

OpenTheo

A Fresh Look at Inerrancy: Part two

September 3, 2024



Risen Jesus - Mike Licona

What are compositional devices? How do they affect our view of inerrancy? What does the Bible say about inspiration and inerrancy? In this episode, Dr. Mike Licona discusses his contention that the common evangelical definition of inerrancy, as outlined in the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, may be based on an incorrect concept of inspiration which in turn renders it incorrect.

Transcript

Hello, and welcome to the Risen Jesus podcast with Dr. Mike Licona. Dr. Licona is professor of New Testament studies at Houston Christian University, and he is the president of Risen Jesus, a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Welcome to the continuation of Dr. Licona's conversation with Frank Turic from Cross-Examined.

In this episode, they discuss the topic of biblical inerrancy. This is Dr. Kurt Jarius. Welcome to the Risen Jesus podcast.

Mike, why don't we start by talking about what some scholars will say are errors in the Bible versions that we have now. Can you name a couple of these? And these are just details. They're not errors in big issues, but they're details.

Give us one or two and let's talk about them. Well, in 1 Samuel, it says that David killed Goliath. When you come to 2 Samuel, it says that Elhanan killed Goliath.

And so, which is it? Now, in the original... There were two Goliath's, like, come, everybody knows that. That might be a harmonization right there, but some of them try to say, well, it was Goliath's brother that they killed. I mean, that's the possibility.

The thing is, first Samuel, in its original form, was just Samuel. And it was later on that it was divided into first and second Samuel. Same author wrote it, you know, the whole thing as one document.

So, I mean, there's various hypotheses that go around to try to explain the difference,

but we just have to say, well, it's maybe one of those solutions are correct. Maybe it's an error there. You know, we just don't know.

And here's something that's interesting. You find a lot of these things in Samuel kings and chronicles, differences in numbers and things like that. The numbers of chariots, the numbers of soldiers, et cetera, numbers of stables.

So, what's going on here? Does chronicles exaggerate because that was a literary device back then? Well, it is a known literary device, but is that what the chronicler is doing? You know, it's hard to tell at times. But you can compare parallel texts, Samuel kings and chronicles, and see that there are certainly discrepancies in what's going on. And we come up with reasons to think, well, you know, maybe harmonize them or, you know, scribal error, you know, copyist error, things like that.

But we can't say we've identified them all because, look, the reason we can identify these things is because there is a parallel text. But most of the Bible does not have a parallel text. So, we're not going to say that copyist only made errors when a parallel text was involved.

If there are, if there, we can identify errors where there are parallel texts, there's probably some errors in the text where they don't have a parallel that the chairs could be. So, I mean, that's one. When we come to the new, I mean, there's plenty in the Old Testament.

When you come to the New Testament, there's the, there's the census of Augustus that's mentioned in Luke. Scholars think that that a lot of scholars think that that's an error. I mean, at least we could say it is a reasonable candidate for an error.

I think the location of the feeding of the 5000 is a potential, it's a reasonable candidate for an error. You have Luke that places it near Bethsaida, which is around, if you think of the Sea of Galilee as a clock, then Bethsaida is around 1231 o'clock. And then Matthew and John says that after he fed the 5000, Jesus ordered them to cross the lake and to go to the other side to, to convert them, which really isn't the other side.

It's kind of on the same side of the lake. Well, it's the north side, but no, it is on the west side. As you know, haven't been there several times.

It's it's around 10 30 11 o'clock. So it's on, it's on the west side rather than the east side where Bethsaida is. Well, Mark says he tells them after the feeding to cross the lake to the other side to Bethsaida.

Well, wait a minute, how can that be? So I mean, that's a reasonable candidate for an error. I think the most difficult one to to resolve would be in the infancy narratives. So you have Matthew that has Jesus in Bethlehem, and then Joseph is warned in a dream to to get out of there and to get to go to Egypt.

And so he's down there for perhaps two years. And then he returns after Herod, Archilal dies, and then they settle in Nazareth. In Luke's gospel, after the days of purification, which I think was 40 days, then Mary and Joseph, we find them in the Jerusalem temple.

So he gives birth in Beth, she gives birth in Bethlehem 40 days later. She's the purification rights doing it in the temple. In Jerusalem, Jesus is dedicated there.

