

# THE DA VINCI CODE

## BEAT UP, COVER UP, HAND UP?

### 1 A personal reflection

### 2 An historical challenge

- Did Constantine declare Jesus divine at the Council of Nicea (325)?

"God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [κυριος] to the glory of God the Father"

The Apostle Paul, *Letter to the Philippians* chapter 2, verses 9-11, circa 61 AD

"They maintained, however, that the amount of their fault or error had been this, that it was their habit on a fixed day to assemble before daylight and recite by turns a form of words to Christ as a god"

Pliny, Governor of Bithynia, circa 112, from: *A new Eusebius: documents illustrating the history of the church to AD 337* (ed. J. Stevenson; London: SPCK, 1987)



Graffiti found on a wall of a house on the Palatine Hill, Rome, circa second century

- Did Constantine suppress alternative accounts of Jesus' life?

"Simon Peter said to them, 'Mary should leave us, for females are not worthy of life.' Jesus said, 'See, I am going to attract her to make her male so that she too might become a living spirit that resembles you males. For every female (element) that makes itself male will enter the kingdom of heavens.'"

*The Gospel according to Thomas* §114, circa 140, discovered in manuscript circa 350

"And the companion of the ... Mary Magdalene ... her more than ... the disciples ... kiss her ... on her ..."

*The Gospel according to Phillip* 63:33-36, circa 180-250

- Are the Bible's accounts of Jesus trustworthy?

The criterion of multiple attestation:

*Very similar events are recorded in the Gospels close to each other*

Feeding the 5000 (Mt 14:13-21) and feeding the 4000 (Mt 15:32-39)

The criterion of dissimilarity:

*Many of Jesus' words or phrasing were unique to him*

**Amen, I say to you**, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Mt 18:3)

The criterion of personal plausibility:

*Can this man run my life better than I can?*

### 3 A spiritual opportunity

### 4 Further reading

- [www.challengingdavinci.com](http://www.challengingdavinci.com)
- *Is the New Testament History?* (Revised 2004) – Paul Barnett
- *Breaking the Da Vinci Code* – Darrell Bock
- *The Da Vinci Code: A Response* – Nicky Gumbel
- The information posters from tonight can be downloaded at [www.bpc.org.au](http://www.bpc.org.au)