - 2) "Priory of Sion" founded by Pierre Plantard (1956-1957)
 - 3) "Priory of Sion" founded [*again*] by Pierre Plantard (1960's)



Pierre Plantard's credibility



- Expressed desire of being a...
 - ◆ Cult master
 - ◆ Descendant of Kings
- Planted forged documents in National Library which claims...
 - ◆ That *Priory of Sion* was established in 1099
 - ◆ List of “Grand Masters”
- He formed an association under that title in 1956, was not a secret society, dealt with local political and social issues.
- In 1961, Plantard claimed that POS was an ancient society dating back to the 11th C, then he invented another version of it in 1984 and THEN...

Pierre Plantard's secret - Exposed

- In 1993, confessed the truth in court:
 - ◆ A European secret society called *Priory of Sion* (supposedly established in 1099) was never a “real organization”

→ *Brown doesn't tell this truth*

Q) Was Jesus & Mary a Couple?

Brown asserts:

- Jesus' marriage to Mary Magdalene was "a matter of historical record." (*DVC* 244)
- Based on Gnostic Gospels
 - ◆ Alternative account of Jesus' life & teachings



3 Key Texts

- ◆ 1) Hippolytus, *Song of Songs: On the female Apostles*
 - “Lest the female apostles doubt the angels, Christ himself came to them so that the women would be apostles of Christ and by their obedience rectify the sin of ancient Eve . . . Christ showed himself to the (male) apostles and said to them: . . . ‘It is I who appeared to these women and I who wanted to send them to you as apostles.’”

3 Key Texts

- 2) Gospel of Philip 63:33-36- An Undefined Special Relationship to Jesus- (2 versions of this text: The original, the suggested)
 - ◆ And the companion of the [...] Mary Magdalene. [...] loved] her more than [all] the disciples [and used to] kiss her [often] on her [...].
 - ◆ And the companion of [the Savior] is Mary Magdalene. But Christ loved her more than [all] the disciples [and used to] kiss her [often] on her [mouth. The rest [of the disciples were offended] by it [and expressed disapproval]. (Alternate for the last sentence: and he used to kiss her on her [... more] often than the rest of₄₇ the disciples [...])

3 Key Texts

- 3) Gospel of Mary 17:10-18:21: Recipient of Revelation
 - ◆ But Andrew answered and said to the brethren, “Say what you (wish to) say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Savior said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas.” Peter answered and spoke concerning these same things. He questioned them about the Savior: “Did He really speak with a woman without our knowledge and not openly? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did He prefer her to us?”

Gospel of Mary (cont)

- ◆ Then Mary wept and said to Peter, “My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I have thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Savior?” Levi answered and said to Peter, “Peter, you have always been hot tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries. But if the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Savior knows her very well. That is why He loved her more than us. Rather let us be ashamed and put on the perfect Man, and separate as He commanded us and preach the gospel, not laying down any other rule or other law beyond what the Savior said.”

Summary on 3 Texts

- No text explicitly says Jesus is married
- Meaning of the texts that might infer it are very unclear.
- 2 texts out of hundreds of texts.

Extracted from Gnostic Gospels

■ From Gospel of Philip

- ◆ *“And the companion of the Savior is Mary Magdalene. Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often on her mouth.” (DVC 246)*
- ◆ “As any Aramaic scholar will tell you, the word companion, in those days, literally meant spouse.” (DVC 246)

■ From Gospel of Mary Magdalene

- ◆ Jesus chose Mary Magdalene to lead His church (DVC 247-248)

Gnostic gospels – Real Facts

- Gospel of Philip actually written in Coptic (ancient Egyptian), which is actually a translation from Greek
 - ◆ “companion” [koinonos] = friendship/fellowship
- Pertinent segment of original manuscript was damaged (Gospel of Philip 63:33-36)
 - ◆ “and the companion of the [??] Mary Magdalene [?loved?] her more than [?all?] the disciples [?and used to?] kiss her [?often?] on her [??].”

Gnostic gospels' credibility

- Written 100's of years later than Gospels in the Bible
 - ◆ Gospel of Philip – 3rd Century
 - ◆ Gospel of Mary Magdalene – 2nd Century
- Not an eye-witness account
 - *Scholars disregarded Gnostic gospels as “not genuine, spurious, counterfeit.”*



Q) Is Christianity a conspiracy?