And then Luke says after that they settle in Nazareth. So what's going on there? If I had to put money on it, I would probably say my best guess is that Luke just didn't care about the Exodus to Egypt, and just didn't include the story and just weave these things in and like cut that out and just made it go from Jerusalem to Nazareth. I wonder if that is that? Yeah, that is something that part airman brought up with Jimmy Akins debate.

Where did they go? Why does why does there's prepared to be a difference between Luke and Matthew? It might not be an error. As you said, maybe just Luke just decided I'm not going to include that part. I'm going to compress this.

Or it could be in terms of homes, Jimmy was saying that it could be that Joseph had two homes. He had a rural home and a city home, so to speak. I mean, there's ways to harmonize these things.

The question is, are we stretching it too much when we do that? And notice, ladies and gentlemen, these things that are acknowledged are minor, minor details. This has nothing to do with whether or not there's a God, whether or not Jesus rose from the dead, whether or not he died for your sins, whether or not if you trust in him, you're going to have eternal life. None of these, none of these are big theological issues.

They're minor details and it shows you something, as we talked about in the previous podcast, that when skeptics bring these kind of things up, they're really going after minor details because they can't go after major details because everybody agrees on the major advice. They have these little chronological things, these little differences in location and cross the lake here, cross the lake. A big deal, right? I mean, it's nothing huge here.

But I want to talk also, Mike, about the compositional devices you talk about in the book, Jesus Contradicted. I want you to compare the compositional device with a harmonization attempt, and why don't we take Jesus heals the Centurion's servant? Because Luke tells the story one way, Matthew tells the story another way, and it appears to be contradictory. So first of all, how does Luke tell the story and then how does Matthew tell the story? Well, Luke has the Centurion.

He's got a servant who's very sick, and so he sends some Jewish leaders to Jesus to ask him the favor to heal his servant. And so they go on and they say, Jesus, the Centurion is a righteous man. He loves our people.

He's built a synagogue for us. He's a worthy of this. Please come and heal his servant.

So Jesus says, all right, let's go check it out. So they head toward the Centurion's home in Capernaum. And on their way, the Centurion has a change of mind.

And so he sends some friends out to intercept Jesus and say, look, the Centurion says that he's unworthy to have you come under his roof. But he recognizes that you are a man of authority just like he is. So just say the word and his servant will be healed.

And Jesus praises the Centurion for his faith and heals his servant without ever seeing the Centurion or his servant. That's how Luke tells the story. That's Luke chapter seven, ladies and gentlemen.

Now, Matthew chapter eight, how does he say it or how does he follow his typical practice of simplifying a story? I like to say, rather than the girl version of the story, he gives us the guy version and he simplifies. And so he just has Matthew, the Centurion himself go to Jesus in person and make the same request. Lord, I got the servant and he's sick.

Please come and heal him. All right, let's go. No, no, no.

I'm unworthy to have you come under my roof. You're a man of authority like me. Just speak the word and the Centurion.

I'm sorry. So Jesus praises the Centurion for his faith and heals his servant without ever seeing the Centurion. So there's a difference there that the Centurion go and meet Jesus or not.

All right. So how would the scholars who believe in what we call the now the traditional view of an erancy that every every detail has to be precisely the same? How would they harmonize these two seemingly divergent accounts? It's a difficult one, Frank. I've saw two different ways they attempt to harmonize it.

The first, and there's only one modern scholar I found that tried it. It was Gleason Archer. And I think Craig Blomberg was open to it, if not partial to it.

And that is to say that the Centurion first sent the Jewish elders, and then he sent the friends, and then he said, you know what? I think I'll just go in person, you know. Okay. So saying something that none of the other gospels said.

So that'd be one way. Another way is what our mutual friend Richard Howe proposed, and some others have as well, metonymy, where, you know, one represents another. So it would be like saying President Biden communicated with the president of Taiwan, expressing his support for Taiwan, when it was actually the secretary of state Blinken who communicated with their secretary of state.

So you could say that Biden did communicate with their president. He just did it through others. And so in that sense, it would be that the centurion, I want to say the centurion went to Jesus.

