

*I don't have enough* **FAITH**  
*to be an* **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

## How to Evangelize Transgender Friends and Is the Bible Historical Fiction? Plus More Q&A

(April 23, 2024)

### **FRANK:**

Ladies and gentlemen, we have several questions today. One question that has been emailed in has to do with the fact that the New Testament unmistakably includes what appear to be eyewitness details that only an eyewitness would know. Details about the land, details about the names, details about artifacts that we now have uncovered, details about who's in power at a particular time in a particular place.

This really appears to be an eyewitness account, but we have a question that's come in that says, well, maybe this is an historical novel that they used the surrounding area. And yeah, they were eyewitnesses at the time, but they're really just recording a historical novel. Because just because you find somebody in the dirt in archaeology or you verify an eyewitness detail from the first century, that doesn't mean that miracles actually occurred.

We're going to get to that question, but I have a couple of other questions I want to get to first that you have sent in. And if you ever want to send in a question, we can't get to all of them, but if you want to try, we'll take a look at your question. The email address is [hello@CrossExamined.org](mailto:hello@CrossExamined.org). Hello@CrossExamined.org with a d on the end of it, dot org. And I also want to mention, I just had a great time out near Seattle this past weekend.

Dr. Carl Payne has put an apologetics conference on for about the past 21 or so years, except for a couple of years of COVID and he funds the whole thing himself. A great guy who for many years was the chaplain of the Seattle Seahawks, has a great book on spiritual warfare I just started to read. I'm going to have Carl on at some point on this broadcast. I also met with my old friend, well, actually a number of old friends out there. Some I see routinely, others I don't see very often.

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Of course, Alisa Childers was out there with me, and she, and I, and Natasha Crain do a lot of work together. In fact, our next conference is out near Pittsburgh on May 18, the Unshaken conference. Go to [UnshakenConference.com](http://UnshakenConference.com) to see more. I was also out there with the great Gary Habermas, the world renowned expert on the resurrection, Doug Geivett a philosopher who for many years taught at Biola University. And I invited my friend Jeffrey Louder, who is the only atheist I ever debated who actually read anything I had written.

I have a lot of respect for Jeffrey, and he's not your typical atheist. He actually has reasons for why he thinks atheism, or at least non theism is true. And at some point, we're going to have Jeffrey on the program. He and I debated about eight years ago out at Washburn University and that you can see on our YouTube channel. But Jeffrey is a very thoughtful guy, and it was great seeing him.

And we all had a great conversation together over lunch this past Saturday, so we'll tell you more details about that when we have Jeffrey on. In the meantime, let me get to some of your questions. This comes from a law enforcement officer. He says, I am a law enforcement officer and a civilian that works at my station. And he says, there is a man there trying to transition to become a woman. He said, we were just work friends before, but he seems to trust me. He says, what are some ways I can bring up Christianity or Jesus to minister to him?

Since it's such a hot topic now, I obviously have to be careful due to my job description, as my agency at work is very pro LGBTQ. He said, anything will help. I also plan on getting Frank's book 'Correct, Not Politically Correct' as well. By the way, if you notice, the book 'Correct, Not Politically Correct: About Same-Sex Marriage and Transgenderism' seems to go out of stock at Amazon every other week. I don't know. It's because they're selling many. I don't think it's that as much as they just don't want to carry it.

So, if you can't find it at Amazon, because right now it says currently out of stock, we don't know when this is going to be back in stock. You can get it [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). Just click on Store. You'll see it there. And this is the book that got me fired from two Fortune 500 companies, Cisco and Bank of America, in the name of inclusion, tolerance, and diversity. And I tell the story in that book because I updated it twice. The most recent time was last year to include the transgender material on there.

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And by the way, friends, that book has zero to do with biblical arguments against same-sex marriage or transgenderism. These are the natural law, which are consistent with the Bible. Natural law, common sense, medical reasons why both same-sex marriage and transgenderism are not good for individuals and not good for a society. So, if you want to get sort of a natural law case, check out 'Correct, Not Politically Correct.'

Now, this gentleman writing in is asking, you know, what can I do? How can I make any headway to bring people or bring this person at least to consider Jesus? And I think what you want to do is just ask a lot of questions. Take this person to lunch and ask him some questions. You know, when, when he's transitioning, you might say, what made you feel like you wanted to transition? Was there an event that occurred? Why do you think this is a good thing for you? I mean, just try and learn the person's story and see where they're coming from.

