

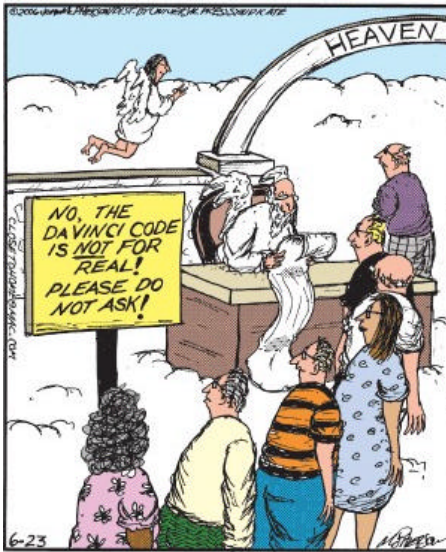
A four part series:
Why *The Da Vinci Code* is True!
(and today's Christianity is dysfunctional)
Part 4 of 4

The Cover-up of Jesus' Humanity: Was Jesus a real God or a real Guy?

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(The words appearing in bold were projected with Power Point onto the front of the sanctuary.)



I'm afraid I have to disagree with St. Peter. Encased in the facts and falsehoods of murder mystery fiction, *The Da Vinci Code's* vital premise – that there has been a cover-up in the Christian faith is absolutely true! Dan Brown, a self-identified Christian, brings up important questions. Here's one of the important ones:

What if the world's most famous man was also the world's most misunderstood man? What would be the consequences of that?

Jesus has been misunderstood. *The Da Vinci Code* brings that up again and again and it rings true for many of us. Because of the cover-up we have misunderstood Jesus. The problem is *the Da Vinci Code* also misunderstands Jesus!

There was an actual historical Council of Nicaea in 325 CE that met to talk about some of who Jesus was. Teabing, the villain of the story, says about this Ecumenical Council:

“Until that moment in history, Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet . . . a great and powerful man, but a man nonetheless. A mortal Jesus' establishment as the 'Son of God' was officially proposed and voted on by the Council of Nicaea.” (*The Da Vinci Code*, p. 231)

Teabing is saying that the first Christians did not think Jesus was divine, but only human until these bishops got together and decided by a close vote that Jesus was divine.

The trouble with that entire statement is that it is all fiction. The Council had nothing to do with deciding that Jesus was divine. What they debated and voted on was in what way was Jesus divine and human, and the vote wasn't close. Only two of the around 300 leaders voted against what they did decide – Jesus was fully human and fully divine. The truth is that the early church from the very beginning was just about unanimous that Jesus was divine. The only debates were about how. Some, like the Ebionites, thought Jesus was a man that God adopted as his divine son at his baptism. The Marcionites thought Jesus was only God just appearing to be a man. The Gnostics thought Jesus was two different beings, one a man, the other God.

The Da Vinci Code is not only about good and bad history, but it's filled with theology – thinking about God. I believe that's the major reason for the amazing interest in *the Da Vinci Code*. There were over 300 visits to my website after one of the columnists for the Kansas City Star featured a summary of my series this month

on *The Da Vinci Code*. People are eager to hear about spiritual things that transcend the dumbing down which has happened to the Jesus path over the centuries. So let's use it to get us thinking about God. The Council of Nicaea affirmed what most followers of Jesus already believed:

1. **Jesus was both human and divine.** (fully God, fully man)
2. **Jesus was a one of a kind, never to be repeated being.** (The only begotten Son of God, because humans are only human, never divine.)

This left unresolved a slight problem that they just decided to live with: How could Jesus have been human, just like us, if he was a one of a kind human/divine being?

So to say Jesus was like us and we are really like Jesus is silly if Jesus was one of a kind, and nobody was or could ever be like him. But *the Da Vinci Code* movie, not the book, solves the problem. I will credit them with squeezing it in an almost passing comment. Do you remember where Tom Hanks near the end of the movie puts in some words that you can't find in the book. They are the most profound words in the whole movie. Tom Hanks, trying to plumb the mystery of Jesus, human or divine, says:

“Maybe human is divine.”

Yes, that's right, Tom. That's exactly what the some of the very earliest Christians, the ones who embraced the Gospel of Thomas believed. One of the things that was covered up was the earlier teachings from the Gospel of Thomas and the Gnostics that human is divine.