That's just representative. He actually, he actually went to him through the Jewish elders and the servant. Okay, that's an attempted harmonization.

Now, when you read these ancient biographies, many of them by Plutarch, you say there's about 90 of these ancient biographies within 300 years of Jesus, 150 years of each side. And Plutarch wrote about 48 of them if I'm not mistaken. And you say all this in the book, Jesus contradicted.

What might be a solution to this issue other than that harmonization? And you call it a compositional device, a compositional device, that term, I use it because Christopher Kelly and the foremost authority in the world on Plutarch, that's the term that he uses for it. There were certain devices that we can infer when we look at the different ancient historians and biographers that they use. And one would be transferral, where you transfer what one person said, as though said by another.

Or the recipient is transferred from one to another. We saw transferral happening with the recipient with Jesus' baptism, who did God's voice speak to, to Jesus or to the crowd. It's a transferral that Matthew's doing.

I think that's what Matthew's doing here. And here's why. Plutarch tells an interesting story about how Pompey, when Rome was in a serious crisis, a lot of riots going on.

It was about ready to collapse under its own weight due to the corruption and the riots. Sounds a little like the US at this point, a reminiscent of it. So they appoint Pompey, the famous Roman general, to run Rome for one year.

And he doesn't need the senate approval. He can install any law that he wants. This is the end of 53 BC.

52 BC comes along. And so one of the laws that Pompey makes is that if someone is on trial, one of their friends can't come in and read a speech of lavish praise called an incommium. Because it would unduly bias the jurors when it really wouldn't matter, contribute to whether the guy was guilty or innocent.

So Pompey makes this law. And then later on, a few months later, he proceeds to break this law when his friend Plankus is on trial. He creates an incommium and has it read at the trial.

Now, here's where it gets interesting. And we know this happened because it's also reported by Suetonius and Cassius Dio. So in Plutarch's life of Cato the Younger, Cato Uticensis, he says that Pompey wrote an incommium and gave it to an emissary who

came into Rome and read it to the jury.

And we know this is how it's happened because again, this is how Suetonius and Dio reports it. And it would have been that after serving his consul, Pompey would have been outside of the city of Rome with an army in a consular province. And so with that army, he wouldn't have been allowed to come back into the city of Rome while he was gone that year.

But when Plutarch tells the same story, we're talking about the same author telling the same story using the same sources. And as Pelian argues, he's writing these simultaneously. He says that Pompey himself came into the city and read it directly.

So Plutarch there is just simplifying and transferring the words from the emissary to Pompey because they were Pompeys anyway. And I think that that's what Matthew is doing with the centurion. It makes perfect sense.

He's just doing what Plutarch and others did writing ancient biography with Transferral. How does that differ from what Richard Howe said that it's in sort of an emissary way, sending, saying it was Biden when really it was Blinken. How does that differ? It does differ because Plutarch is actually saying, he intends for us to understand that Pompey himself went in the city and read it.

Whereas Richard is saying that no, Matthew didn't mean for us to take it that the centurion himself went. And where I think that goes wrong is that in Luke he's telling the people, the emissaries, go back and he praises the centurion for his faith and he tells them plural that it will be done. Whereas in, so he's using plural noun plural verb.

Whereas in Matthew, he uses the singular verb, go singular to the centurion, go. It will be done for you singular as you singular have requested. So I don't think he's referring to metonymy there.

It just makes more sense when we see this kind of stuff that's going on in the other ancient literature. These are common compositional devices that were part and parcel of writing ancient biography and history. This is how they did it back then.

We do it today in a sense for especially as guys or people who want to abbreviate. We're not so much concerned about precise accuracy. We're more concerned about just telling the stories succinctly and giving an essentially faithful representation of what occurred.

Yeah, you talk a lot in the book Jesus contradicted about the fact that we when the gospel writers are writing down, even what Jesus said, many times they're paraphrasing. They are getting the gist of what he said because I remember years ago, Mike, when I first became a Christian, I was reading two accounts of Jesus saying, you must deny yourself and take up your cross. And another gospel I think said, you must deny yourself and take up your cross daily.