You'll learn something, maybe something you didn't know. And people like to talk about themselves. They like to talk about their story. They like to know that someone's listening, especially somebody dealing with an issue like this, which obviously shows a lot of mental anxiety that they think they actually need to try and change their gender, which they have to know somewhere in their mind that it's impossible to do, but they still want to try it anyway.

So, you may ask them, like, why do you think this is a good thing? Why do you think this is going to be good for you? What is good? What feeling did you have that made you want to do this? And do feelings always tell you the truth? Because I know that, and everyone knows that a lot of times, feelings don't tell you the truth. Feelings come and feelings go, and if you followed your feelings without reason or without moral restraint, you wouldn't live very long. We all have impulses, even feelings that persist over a long period of time that we know we ought not follow.

So, you might ask, how do you make decisions like this? Is it completely feeling based? You might also ask, do feelings ever change, particularly among the young? By the way, feelings change rapidly. In fact, as we pointed out in the book, and I pointed out on the previous program, we had the last podcast, that about 80% of young people who have this so-called rapid onset gender dysphoria grow out of it by the time they're 18.

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And the newest data shows that 96% that have gender dysphoria by the time they hit 26 years old are back to their biological sex. In other words, they've dispensed with gender dysphoria. They've grown out of it somehow. So, out of the small percentage that do have gender dysphoria, 96% of those by the time they're 26 don't have those feelings anymore.

So, why would anyone suggest that puberty blockers, or cross-sex hormones or, God forbid, surgery would be a solution to a problem that's probably going to fix itself anyway just through the passage of time? Yet that's what our government thinks is a good thing to do right now, and it matters who you vote for ladies and gentlemen. Let me just say that, okay? Because what's coming out of the White House right now makes absolutely zero sense when it comes to the data. And people are catching on.

Even people in the UK are going, yeah, this isn't good for kids especially. We're shutting down our UK gender clinic because this is bringing more harm than good. You might also ask the person over lunch, have you read much about the long term effects of trying to do this, trying to transition? And then you might ask them, have you ever investigated the claims of Jesus? And what do you think about Jesus?

And if Jesus, who indeed did sacrifice Himself for you, wanted you to live according to the biology He gave you, would you obey Him? I mean, if you can get to that point in the conversation. But no matter what he answers, you're caring about him because you're sitting down and talking about these things with him. So, just demonstrate some concern. Try and learn where this person's coming from.

And no matter what decision he makes, be friendly to him, doesn't mean you're going to use his pronouns because you're not going to lie to him. And if he asks you to use pronouns, you can say, do you think it's right to ask people to violate their conscience? Of course not. Then please don't ask me to violate mine. No, I would say you want to love somebody. And when you love somebody, you tell them the truth. You don't further them into their delusion or further them down a road that is going to hurt them and be against what God wants for them. But be a friend to this person.

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Again, being a friend doesn't mean you approve of everything they do. Love does not mean approval, ladies and gentlemen. Love means you seek what's best for the other person. And in the passage that everybody reads at their wedding, but nobody obeys, 1 Corinthians 13, Paul says that love always protects, that love does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but love rejoices in the truth, that love always perseveres.

You don't help people by lying to them. You don't help people by ushering them down the road away from the truth, away from what's right. You love people by telling them the truth coupled with grace, that there is a solution here. Because you love them, you're going to tell them the truth. So, I would try that. Just try and befriend that person. It seems like you already have a friendship with them and ask them some questions. That's the way forward questions. You're not making statements. You're asking questions to try and learn what the other person believes and why they believe it.

By the way, when you ask the question, what made you feel this way? Walt Heyer, who tried to live as a woman for eight years and then became a Christian, later started the ministry, SexChangeRegret.com, which is a great resource, by the way. Sexchangeregret.com, go there. He found after interviewing hundreds, if not thousands of people that wanted to get out of the road they went down, the transitionary road they went down. He found that when he asked that question, what happened that made you feel this way, 100% of the time there was always an event.

Normally some sort of traumatic sexual abuse event, that caused the person to have these feelings of I want to be the other gender. It could be that a boy who was sexually abused wanted to rid himself of the organ that was sexually abused. So, you can understand some of the psychology behind it if you ask the right questions. All right, thank you for caring about that person, by the way.

All right. Devon writes in, and he says, my name is Devon, and I'm a longtime listener of your show. Appreciate everything you do for the ministry of Jesus Christ. Well, thank you, Devon. I've recently adopted a more reformed view of soteriology. And I'm just wondering, doesn't your question, if I could prove Christianity is true, would you become a Christian? First of all, I never put it that way, Devon, because proof means different things to different people.