Brown asserts:

- Constantine, in scheming to use Christianity to serve his own purpose, ...
 - ◆ Determined the divinity of Christ via a Council (DVC 233)
 - ◆ Compiled the books of the Bible (DVC 234)
 - ◆ Moved day of worship from Sat → Sun (DVC 232)

But, actual historical facts note:

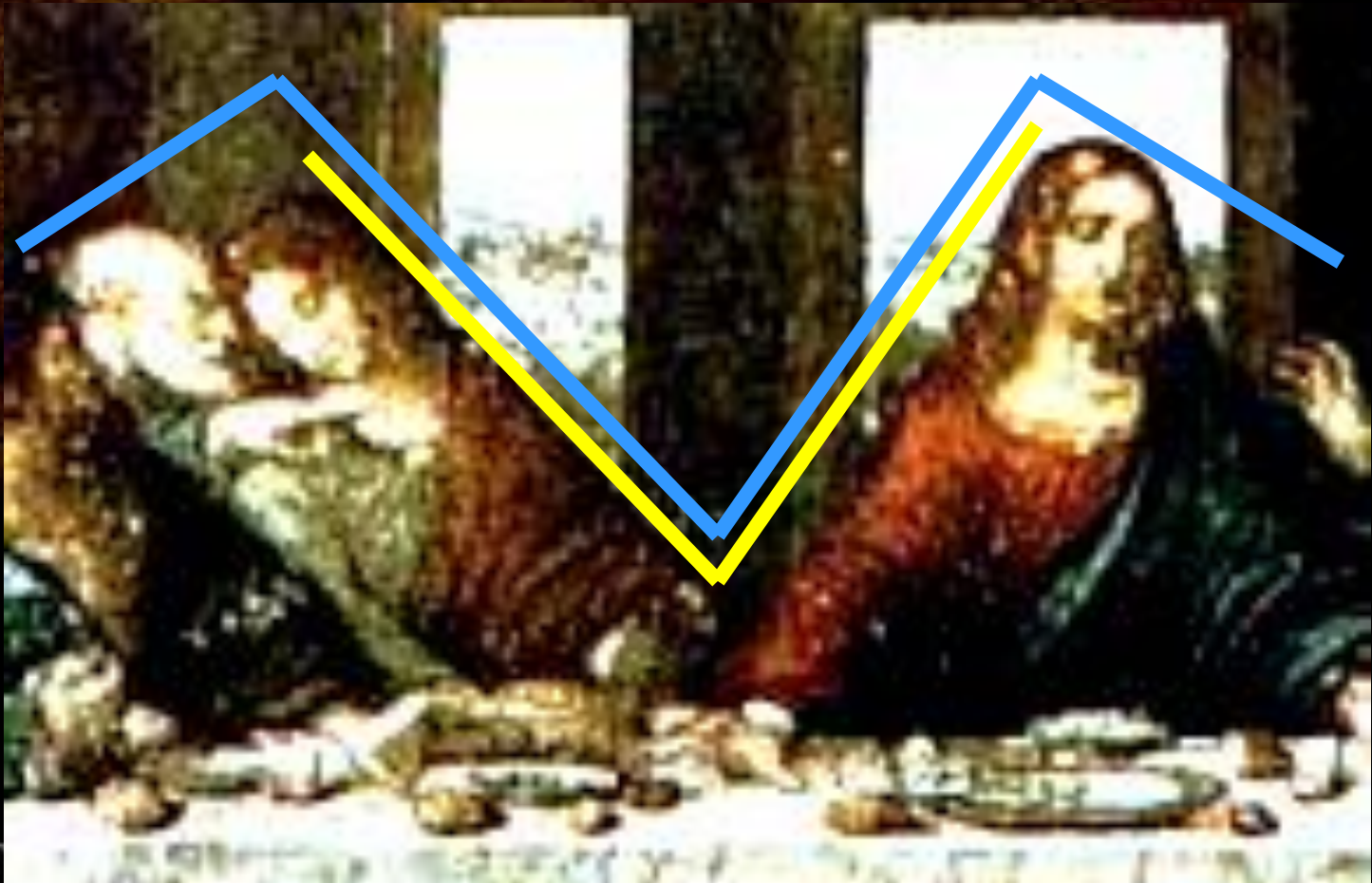
- Divinity of Christ was decided before Constantine
 - ◆ Per New Testament, Early Church Fathers, writings
- Bible had already been put together centuries before Constantine
- Worship had already moved to Sunday before Constantine
 - ◆ Acts 20:7 “On the first day of the week we came together to break bread...”