And I'm thinking to myself, what did he say daily or not? Which is it? And that for me was almost like a crisis of faith. How can I trust this stuff? What did he say? What's the truth? And part of the reason that bothered me is because I had the wrong expectation of what we've already admitted in the first show, ladies and gentlemen, that the Bible doesn't give us a firm definition. No matter if you're going to take the Chicago statement view, you got to go back and listen to the first podcast and what we're talking about.

Or you're going to take the view of an air and see that Dr. Michael Kona is going to give us here in a few minutes here on this podcast. The Bible doesn't tell you what the right definition is, but you've got two principles, Mike, that you use to try and arrive at the proper definition of an air and see. What are the two principles? Well, that's necessarily for an air and see, but just two principles of how we can approach the text.

And the first is our view of scripture should be consistent with what we observe in scripture. Our view of scripture should be consistent with what we observe in scripture. I mean, this just sounds common sense to me.

And the second one is that, before you get there, before you get there, let's unpack that for a second. What do we observe in scripture? We observe that authors relating the same events tell those events differently. And so, and even using different wording, now it could be, he said something, and I'm sure he did, he said things over and over again in different locations, and maybe one author is saying what he said in one location, and another author is saying the same kind of thing because he said a little bit differently in another location, that could be.

But it could also be that they're just recording the gist. Both of those options are on the table. That's correct.

And again, I'm not the first one to say this. I mean, F. E. Bruce, a brilliant scholar whose conservatism was beyond question. J.I. Packer, one of the three guys who crafted the Chicago statement said that no one has epitomized the balance between faith and Christian scholarship more than F. F. Bruce.

And yet when F. F. Bruce, in his commentary on the Gospel of John in the introduction, he says, John has taken the Jesus tradition and restated it as an expanded paraphrase, a translation of the freest kind, a transposition into another key, and so much more. Wow. You know, that's pretty remarkable.

And so, that's why I think you have on many occasions in the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, where you have them. Jesus is cryptic about his identity. But in John, he's out there with it.

Before Abraham was, I am. And he makes statements that are very explicit that we don't find in the Synoptic Gospels. What we do find, however, is the same kind of message

that Jesus was communicating explicitly in John, we find it being communicated implicitly or in softer terms in the Synoptic Gospels.

So, when you read the Gospels, like if you were to read Matthew five times, and then read Mark five times, and then read Luke five times, don't go Matthew Mark Luke, Matthew Mark Luke, read Matthew five, Mark five, Luke five, and then read John five times. What you'll notice is that Matthew, Mark, and Luke are extremely similar in the way they report about Jesus. Jesus sounds the same.

When you read John, the message, the teachings of Jesus, the picture we get of Jesus is the same, but he sounds different. And then when you read first John five times, you go, whoa, Jesus in John's Gospel sounds a whole lot like John in first John, which seems to suggest that John has recast Jesus using his own words. So, they took these kinds of liberties.

That's the way that they wrote back then. They were entirely authorized to do this kind of stuff. They just didn't write like modern biographers.

There's only one who wrote like modern historians, biographers, and that guy's name is Asconius, who wrote around the same time as when Paul was executed. Now, most people will never even have heard of Asconius. And the reason being is because people didn't care about him because he was writing in a manner that people just didn't value back then.

That's not what they wanted. Okay, so the first principle we have to, our view of scripture should be consistent with what we see in scripture. Right.

What is our scripture? And the second principle is, if we truly, truly want to have a high view of scripture, then we will accept it, embrace it, as God has given it to us, instead of attempting to force it to fit a mold of how we think he should have. And if we refuse to do this, we may believe we have a high view of scripture, when in reality, we have a high view of our view of scripture. Yeah, that's an interesting distinction you make.

We have a high view of our view, what we expect. You know, there's a lot of things that I might expect God to do differently, but since I'm not God, he has reasons for not doing them the way I might want him to do and do them. We'll take for example, he says, if you, you know, if you want to be my disciple, you got to take up your cross and follow me.

That means you got to be willing to be crucified. And yet, we hear that God loves us. Well, we think if God truly loves us, I mean, if we love our children, we love our spouses.

If someone came to them and say, deny your dad, deny your husband, did I mic his your husband, or we're going to subject you to a horrible death, I'd say, yeah, you know that you're my wife, you know that you're my kids, deny me, I know that you know it, spare

your hide. But that's not what God says. He says, no, you got to be willing to take up your cross.