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I think the proper way to phrase the question might be, if Christianity were true, would you become a Christian? But I understand what you're saying. If Christianity were true, would you become a Christian? Because then you take out the notion of, I have to prove it to you. No, if it really just were true, if you could find out on your own, if it were true, if you thought it was true beyond a reasonable doubt, not 100% certainty, but a reasonable doubt, would you become a Christian?

And then Devon says, when people say no, you admit it's not a problem of the head, but of the heart. And I believe you hold the view that only God can change hearts. So, wouldn't the end result be in God's grace and not our will? May God bless your ministry. Just want to know how you address that issue. Thanks. All right, thanks, Devon. Well, it depends on what you mean by does God change the heart? I think there's a difference here between justification and sanctification. Justification is the moment you become a believer.

And sanctification is the long term process where you become more and more like Jesus. And justification happens in an instant. Sanctification happens over a lifetime. And yes, only God can change the heart through sanctification. You have to yield in order for Him to do that. You have to yield to the Holy Spirit. In fact, Paul talks about that in the book of Romans. We have to know that Jesus is the savior. We have to then apply what Jesus has said to our lives.

And then thirdly, we have to yield to the Holy Spirit. The old King James said something like, know, reckon, and yield. It sounds like King Jimmy was from Texas when he says reckon. But you get the idea. To know that Jesus is the savior, to apply what He has done to your life, to accept what He's done, and then to yield to the Holy Spirit. You see, the Bible talks about we can grieve the Holy Spirit. In fact, only God changes the heart. But it's only after we willingly respond to the Holy Spirit drawing us, as John 6:44 says, that God draws all people to him, or God must draw people in order for us to believe.

That's true, but I believe God draws all people. But some people grieve the Holy Spirit. We can still, through our free will, grieve the Holy Spirit by rejecting Him when He draws us. If not, then the Bible is contradictory because on one hand God says that He wants all people to be saved. And yet on the other hand, all people are not saved. Well, why aren't all people saved if God wants all to be saved and He does all the saving independent of what we decide?

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Well, the only reason is because we have free will to reject. God has given us free will so we can love. The problem is with our free will we can also do evil, and we can also therefore grieve the Holy Spirit, and we do. It's a complete sham, it seems to me the scriptures are, to say that God does all the choosing, that we have no choice in it at all, and yet God wants all to be saved and only some are saved then. What's the point?

Why does He continually plead with Israel, say throughout the Old Testament, to obey Him and they continually don't obey Him? Why does He say that He wants all to be saved and yet some are not saved if He does all the saving, and we have no choice? Now, our friends over at Got Questions have a good little article on this. The folks at Got Questions normally put together great articles. You might not agree with everything they say, but here's a little article that talks about what does the Bible mean when it says that we will receive a new heart?

I'm just reading a section of it from here. They say the human heart was created to mirror God's own heart, and they reference Genesis 1:27 and James 3:9. We were designed to love Him, love righteousness, and walk in harmony with God and others, as Micah 6:8 says. But part of God's design of the human heart is free will. That free will carries with it the opportunity to abuse it, as Adam and Eve did in the garden of Eden.

God desires that we choose to love and serve Him. All right, let me make a comment here. Without that ability, without free will ability, then we don't have any moral accountability. Yet God is choosing to punish us for something we had no choice in doing? We had no choice to sin, and we had no choice to obey because God is making all the choices. This doesn't make any sense philosophically, much less scripturally when you have these contradictory verses then.

Or they could be contradictory if you take them in a Calvinistic way, a hard five point Calvinistic way, that God wants all to be saved, and yet some are not. Anyway, the article here goes on, God desires that we choose to love and serve Him. When we stubbornly refuse to follow God, our hearts, which were designed to communicate with God, are hardened. God compares rebellious hearts to stone, as He does in Zechariah 7:12. A heart of stone finds it impossible to repent, to love God, or to please Him.

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The hearts of sinful humanity are so hardened that we cannot seek God on our own, as Romans 3:11 says, that no one seeks God. And that's why Jesus said, no one can come to Him unless the Father first, get the word first, draws Him, John 6:44. We desperately need new hearts, for we are unable on our own to soften our hard hearts. A change of heart toward God requires a supernatural transformation. Jesus called it being born again. When we are born again, God performs a heart transplant, as it were. He gives us a new heart.

