

The Dead Sea Scrolls

"Fortunately for historians, some of the gospels Constantine attempted to eradicate (like the Gnostic gospels) managed to survive. The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1950's hidden in a cave near Qumran in the Judean desert."

- Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*

FACT: Discovered in **1947**, not 1950.

FACT: No copies of the **Gospels** found in the scrolls.

Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

FACT: Constantine was a **true convert** to Christianity.

FACT: He did convene the Council of Nicea in 325 - purpose was to **dispel** Arian controversy - a teaching that Jesus was a created God from the Father, not equal with God from the beginning.

FACT: Constantine did not compile the **Biblical canon**.

Example: Old Testament established well before he was even born.

Conclusion

Why do people believe the conspiracy claims of a novel like this?

1. Some harbor a **suspicion** towards the **church**.
2. Many do not know much about **Christian theology** or **history**.
3. Some people are looking for a **spiritual "out"**.

Small Group Discussion Questions:

1) Begin by discussing *The Da Vinci Code*. What did you like best about it? What didn't you like?

2) How might stories like this be dangerous to the Christian faith? In what ways might they be opportunities?

3) What questions, issues, or concerns about historical Christianity does *The Da Vinci Code* raise in your mind?

4) Can historical events be verified? Why or why not? What do you think determines whether or not an historical event actually occurred?

5) Describe how well you understand Christian history. How have you considered history a "friend of Christianity?"

SEPARATING **FACT** FROM **FICTION**



Series: The Da Vinci Code: Fact or Fiction?

Title: "What Can History Really Tell Us?" Pastor Sean Kelly, June 4, 2006

Introduction

- ◆ History is especially important to Christianity because it's **grounded** in historical reality.
- ◆ Historians have developed ways of testing the reliability of ancient accounts and **documents** - the science of **Textual Criticism**.
- ◆ History is not an **enemy** of Christianity - it's a **friend!**

Major Historical Claims in The Da Vinci Code

The Priory of Sion

"The Priory of Sion - a European secret society founded in 1099 - is a real organization. In 1975 Paris' Bibliotheque Nationale discovered parchments known as Les Dossiers Secrets, identifying numerous members of the Priory of Sion, including Sir Isaac Newton, Botticelli, Victor Hugo, and Leonardo Da Vinci."

- Dan Brown, The Da Vinci Code

FACT: Founded in **1957** to campaign for low-income housing in France.

FACT: BBC documentary as well as other French books exposed the Priory hoax a decade ago. Pierre Plantard **confessed** to the hoax on his **deathbed**.