And no matter what they do, you do not deny me. That's what I expect of you. So yeah, God doesn't always act as we would think he would, or hope that he would, but he's God, he's independent, he does what he wants.

Yeah, we're speculating now, Mike, but why do you think, and maybe there's no way of answering this, why do you think God would allow, say, even heirs to creep into, scribal heirs to creep into the text? We can identify those, but why would he allow that? You're right, we can only speculate. I mean, I've heard people say, well, maybe if our text was, was if there was no challenges in terms of errors in the text, we would worship the text. You know, I don't know if it's possible, I guess.

I really don't have any idea. You know, what I do know is this, God could have given us his scriptures in any number of ways. He could have put them on golden plates, and told us where they're at, and we could dig them up, and we'd have them word for word.

He could have communicated them to us through an angel that dictated to us through an angel that we were written. He could have done any of these things, but he didn't. Instead, he chose to have the scriptures composed and preserved by humans, which allow errors to creep into it by the time it gets to us in the 21st century.

This is what scripture looks like. God could have chosen different ways, but this is the way from role, please. What is your definition of an errancy and why? Well, again, if our view of scripture is to be consistent with our view of scripture, I look at our product and I say, the autographs, the originals may have been inherent in every detail, but we cannot know.

And I don't want to go further than what we, what we can actually give what I think is a decent argument for. So I define an errancy as, the Bible is true, trustworthy, and without error in all that it teaches. That's how I would define it.

And what's nice about what I like about this definition, it applies both to the originals and to our present Bible. So we can hold up our present Bible. Pastor can hold up his Bible on Sunday morning and say, the Bible I'm holding in my hands is the inherent word of God.

It's an errant in all that it teaches. But as you pointed out earlier, the pastor who embraces the Chicago statement cannot with integrity hold up his Bible on Sunday morning and says, my Bible is the an errant word of God. Yeah, you can do that with that definition.

And who agrees with you on that definition? Prominent people we know who are conservatives. I think we asked William Lane Craig what I haven't discussed this with a lot of individuals. And I don't know, even if I did, I don't know that I want to give them

their names because then they'd become targets.

I've been targeted before I've got thick skin, I can take the arrows in my back. I'm not going to ask my friends to do it. So, but I know William Lane Craig does.

In fact, what was interesting is I sent my chapter an early version of it to Bill. And then, you know, he's working on his magnum opus. And I think his volume one is coming out this fall.

And so he sent me his chapter on the doctrine of scripture. And Hark, we both pretty much believe the same thing. We both think of an errantcy and inspiration in very similar ways.

We just get there differently. He gets there through philosophical theology. I'm getting there through, you know, historical as well as theological.

But I'm not so much, you know, doing philosophical theology. That's just not my lane. But we kind of arrived at the which was kind of neat.

Now, toward the back of the book, again, the books called Jesus contradicted, you include a couple of testimonies from people that had read your previous book, which is the academic version of this. And I know some people are having their mind stretched to listen into this because our expectation, at least mine was, given the fact I learned from Dr. Geysler that, you know, every detail had to be correct in order for us to call the Bible an errant. And many of the details we can harmonize, but there are some that appear to be better dealt with with the composition technique you're talking about, Mike.

And you had some people write to you and say what about reading your book? I've had a number of people who call right me, pastors and other people saying, this stuff is great. This is really restored by confidence in the gospels. The very first person to do it is a gentleman in Southern California named Ricardo Mora.

He's a high school teacher. And what had happened was he was listening to a, um, okay, so he came from, I think it was Cuba. And, um, he was, in fact, let me read it, Mike, I have it right here.

This is on page 214. He sent you an email. It says, I'm so thankful for what you have done here, Mr. Lacona, Dr. Lacona.

I am crying right now as I write these words, and I'm a guy. I don't usually cry. It's been 22 years of searching, uh, for, no, it's, it's been 22 years of searching for an answer, praying for some form of insight, hoping that my mind would one day be at peace.

It's finally at peace. Now, the very differences that caused me so much worry and doubt are turning into markers of authenticity. I can finally trust these accounts again.