Therefore Jesus was human like all the rest of us – because being human is being divine. So let's change point number 2 from “Jesus was a one of a kind, never to be repeated being (The only begotten Son of God)” into what I believe is more true:

1. **Jesus was both human and divine.**
2. **Just like we all are divine human beings.**

The church covered up something. It wasn't Jesus' humanity, *it was our divinity*.

But you say, “Jesus really was different from us. That was obvious! Look at the things he did.” I can understand just exactly that. However, what did Jesus mean when he said:

“Whoever believes in me will do the works I do, and even greater ones.” (John 14:12)

How could we do what he did if we are not like Jesus and his mighty divine power? So the difference must be that he was more advanced in knowing and expressing his divinity and not in being a totally different kind of creature. And, according to Jesus, we are going to advance eventually to his level and beyond!

There are a number of places in the New Testament that point to our divinity. Seeing this can trigger a leap forward in your own spiritual growth. It can be quite powerful. This is a new idea to many of us and I want to help us get there from the Bible itself.

For instance, Jesus claimed that he was the light of the world. (John 9:5) We say, “That's a relief because I am certainly not the light of the world. I don't send off much light. I'm pretty much a dim bulb. Sometimes I think I just suck up any light I find and turn it into darkness.” For all of us dim bulbs, Jesus had this to say:

“You are the light of the world.” (Matt 5:14)

There may be a lot of dirt on the bulb but somewhere inside of all the goo is a brightly burning bulb. We just don't know it yet. We haven't connected with it yet deep inside of us. We haven't experienced it as fully as we potentially can, although some of you are strongly on the way. But the light is there within us. As Jesus said, “The Kingdom of heaven is within us.” We are beings of light. We are beings of light just like Jesus was.

“We are joint heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom of God.” (Rom. 8:17)

Joint heirs means we get the same thing Jesus gets. We share equally as divine beings both with Jesus and all the rest of humankind.

“When he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2)

Not a little like him, some parts of us like him, close to being like him. But like him. We are gods and goddesses.

“He was like us in every respect.” (Heb. 2:17)

If he was like us in *every* respect. What would you think if I had two identical twins standing up here. Look how alike they are. It was hard for even their mother to tell them apart. Both brown hair, both even has same mole on their necks. Isn't that amazing, they are so “alike in every respect.” Oh, well, there is one difference. One of them is god and the other is not. But that's just a minor thing. They really are just alike. We say, Oh no. They are only superficially alike. At the core they are two very different kinds of beings – one human, one divine.

“All of us, seeing the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image, from one degree of glory to another.” (2 Cor. 3:18)

That “same image” is the image of God which we shall eventually awaken to, transforming step by transforming step. We shall eventually know we are divine like Jesus, the Christ.

“(God said) I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters.” (2 Cor. 6:18)

Paul says here and many places that we are sons and daughters of God. Jesus was also called, “son of God.” According to John's Gospel being a son or daughter of God, being one with God, and being God are all the same. Jesus was all of those and so are we.

“As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us. . . . May they become completely one as I am in them and you are in me.” (John 17:20, 22)

Here was Jesus' fervent prayer that we would realize our divinity, that we would embrace our oneness with God, with Goddess. *And then live and love like it!*

“Do you not know that you are gods?” (John 19:34)

The Pharisees accused Jesus of claiming to be God because he said that he and God were one. Jesus agreed with them on the basis that, as confused, ignorant, and opposed to him as they were, incredibly, they were divine also. If they were divine, as bad as they were, how could they say he was not divine, as good as he was. And how can we say we are not “gods” also?

Remember that Jesus was teaching all this to people who did not understand it yet. And by the time the various writings of the New Testament were edited by even less evolved disciples, sincere as they were but who had a point to make, we see only what remains and seeped through their foggy understanding.

We need to know that there are other passages, especially in the Gospel of John, that say we are not at all like Jesus. Remember John 3:16 says that God so loved the world that God gave his *only* begotten son.

Since one of my spiritual guides is the John who wrote part of the original draft of the Gospel of John, I asked him about it the other day. “I said to him that the Gospel of John says that Jesus is God and we are nothing like Jesus. Is that really what you said?”

