

**CRACKING THE DAVINCI CODE**  
**Gnosticism and Christianity**  
**10/24/04 PM**

**1. Is Christianity Unique Or Did It Borrow From Other Religions?**

*Nothing in Christianity is original. The pre-Christian God Mithras- called the Son of God and the Light of the World- was born on December 25, died was buried in a rock tomb, and then resurrected in three days. By the way, December 25 is also the birthday of Osiris, Adonis, and Dionysius. (The DaVinci Code 232)*

**a. The Old Testament predicted the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus hundreds of years before the superstitions of Mithras surfaced.**

- The virgin birth Isaiah 7:14
- His beatings Isaiah 52:14
- His crucifixion Isaiah 53:1-11
- His resurrection Psalms 16:10
- ◆ The New Testament is a fulfillment of the Old Testament Prophecies.
- ◆ The OT prophecies predate the worship of Mithras.

**b. It is most probable that the myths about Mithras' developed after Christianity first came to Rome in the first century.**

- Numerous conflicting myths are associated with Mithras.
- ◆ The followers of Mithraism did not keep written records, but chose to pass on their religion through secret rituals.
- ◇ What we know about the religions comes from outsiders who opposed the legends.

- The cult of Mithras was continually evolving and adapting itself to the needs of a particular group or culture.

## 2. Is Gnosticism Just Another Form Of Christianity?

Millions of people who have never heard the word Gnosticism are devotees of its essential teachings.

Today there are numerous groups and movements that utilize Gnostic concepts and writings.

Wiccans, New Agers, occultists, radical feminists, neo-pagans, and a host of other groups.

Tragically, Gnostic concepts have infiltrated modern American Christianity.

**World Magazine July 3/10, 2004 p. 50-51**

The reason this generation is attracted to Gnosticism is it is a religion committed to diversity and do-it-yourself spirituality.

As we evaluate the tenants of Gnosticism, we are in effect, giving a critique of today's religious climate.

Although Gnosticism was a very diverse movement, we will discuss its doctrine in its most popular form.

### a. Another God Exodus 20:1-3 cf Deuteronomy 13:1-4

- **Garlow and Jones (Cracking DaVinci's Code 166)-**  
 "The most striking theme common to all fifty-two texts dug up at Nag Hammadi is the rejection of the Genesis creation account. The Gnostic texts constantly mock the Creator God as a blind fool. Jahweh is the first and mightiest of all oppressive patriarchs. He is the "heavenly counterpart of all blustering macho brutes who think they know everything because they are male. . . The Gnostic is free from any law because the foolish Jahweh made up the law. In this way of thinking, there is no sin, the fall of Genesis 3 is *liberation*, and the serpent of the garden speaks wisdom."

- **Bock (Breaking The DaVinci Code 68)** For these groups, there exists the eternal, supreme, transcendent Father who is utterly spiritual and has no contact with anything material. In opposition to Him is the Creator of the physical world, a fallen, wicked, arrogant being often called the *Demiurge*, or “maker” who falsely believes himself to be the only god. These Gnostic or Gnostic-like groups demean and ridicule this imposter and the physical things associated with him because he does not acknowledge the Pure Father of the true immaterial world and because he is the craftsman of things material.”
- **Bock 75** “Many of these texts portrayed God as a dyad, with the divine mother as part of the original couple.”
  - ◆ Or that God is androgynous or bi-sexual in nature.
- Gnostics believed that when we encounter God, we are in effect encountering ourselves, for knowledge of self is knowledge of God.
  - ◆ We are actually lighting the spark of divinity that exists in all of us.
- God, however he or she is defined, is really an extension of ourselves.
  - ◆ In the *Gospel of Thomas*, when the disciples asked Jesus where they should go, he replied, “There is light within a man of light, and it lights up the whole world. If he does not shine, he is darkness.”
    - ◇ We are not directed to Christ who exists outside of us as a savior, but rather we must look to the light within to save ourselves.
  - ◆ In the *Gospel of Philip*, we discover a more radical notion.
    - ◇ “God created humanity; [but now human beings] create God. That is the way it is in the world- human beings make gods, and worship

their creation. It would be appropriate for the gods to worship human beings.”

- Christianity teaches a holy God, He is totally other.
  - ◆ We are not gods.
  - ◆ The first lie of Satan and all demonic religion is that we will be like God.
- He is pure, sinless, and without defect.
- He is the personal Creator, Sustainer, and Judge to whom we must give account.