Notice it says, when we are born again, not before we're born again. The power of the Holy Spirit changes our hearts from sin focused to God focused. We do not become perfect. We still have our sin flesh and the freedom to choose whether or not to obey it. However, when Jesus died for us on the cross, he broke the power of sin that controls us, receiving him as our savior gives us, see, now they're talking about sanctification here. This article is.

Receiving Him as our savior gives us access to God in His power, a power to transform our hearts from sin hardened to Christ softened. When we were separated from God with hardened hearts, we found it impossible to please Him. We tended towards selfishness, rebellion, and sin. With new hearts, we are declared righteous before God. The Holy Spirit gives us a desire to please God that was foreign to us in our hardened state. Second Corinthians 3:18 says that we are being transformed into His image with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit, unquote.

God's desire for every human being is that we become like His Son, Jesus. Romans 8:29, which talks about the fact that we are predestined to become like Jesus. The famous verse says, for those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of His son in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. Now, I think the way to consider this word predestined, it means that you're guaranteed to be conformed to the image of His Son if you're in Christ. It doesn't mean you don't have a choice.

It doesn't mean that God makes all the choices. It means that once you're in Christ, it's guaranteed that you're going to be conformed to the image of His Son. And the article here goes on to say we can become like Jesus only when we allow God to rid us of our own hardened hearts and give us new hearts. So, yes, God changes hearts, but we're the ones that allow God to do so.

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We're the ones that, when we don't grieve the Holy Spirit, when we throw ourselves on the mercy of God, when we accept what Christ has done, when we turn from our wicked ways, when we repent and we accept what Christ has done for us, then He starts the process of giving us a new heart. And Jesus Himself, who, by the way, didn't have a sin nature, He learned obedience through suffering. If Jesus without a sin nature learned obedience through suffering, what about us that do have a sin nature?

So, it's a good question, Devon, but I don't think the Calvinistic way of looking at it is correct. I don't think we get a new heart prior to accepting Christ. We get a new heart as a result of accepting Christ. Otherwise, as I mentioned earlier, we have all sorts of theological, and philosophical, and moral problems. If God is doing all the work, then He's the author of evil, because He also causes us to do evil if we don't have free choice. And if He causes us to do evil, then He is the author of evil.

And if He's the author of evil, why should we trust a word He says? Why should we trust the word of God if He's doing evil. He could be deceiving us. So, tragically, the hard five point Calvinistic view makes God more like Allah, that he's just arbitrary, and whatever He does is good. Not He does it because it is good, because it's a derivative. Goodness is a derivative of His nature, or goodness comes from His nature. That's the essentialist view, that God is good. It's not what He does makes it good. He just is good. And His commands flow from His good nature.

And He's not going to command us to do evil, nor is He going to cause us to do evil by overriding our free will. If He does, how is He any different than Satan? If Satan could override our free will for us to do evil, He would. He tries to tempt us to do so, though, doesn't He? Now, if you want more on this, I think the best YouTube source if you want to watch videos is Leighton Flowers, who has a YouTube channel called Soteriology 101.

By the way, he just debated James White on this very issue, and the center of the debate was John 6:44, the passage I mentioned earlier where Jesus says, no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day. What does that mean? Does that mean we don't have a choice? Does that mean he only draws some people and not others? Check out Soteriology 101, that YouTube channel, and you can watch the debate between Dr. Flowers and Dr. White and see what you think. All right, thanks for the question.

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Now, got a question from Mike, our resident skeptic. Very intelligent guy, and this is part of a long series of points he makes as a result or resulting from our show with Dr. Jonathan McLatchie on the resurrection. And here's what Mike says. Your guest today rattled off biblical passages for proof in such rapid fire succession I couldn't keep up. Yes, Jonathan is very fast in how he speaks. He's a brilliant guy, and sometimes you've got to slow him down to go, hey. Wait, I didn't get that. Hold on.

Anyway, here are some comments from Mike. He says even when you asked for historical evidence outside the Bible, his response was largely another recitation of biblical quotations from Acts. Yes, I agree, Mike. I don't know if he heard the question, but he actually did cite a couple of sources, extra biblical sources, briefly there. And he may have thought, I don't need to cover that again, because we did mention it earlier in the show. In the book, 'I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist', we mentioned that there are about ten non-Christian writers who mentioned Jesus within 150 years of his life.

And some of these are people like Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Thallus, Flagon. You even have some enemies of Jesus, like Celsus or Celsus, depending upon how you pronounce that. And so, in other words, there's some anti-Christian sources, and these folks briefly mentioned Christianity in some way. But when you put all of their brief mentions of Christianity or the apostles, or the disciples, or what happened in the first century, you get a story congruent with the New Testament.