→ *History's sequence of events is different*

Lastly, on Da Vinci's "Last Supper"



A Closer Look



A closer look

- Da Vinci had known habit of painting younger men with a feminine look
 - ◆ e.g., John the Baptist

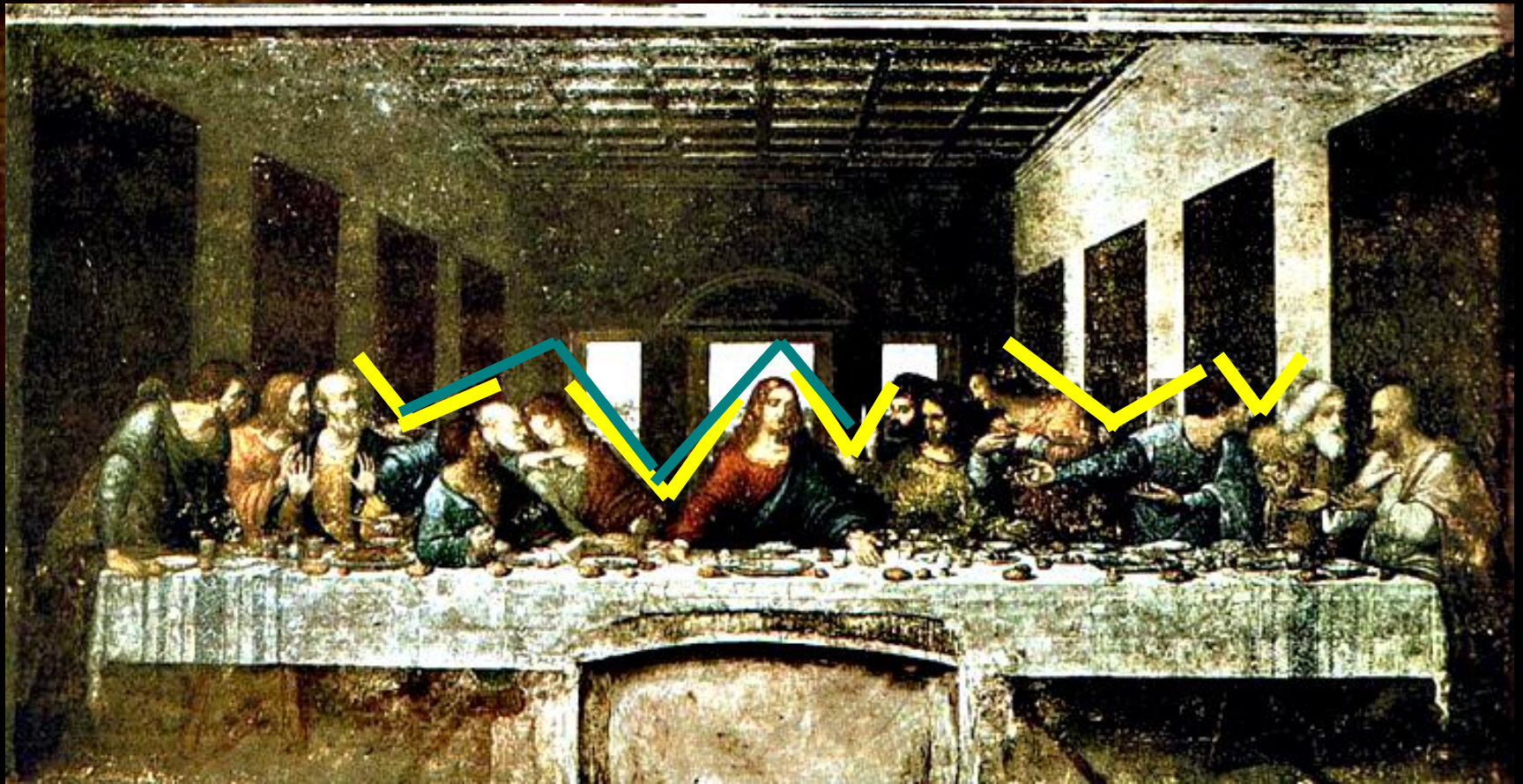


A closer look

- The “V” can be found all over the place
- “M” can stand for a variety of things
- If it’s Mary, then where is John, the Beloved disciple of Christ?

→ *Brown’s case falls apart in court...*

Lastly, on Da Vinci's "Last Supper"



A Closer Look – Where is the Chalice “*holder of Jesus’ blood*”



Summary

- “Priory of Sion” was made up! (confessed a lie!)
- Account of Jesus & Mary (per Gnostic Gospels) is a wild guess
- Foundations of Christianity existed long before Constantine

Concluding remarks

- “[T]he most flagrant aspect of the Code is not that Dan Brown disagrees with Christianity, but that he utterly warps it in order to disagree with it – to the point of completely rewriting a vast number of historical events. And making the matter worse has been Brown’s willingness to pass off his distortions as ‘facts’...”

[Richard Abanes, The Truth Behind the Da Vinci Code]

For Further Reading

