

CRACKING THE CODE (PART 2)

John 1:1-18

I. A FAX FROM HEAVEN

- A. How did Brown say we got the Bible?
1. “The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven ... the Bible is a product of *man*, my dear. Not of God.” (p. 231)
 2. “The Bible, as we have it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great.” (p. 231)
- B. How do we say the Bible came into being?
1. “God inspired persons of the covenant community to write the scriptures ... The scriptures are the infallible rule of faith and practice ...” (*Confession of Faith*, p.1)
 2. “Theologically, the Bible is acknowledged in the church as a revelation from God.” (Donald K. McKim)
 3. “It is the simple truth to say that the New Testament books became canonical because no one could stop them from doing so. They had that power to them.” (William Barclay)
- C. The Canon of Scripture.
1. Oral Tradition.
 2. The canon is “the norm, the standard, the rule.”
 3. Three criteria for inclusion in the Bible:
 - Does it have roots connected to one of the apostles?
 - Is it consistent with the teaching of Jesus?
 - It had to have widespread influence in the church.
- D. What about the Dead Sea Scrolls?

II. MARY, MARY, QUITE THE CONTRARY

- A. Who was Mary Magdalene?
1. She was one of Jesus original traveling disciples. 2. She was present at his death. 3. She was the first to see the risen Lord. 4. She was the first to testify to the Easter events.
- B. What’s in a name?
1. Her first name was probably not Mary, and her last name was not Magdalene.
 2. Was Jesus and Miriam from Magdala married?
- C. What was the Holy Grail?
1. The Cup of Christ? 2. Mary Magdalene? 3. A Medieval Myth?

III. THE “SACRED FEMININE”

- A. Was Christianity an attempt by men to gain control over women?
1. One of the most radical things about Jesus was the seriousness with which he took women.” (John Ortberg)
 2. “*These women were helping to support them out of their own means*” (*Luke 8:3*).
 3. “*There is now neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*” (*Galatians 3:28*).
- B. What is the role of women in the church today?

Prayer Concerns: Burney Biesel, Jere Ford, Charlotte Hart, Deborah Hendrix, Mac Kerr, Joe McDowell, Anne Miller, Sibby Petty, Ann Ramsey, Mildred Sentell, Jennifer Tarpley, Joe Tidwell, Jr., Ray Billings, Gerald Borden, Sarah Clark, Richard Cole, Cledus Creel, Rev. E.H. Denman, Jr., Jimmy Eubanks, Angela Fisher, Nancy Godsey, Rob Hammond, Fern Haslop, Abby Jones, Jeff Joyner, Mary Lou Lepping, Van Lynch, Catherine Mattheus, Dorothy Montgomery, Taylor Murray, Judy Owen, Theresa Patrick, David Petrie, Steve Raines, Patrick Ramage, **Cathy Webb** ...

PASTORAL PRAYER

Gracious God, how can we unravel the mysteries of the Bible? How can we really know if Jesus was your Son or just a man – a great and powerful man, but a man nonetheless? How can we defend our faith and counter the claims that the Bible is a product of men, and that it did not come from you? How can we know that everything we have heard and been taught about Jesus and the Bible is not a myth? That it is not just a pretty story?

O God, perhaps we have relied too much on what “others” have said about Jesus and your Word. Perhaps it’s time for us to decide for ourselves who you are? Perhaps we have spent too much time “overhearing” the Bible and not enough time encountering the Bible on our own. Too much time listening to what people in the pulpit and on TV tell us what the truth is and not enough time discovering the truth for ourselves. Maybe it’s time to stop being “second-hand” Christians.

Speak to us now. Reveal yourself to us. Hear us as we pray the prayer your Son taught us to pray:

THE LORD’S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

JOHN 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father ... And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

June 25	<i>Getting Things Done for God</i>	Exodus 18:13-27
	Annetta Camp to Preach	
July 2	<i>How Do You Sing the Anthem?</i>	1 Corinthians 12:12-26
July 9	<i>I’ll Meet You in the Furnace</i>	Daniel 3

On the Radio (1450 AM):

June 25	<i>Beginning Again</i>	Revelation 21:5
July 2	<i>The American Dream</i>	Romans 13:1-8
July 9	<i>The Da Vinci Code</i>	Mathew 16:13-20