In fact, here is what you'll learn from these non-Christian quotations. Jesus lived during the time of Tiberius Caesar. He lived a virtuous life. He was a wonder worker. He had a brother named James. He was acclaimed to be the Messiah. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He was crucified on the eve of the Jewish Passover. Darkness and an earthquake occurred when He died. His disciples believed He rose from the dead. His disciples were willing to die for their belief. Christianity spread rapidly as far as Rome.

And His disciples denied the Roman gods and worshiped Jesus as God. These are all from non-Christian sources. Okay? Now, I hasten to add, these people weren't eyewitnesses. Josephus may have been an eyewitness of some things after Jesus, because he lived from 37 AD to about 100 AD. It may have actually seen or known about James's martyrdom, because James was

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martyred, the half-brother of Jesus in 62 AD, by the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. He was the pastor of the church in Jerusalem at the time.

And so, he dies and Josephus records that. So does another writer later by the name of Hegesippus. In any event, they're not eyewitnesses, but they may have had access to eyewitnesses or what happened was such common knowledge that they could check sources and verify that what they said was the case. In fact, as I just pointed out, that these non-Christian writers, at least some of them, admit that disciples believed Jesus rose from the dead.

The writers, the non-Christian writers don't believe that. If they did, they'd be Christians. But they're saying that the disciples believed Jesus died and rose again. And those disciples are willing to die for that belief. This is what the non-Christian sources are saying. Now, I always say this whenever I do a presentation on this, that I know that people want non-Christian sources, and it helps with corroboration.

But it seems to me there's a bit of an illicit assumption lurking behind this quest for non-Christian sources. And this is the illicit assumption that you really can't trust the non, or you really can't trust the Christian writers because, you see, they were Christians. They were biased. You can only trust the non-Christian sources to tell us what really happened in the first century.

Now, if you think about that for more than 10 seconds, you realize how stupid that assumption is. What did the Christian, so-called Christian writers, the people that wrote the New Testament have to gain by making up a new religion? Nothing. They were all Jews, with the exception of Luke. They already thought they were God's chosen people. What did they get by saying a man claimed to be God and rose from the dead?

Well, they got kicked out of the synagogue, and then they got beaten, tortured, and killed. Certainly not a list of perks. All right? So, they had every motive to say the resurrection did not happen. Not every motive to say it did. Which is why I think it makes much more sense to put more stock in the writings of the people that had everything to lose by saying it was true, rather than maybe the people on the periphery that weren't as interested in this, because either they didn't witness it, or they lived later like the non-Christian writers.

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Why say I need non-Christian writers to confirm this when the people who wrote it down became Christians because of what they saw? Remember, the New Testament writers did not create the resurrection. The resurrection created the New Testament writers. Christianity did not begin with a book. It began with an event. There were thousands of Christians before a line of the New Testament was ever written.

These were Jews from where it started who had everything to lose by saying the resurrection had occurred. In any event, Mike goes on to say this. The citations that involved actual historical evidence, like the boat story with Luke and Paul, do not prove the credibility of all other claims made in the Bible. Okay, we were talking about on the program with Dr. McLatchie, the incredible detail that Luke goes in regarding the shipwreck in Acts 27.

I mean, he gets so many details right about the Mediterranean, even he gets the water depth off Malta right. In fact, the entire book of Acts, if you look at it, particularly at the second half of the book of Acts, from say chapter 20, from chapter, let's see, 13 to the end of the book, chapter 28, there are 84 eyewitness details that Roman historian Colin Hemmer uncovered when he did his study of the book of Acts. The technical name of his book is 'The Book of Acts.' It's called 'The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History.'

It's a big, thick book he wrote about 30, 35 years ago, and he went through Acts with a fine tooth comb and figured out that there were 84 details that only an eyewitness or somebody who knew an eyewitness would know that are contained in the second half of the Book of Acts. And what Mike appears to be saying here is that all these details don't prove that the miracles that they say actually happened.

He goes on to say, Mike does, the writer, the questioner here, he says, I'm guessing you, like me, have read a number of excellent historical fictions set in well-documented places and times that are a mixture of actual events and characters, with some amount of the author's imagination or poetic license and assumptions filling in gaps. The factually accurate historical events and characters don't prove the credibility of the imaginative parts of the story. He said, your final argument as proof of the truth is that Christians were willing to be persecuted for their faith.

