
News Updates

JOURNAL MARKS 100TH ISSUE

This issue of *The Quarterly Journal* achieves a milestone for the ministry of Personal Freedom Outreach. It marks our 100th issue. In 1981, PFO began publishing its quarterly newsletter. This periodical was developed to provide the Christian body with articles, editorials, news items, and book reviews on current cult-related and apologetic subjects. During the past 26 years some things have changed, including the design, size, and name of our newsletter publication, yet its purpose has remained unchanged.

TQJ has been called a tremendous resource to assist the Christian's spiritual discernment. It has been heralded by many within the apologetic community for its careful and thorough research and cutting-edge articles. PFO is grateful for the respect we've earned and for the accomplishment of one hundred issues in which to share, to serve, and to make a difference.

—MKG

DAN BROWN CLEARED OF PLAGIARISM CHARGES

Author Dan Brown escaped from his own drama involving a plagiarism case brought against him over his best-selling novel, *The Da Vinci Code*. In April, England's High Court dismissed the copyright infringement charges aimed at him.

Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, two of the three authors of a 1982 fictional work, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, sued Brown claiming that he had stolen their central theme for his own volume. Following a five-week trial, the British court issued a 71-page ruling which stated, "Even if the central themes were copies, they are too general or too low a level of abstraction to be capable of protection by copyright law."

Baigent and Leigh's novel proposes that Jesus married Mary Magdalene and produced a child through the union whose lineage continues to this day. Brown's storyline in *The Da Vinci Code* closely parallels this thought, alleging that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married, with Mary giving birth to a daughter following Jesus' crucifixion. During the trial, Brown admitted that *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* was just one of several sources which he utilized in study for his own work.

The court, by ruling in Brown's favor, cleared the way for an unimpeded May 19 premiere of *The Da Vinci Code* motion picture. If the court had ruled against Brown, the release of director Ron Howard's film adaptation may have been delayed. The movie, starring Tom Hanks, was budgeted at \$125 million. Columbia Pictures paid Brown \$6 million in June 2003 for the film rights.

Baigent and Leigh lost more than just the case when the court tossed out their charges. According to a Religious News Service report, the judge ordered the pair to cover 85 percent of the estimated \$2.25 million in trial expenses incurred by Random House, Brown's publisher. The judge also refused any right for Baigent and Leigh to appeal the court's ruling.

The Da Vinci Code was first published in 2003, has sold more than 40 million copies, and has been translated into 44 languages. News reports disclose that Brown is the highest-paid author in history and that he earned an estimated \$78 million in a single year.

—MKG

PENTECOSTAL CENTENNIAL CELEBRATED

Tens of thousands of people assembled April 25-29 in Los Angeles to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Azusa Street Revival, the event which is said to have birthed the Pentecostal movement. The first day of the historic gathering drew 25,000 people from more than 100 nations.

The five-day celebration featured over 150 speakers, including Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, T.D. Jakes, Rod Parsley, Reinhard Bonnke, and Creflo Dollar. The roster also included names not generally recognized as prominent within Pentecostal or Charismatic circles. Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church in Southern California, made a two-part presentation on the opening day in which he presented "the key characteristics of a Spirit-filled local church."

On April 14, 1906, Pastor William Seymour held the first service of his Azusa Street Mission in a converted livery stable. The principal attraction of the services was glossolalia, which the *Los Angeles Times* labeled a "weird babel of tongues" amid "wild scenes." Seymour, a disciple of Charles Fox Parham, a Holiness preacher from the Midwest, fostered the belief that tongues were a modern day sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. For

(continues on page 22)