**b. Another authority Isaiah 8:20 cf Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

- **Why the ‘Lost Gospels’ Lost Out (Christianity Today Magazine June 2004)** Gnosticism fundamentally rejected Jewish theology about the goodness of creation, and especially the idea that all the nations could be blessed through Abraham and his faith. When the church accepted the Hebrew Scriptures, it implicitly rejected Gnosticism before it had a chance to get started.
- Jesus viewed the OT as fully authoritative. Matthew 5:18
- Jesus viewed all three sections of the Hebrew scriptures as inspired. cf Luke 24:44
- Jesus saw the OT references as reliable down to the words and tenses of the words used. cf Matthew 22:29-32, 41-46

**c. Another Jesus 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 cf John 8:23-24; 2 John 7-11; 1 Corinthians 15:12-19**

- Read the passages
- Gnosticism had a tendency to separate the human Jesus from the Divine Christ, seeing them as two distinct beings.

- ◆ **Bock 77** “. . .there were two beings: the living Lord and Savior Jesus, and the human substitute Jesus. . . The earthly, living substitute, a mere human who only represented Jesus, was crucified. The heavenly Jesus did not suffer on the cross; His earthly substitute was sacrificed. The heavenly Jesus laughed at the world’s ignorance.
- The Gnostics did not view Jesus’ death as an act of atonement, but rather as an occasion for discovering the divine self within.
  - ◆ To them, the immediate experience of Christ mattered, not the events of his earthly life.
  - ◆ They believed that spiritual experience was the source of religious truth.
  - ◆ An occasion to awaken their own divine possibilities.
- The Gnostics unanimously rejected Jesus’ physical resurrection.
  - ◆ One Gnostic writer referred to it as the “faith of fools.”
    - ◇ In the *Gospel of Mary* the resurrection appearances are interpreted as appearances of visions, dreams, and trances.
- The Gnostics believed that the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus were irrelevant.
- cf 1 Corinthians 15:12-19
- d. Another Gospel 2 Corinthians 11:3-4; Galatians 1:6-9**
  - *To the Gnostic, Christ is of help to us, but he did nothing that was indispensable for our salvation.*
    - ◆ Gnostics didn’t believe that we needed to be saved from the penalty of sin or a final judgment.

- ◇ **Olsen and Miesel, (The DaVinci Hoax 50)**  
(To the Gnostic)“Salvation is not about overcoming sin through and by God’s assistance; rather it is the overcoming of ignorance through self-knowledge.”
- ◇ Our problem, according to the Gnostics, is not sin, but ignorance. Salvation comes through secret esoteric knowledge.
- ◇ We simply need to know how to access the gnosis and experience our own enlightenment.
- ◆ Thus we do not need to believe a given set of doctrines for salvation.
- ◇ In fact, doctrines and belief systems are actually seen as hindrances to progress along the Gnostic path.
- ◆ Gnostics would agree that the path we take doesn’t matter as long as we experience our own gnosis.
- ***In contrast to that, Christianity believes that Jesus is the only one who qualifies as a Savior.***
  - ◆ The Incarnation is the great divide between Christianity and Gnosticism.
  - ◇ Jesus is God, who took on full humanity in order to redeem us from the penalty of sin.
  - ◆ Ideas could not bridge the gap between us and God; only an act of atonement could.
  - ◇ 1 Peter 1:18-19
  - ◆ Our sins are as real as a thief who steals money from a bank vault.
  - ◇ And as restitution demands that the money be replaced, so the payment for our sin had to be made before we could be reconciled to God.

- Christ is the only one who can repair the breach between us and the God of the Bible.
  - ◆ Christ's example or his ideas do not save us.
  - ◆ A vision or revelation of him does not save us.
    - ◇ Our own experience, no matter how wonderful it may be, cannot remove the barrier that our sin has caused between God and us.
- Some people say, "God, yes- but why Jesus?"
  - ◆ They assume that there are many ways of access to God.
  - ◆ They fashion God into their own image.
- We must come to the right God in the right way.
  - ◆ Cain and Abel came to the right God, but one brought an acceptable offering while the other was rejected.
    - ◇ cf Nadab and Abihu Leviticus 10
- As the God-man, Jesus is perfectly sinless and therefore the only one qualified to give us the righteousness by which we can stand in God's holy presence.
  - ◆ Deeds of compassion and kindness are found in most world religions.
    - ◇ As are moral codes and ethics.
  - ◆ Jesus is what sets us apart.
- John 14:6
- Romans 3:21-26; 5:1-11
- 1 Corinthians 15:3-11
- Titus 2:11-14