

“Seeking the Truth” with DaVinci’s Disciples

The Code is Coming—and it’s coming on strong. On May 19, theaters will unveil *The Da Vinci Code*... and we can be sure that people will notice and churches will respond. How we will respond should be thoughtful and biblical.

At the Center for Missional Research, we think it is important to consider what people think before churches respond. Few churches are protesting the false claims of the Branch Davidians. Why? Because they are not believed by the vast majority of people. Few churches will put on their signs, “Koresh was a false messiah,” because no one is paying much attention.

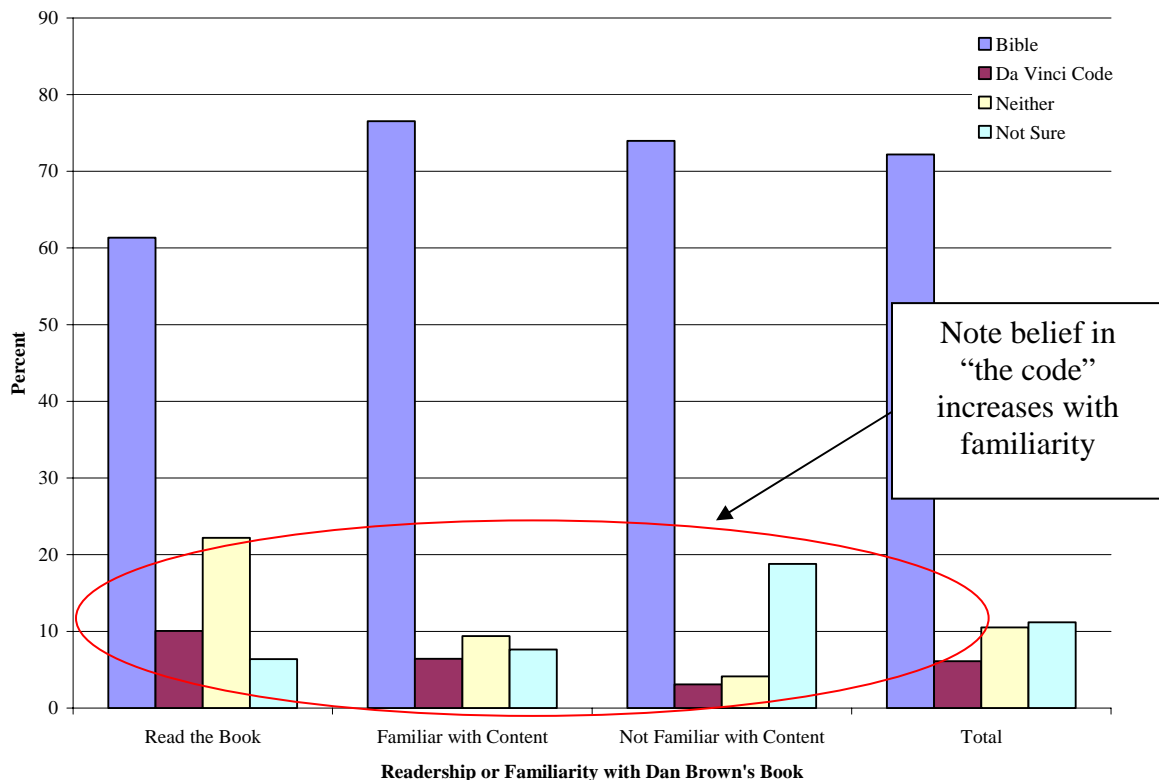
We commissioned a poll with Zogby International, the well-known research firm, to get a better understanding of how people understand and interact with *The Da Vinci Code*. Zogby called 1,200 people for us and found some interesting things.

First, most Americans polled are familiar with the content or have read the book. In our poll, 23 percent indicated they had read the book, 43 percent indicated they had not read the book but were familiar with its content, and 34 percent indicated they were not familiar with the content. There are few books that have sold the 40 million copies that *The Da Vinci Code* has already sold, and few books that have such influence.

The Bad News

Our study showed that the more a person knew of the book, the more likely they were to consider the claims of *The Da Vinci Code* to be true, or to consider neither *The Da Vinci Code* nor the Bible as “closer to the truth.”