Your work is crucial for young adults to know as they enter college, what happened to me, can be avoided. Please don't stop doing what you're doing. Yeah.

He said that while he was at, um, uh, he was, he was at a Christian university doing a master's degree in, in apologetics years ago, more than 20 years ago. And the gospel difference is really bothered him. And so he read Geisler in house book.

He read Archer's book. And he said, he found some of their proposals for reconciling the differences, their harmonizations to be more problematic than the difference itself. And so he just kind of stagnated in his, in his Christian walk for like 20 years or over 20 years.

And so it was reading this book, which he learned about on, uh, Bill Craig's podcast, reasonable faith. That's right. He took a day off.

He bought the book, took a day off of work and read the book. And it rejuvenated his faith. You know, for me, these little differences, ever since I've been doing this, uh, now, uh, you know, when I first became a Christian, it bothered me.

But ever since then, none of these apparent discrepancies have bothered me for some reason because the overall message still comes through. And I remember you saying that when you were, uh, when you were very early in, uh, your walk as a Christian and you were going, we were going to Liberty, uh, you kept going to Dr. Gary Habermas, who was a professor there, and you're coming up with all sorts of objections to the faith. And he would keep saying one thing back to you.

What was it? Did Jesus rise from the dead? That's right. And that's so important because if he did, it's game set match. Christianity is true.

Period. Right. Right.

Now, we got to talk about one other thing. And then I want to read a quote from Bart Ervin again, because, uh, it, it's germane to what we're talking about. Some people are thinking, but Mike, if I give an inch on saying that, you know, there could be a scribal error, there could be, you know, maybe Matthew got it wrong.

Maybe the centurion didn't go and, you know, then I'm going to start doubting the resurrection because how do I trust the same author on the resurrection? How do you respond? You just look at historical research and there are things through the scripture. I mean, there's some things we can establish about Jesus, some things we can't, we can't establish that he was born of a virgin or take the statement that Jesus' death of tones for our sins. The historian can establish that Jesus died by crucifixion, but the historian don't have the tools.

No one has the tools to be able to establish as fact that Jesus' death of tones for sin is it's a truth of faith. It's something we have to believe by faith alone because there's no way

to establish it. So I think when we take some facts, known facts, things that even skeptical scholars will grant, we can build a very strong case for the resurrection of Jesus.

And so that's how. So like you said earlier, was there one or two angels at the tomb? I think there was probably two and you have spotlighting going on. It's irrelevant.

Even if we couldn't tell it, even if we look at that as a contradiction, it doesn't change the fact that Jesus rose leaving behind an empty tomb. Yeah, ladies and gentlemen, I can't emphasize enough, these documents would not exist unless Jesus rose from the dead. I agree with that.

I mean, why would they ever be written? That's the point, right? That's what every one of these documents is written about when you think about it. It has something to do with the resurrection of Jesus, whether it's stated explicitly or implicitly. So the New Testament documents we're talking about.

If Jesus hadn't risen from the dead, he'd had just been another itinerant preacher who said some pretty amazing things, but he wouldn't be the center of the human race. That's certainly for sure. It'd be like every other failed Messiah of that time.

And Josephus said there were a lot of them. Oh, yeah. That would be Messiah dies, killed by the Romans, and then they just find someone else.

And that movement just becomes no more than a footnote in future historical works. In fact, I want to read something that Bart Ehrman said. Bart Ehrman, the skeptic, we've talked about many times on this program, he wrote a book in 2006 called *Miss Quoting Jesus*.

And Bart Ehrman was a disciple and learned from Bruce Metzger, probably the top manuscript scholar of the last century who taught at Princeton University. And they actually co-wrote a book together called *The Text of the New Testament*, the same year that *Miss Quoting Jesus* came out. And in the paperback edition of *Miss Quoting Jesus*, it's not in the original, but in the paper back edition, there's an interview where they interview Dr. Ehrman.

And here is what he says, because Bruce Metzger is a or was a believer. Here's what he says in the interview, Bart Ehrman. Bruce Metzger is one of the great scholars of modern times.