John replied “That’s overdrawn, but that’s how I saw it at the time. My many later editors did much of this also. My Gospel was tampered with more than Thomas’ was. By the way, Thomas was there and he did doubt. Later editors took what I heard from the Spirit of Jesus and moved it to suit their beliefs and purposes. There were differences in what we heard and understood, too. Looking back I believe we may have needed to make Jesus a one of a kind Savior for the church to establish Jesus as the way. The great “I am.” Now it’s time to expand that belief just as you are doing.”

So let’s add two other points to our first two:

1. Jesus was both human and divine.
2. Just like we are all divine human beings.
3. **But Jesus knew it, embraced it, and lived it.**
4. **And came to teach us to rediscover our own divinity by going within.**

Does that sound strange – “our own divinity”? Of course it does!

(1) We have been taught against that very idea. We have been told the biggest sin of all is to think we are god.

(2) We are fearful that our ego will get hold of this and become even bigger and more controlling. What our ego actually afraid of is us owning our own divinity. Our ego stubbornly resists this because it spells the death of our ego. I’m not trying to inflate our egos. I’m trying to demolish our egos. Jesus was a person in whose ego, if it ever existed at all, had died. (For more on the ego see my series [*Soul Strength: Finding our Real Self by getting to know our False Self*](#))

(3) There is a really big reason that it is difficult to believe we are divine like Jesus. Just look around. Does the person sitting next to you really look like a god? It gets worse. Look in the mirror. Do you really look like a god?

Ah, but according to Jesus, appearances are deceiving!

Any belief that makes Jesus different from us in anything but degree is an incredible barrier to our spiritual development.

The answer to my title this morning: “Is Jesus a real God or a real Guy?” is YES!

Are we real gods or real people? Yes! We are like Jesus, fully human and full of God at the same time..

The earlier Gospel of Thomas makes it real clear:

Jesus said, “Whoever drinks from my mouth will become like me. [know, embrace, and live their divinity] I myself shall become that person, and the hidden things will be revealed to him.” (Gospel of Thomas, saying 108)

How many Christians do you know who actually think they may possibly become like Jesus in this life? The average Christian has no expectations that he or she will really be just like Jesus and certainly no

expectations anything near that could happen in this life. No more than they would try to become like Albert Einstein, Michaelangelo or Michael Jordon.

The church's teaching that we are different from Jesus, yet should be like him is dysfunctional. Dysfunctional families are crazy-making. Families give these kinds of message to kids:

- "You are so dumb. Why don't you do better in school?"
- "You should make better grades. You are so stupid."
- "You are really bad. You need to act better."
- "You're so clumsy. Why don't you shape up and act like your brother?"

And the church has said for centuries:

- "You're a terrible sinner, You should be like Jesus."
- "You think too much of yourself. You act like you think you're God. Stop that. You should act like Jesus, instead!"

That's our dysfunctional crazy-making conventional church at work.

The current state of the institutional church has actually slowed down the evolutionary process of all humankind. It has kept us stuck in the previous and lower mythic/literal levels of spiritual evolution. I have long realized the power of conventional religion to prevent our spiritual growth. It makes me angry. Here are good, sincere, loving people, devoted to the Christianity path, who have been taught things about Christianity that hinder their spiritual growth.

Jesus' message and model was supposed to motivate us, not intimidate us.

The fact that this sounds so weird and impossible to us is the proof of how we have missed Jesus' message.

Let's do a little spiritual exercise right now if you would. When we see our own True Self as divine just like Jesus' own True Self; we can learn to read the Gospels in new way. Where Jesus says "I" or "me," we say "own True Self." (If you are reading this, I suggest you say the second sentence out loud several times, or until you can embrace it.)

Jesus said, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

If I love father or mother more than *my own true self*, I am not worthy of *my true self*.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."

My own true self is the light of the world.

(Don't cringe. Remember that Jesus said exactly that: "You are the light of the world!")

Jesus said, "If you have seen me, you have seen God."

If you have seen your *own true self*, you have seen God.

Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to God except through me."

My own true self is the way the truth and the life. No one comes to God except through their own true self.

Jesus said, "Believe in God and believe also in me."

Believe in God and believe also in *your own true self*.

May the name of Jesus forever be praised for showing us this way!