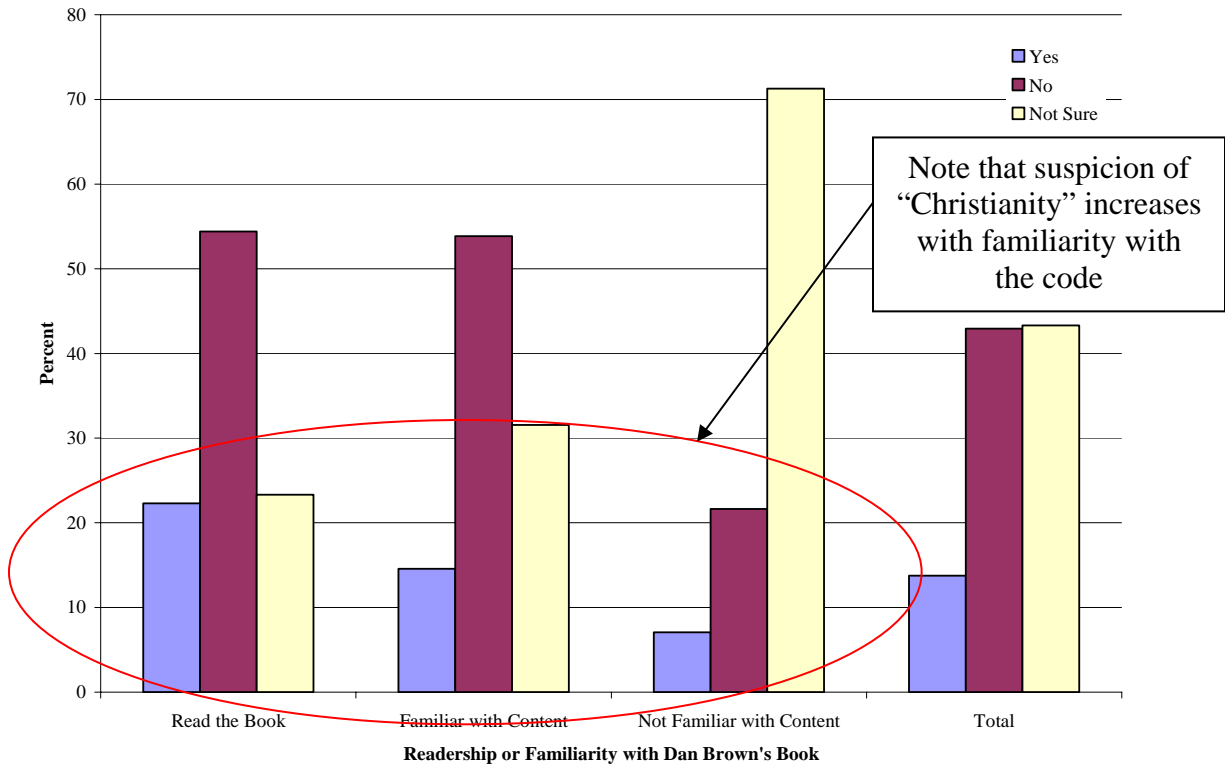
Which book would you consider to be closer to the truth, *The Da Vinci Code* or *The Bible* ?



Since more people are about to be increasingly familiar with the content, this should be a cause for concern.

Also, the more familiar they are with the content, the more likely they are to believe that Christianity is suppressing the “truth.”

Is Christianity suppressing the truth as portrayed in *The Da Vinci Code* ?



The Good News

It would be a vast overstatement to say that most, or even a large minority, believe the truths found in *The Da Vinci Code*. When we compared the Bible to *The Da Vinci Code*, even among all Americans in our sample, the Bible fared well! We asked:

In the movie advertising they are using the tagline “seek the truth.” Which book would you consider to be closer to the truth, The Da Vinci Code, or the Bible?

The Bible	72%
<i>The Da Vinci Code</i>	6
Neither	11
Not sure	11

So, if many believe the Bible as more reliable, is this an opportunity for an evangelistic witness? To find out, we also asked:

After reading or hearing about The Da Vinci Code, are you more or less likely to seek truth through studying the Bible?

More likely	44%
Less likely	20
Neither	21
Not sure	16

Instead of picketing and protesting, many are seeing *The DaVinci Code* as an opportunity—and with good reason. Almost half of those surveyed said they are more likely to seek the truth through studying the Bible. Perhaps an invitation to Bible study would be more effective than a protest at the theater.

Where Now?

Here is the irony: a movie that questions the basics of the faith is now causing almost half of Americans to be “more likely” to look to the Bible which 72 percent already consider closer to the truth. The movie tagline is “Seek the Truth,” and we can help them do that very thing.

Many folks are just not sure—and that provides a challenge and opportunity. When asked, “Is Christianity suppressing the truth as portrayed in *The Da Vinci Code*?” there was a large number of people who were not sure. It is hard to say if “not sure” means indifference / unawareness about the subject or sincerely questioning its content, but these folks may still be open to look at the gospels and encounter Christ there.

Yes	14%
No	43
Not sure	43

For those not sure, the answer is found in bringing them to the Word of God. We can trust the Word and Spirit to work in people’s lives. So, rather than burning *The DaVinci Code*, let’s invite people to read a better book—the Book that tells the dramatic story of God who sent His son, who lived a perfect life, died in my place on a cross, and who rose again to break a curse, not a code. That’s an opportunity we should not miss.

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