And I dedicated the book to him because he was both my inspiration for going into textual criticism and the person who trained me in the field. I have nothing but respect and admiration for him. And even though we may disagree on important religious questions, he is a firmly committed Christian and I am not, we are in complete agreement on a number of very important historical questions.

If he and I were put in a room and asked to hammer out a consensus statement on what we think the original text of the New Testament probably look like, there would be very few points of disagreement. Maybe one or two dozen places out of many thousands. The position I argue for in *Miss Quoting Jesus* does not actually stand at odds with Professor Metzger's position that the essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variance in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament.

Unquote. That's on page 252 of the *Jesus*. My only question for somebody like Bart Ehrman then Mike is, why did you ever write the book in *Miss Quoting Jesus* then? Yeah.

Right. I mean, because even if you're right, there are these minor errors, these minor details that we can't harmonize. Even if you're correct, you're essentially admitting that what Bruce Metzger is believing is contained in the documents, including the resurrection.

Yeah. I agree with you. That is the popular version of his other book, the *Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*.

The *Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* is far more tamed in the way it describes things than what you find in *Miss Quoting Jesus*. What happens, Bart has this way of trying to make things very provocative and people get the wrong impression, because people were reading it and saying, yeah, we can't trust the New Testament. We can't trust it at all, because it's been corrupted over the years.

So I just think that due to the provocative way in which he communicates in that book, which sells a lot of copies, he's miscommunicating, not misquoting, but miscommunicating his ideas behind it. Yeah. It's really more misquoting ermene, because the same year he released the update to the book, the text of the New Testament with Metzger.

And as you say, when he's talking to an academic audience, he's much more tamed. He's agreeing with Metzger that you can trust what the New Testament document says. But of course, he doesn't agree that everything the New Testament document say actually happened.

He's simply saying the text isn't corrupted to the point where we can't know what the original said. And so, ladies and gentlemen, I say all that because if you're bothered by these minor so-called errors that we might not be able to harmonize, that doesn't affect the Christian faith, one iota. That's correct.

Jesus rose. So Christianity is true. That's right.

That's right. And all the major teachings remain the same, even if the centurion did or didn't go to Jesus. Right.

Even if so and so in the Old Testament was 42 or 22, there are two different manuscript traditions, and how old he was. These are minor things, ladies and gentlemen. But as Christians, when skeptics bring them up, we ought to be able to at least have a discussion with them on it.

And that's what this book will help you do. Jesus contradicted why the gospels tell the same story differently by my friend Michael R. Lacona, Dr. Lacona. It's filled with all sorts of endorsements on it.

I read the book. It's a great read. Whether you agree with everything or not, that's not the point.

You ought to be educated on these things. I think there are certainly many things in this book that are helpful to understanding why there are differences in the New Testament. So put this not just in your library, but in your head, ladies and gentlemen.

And again, Christianity is true. Whether or not we can come up with a satisfying solution to every little detail. Mike, tell people where they can learn more about you and where they are.

The YouTube channel is Dr. Mike Lacona. And so I think right now we have three short videos that kind of just give you a little teasers of what's in each of the chapters, things like that. Well, maybe not so much individual chapters, but what's being said in the book.

There's going to be, I think, 10 videos, short videos, two to four minutes. We've got a couple interviews on our channel of more describing the ideas that are in the book, discussing it. And we've got much, much more.

So Dr. Mike Lacona, YouTube channel, or you just go to our Facebook, I'm sorry, our, we've been going to this for a while, I'm getting tongue tied. My website, RisenJesus.com. RisenJesus.com. And later this year, ladies and gentlemen, Dr. Lacona and I will be releasing an online course on the resurrection. We filmed it last year.

We're just pulling it all together now. And of course, that's Mike's area of expertise, the resurrection. And he was a student of Dr. Gary Habermas, as you may know.

So look for that course coming out. Thanks for joining us today. If you'd like to learn more about the work and ministry of Dr. Mike Lacona, visit RisenJesus.com, where you can find authentic answers to genuine questions about the reliability of the gospels and the resurrection of Jesus.

Be sure to subscribe to this podcast, visit Dr. Lacona's YouTube channel, or consider becoming a monthly supporter. This has been the RisenJesus Podcast, a ministry of Dr. Mike Lacona.