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But religious persecution is not unique to first century Christians, as evidenced by Old Testament Jewish martyrs and persecution of other non-Christian believers in other places and times. If willingness to die for one's faith is evidence of truth, then Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Marshall Applewhite must have been true prophets. Thank you, Mike. Interesting points. And I guess there's a question in there somehow. I'll make it a question like, how do we know this is not historical fiction?

Well, the first question you want to ask when somebody brings up an objection like this is, first of all, what do you mean by that? And secondly, what evidence do you have for that position? In other words, what evidence do you have that this is historical fiction? Because historical fiction really only became a genre about 200 years ago. All right? There have been myths and fables in the past, but they weren't passed off as historical fiction. It would have been new. And I'll mention a quote from C.S. Lewis here in a minute that points this out.

It would be sort of anachronistic to say that a first century historical novel actually occurred, and the New Testament is that historical novel. So, my first question with somebody who says, well, how do you know it's not a historical novel? My first question would be, what evidence do you have that it is a historical novel? And secondly, the dominant view among all stripes of New Testament scholars.

When we say New Testament scholars, we're not talking about just people who are Bible believing Christians. There are atheists who are New Testament scholars like Bart Ehrman at UNC Chapel Hill. There are people from atheist, to agnostic, to Christian, everywhere in between. In fact, there is even a few Jewish New Testament scholars believe it or not. There's about three or four of them.

So, this is the dominant view among all New Testament scholars, is that the New Testament writers really believed what they wrote, that they weren't inventing this. They really thought the risen Jesus had appeared to them. In other words, the New Testament writers did not invent the story. Non-Christian scholars often claim that the New Testament writers were mistaken about the resurrected Jesus, but they were not intentionally writing historical fiction. They weren't inventing it. Now, could all these scholars be wrong? Yes, they could be.

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You know, the consensus doesn't always mean it's true. I get that. But they have good reasons why they're saying that. In fact, Bart Ehrman himself said that he believes that the New Testament writers or apostles really thought that they had seen the resurrected Jesus. He says that Paul had some sort of vision, but Ehrman maintains it wasn't really the resurrected Jesus. In other words, he was mistaken. I mean, those are really the choices you have. You've got three choices.

Either the New Testament writers invented this, (which doesn't make any sense, and I'll go into that here in a minute) they were mistaken, or it really happened. In fact, we even talked about that on the program with Jonathan McLatchie. Also, let me point out that historical fictions don't normally claim to be eyewitness accounts telling the truth. And I don't have time in this podcast right now, but we all point out Dr. Geisler and I do in the book, 'I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist', in chapter ten, we cite at least a dozen places in the New Testament where the New Testament writers or the people speaking claim to be eyewitnesses.

They're claiming to be eyewitnesses. Doesn't prove that they are, but they're not passing this off as some sort of historical novel. So, historical fictions, historical novels, don't normally claim to be eyewitness accounts telling the truth. Also, they don't normally include powerful people who really exist in their stories. Sure, if you're reading a historical novel, like a Tom Clancy novel or something, you know, he may talk about the president.

But he's not, in his day, it may have been President Clinton, or President Bush, or somebody like President Reagan, okay? But he, the name in his, in his novel isn't President Reagan, or Bush, or Clinton, or anybody. It's some made up president. Okay? And yeah, he might talk about the USS and the USSR. He may talk about real submarines or real aircraft, but he doesn't, he doesn't name real people in them and say that they're part of the story. Also, historical fictions don't normally have their authors suffer and die for an empirical claim that they know is a lie.

Yes, you're right, Mike. Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Marshall Applewhite died, and Muslim scholars will die. Now David Koresh actually died because he was the victim of the Justice Department basically firebombing his location in 1993. Jim Jones was just a psycho who he and his, his followers back in about 1980 all committed suicide. And Marshall Applewhite, I don't know who that is. That might be. Is that the Hale bot commit guy?

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I don't know. But look, yeah, there are crazy people that think that what they believe is true. But the New Testament writers could know what they believe was true because it's an empirical claim. Did this guy they spent three years with really die and then rise from the dead and for 40 days did miracles and appeared to them on at least twelve occasions in physical form where they could touch Him, eat with Him, talk with Him, see Him eat, and interact with them.

They could verify with their own senses that their belief was either true or false. Maybe Jim Jones thought what he was doing was right, or Marshall Applewhite, or David Koresh, or a Muslim martyr now. Muslim martyrs now and even back in the day of Muhammad, if there were such martyrs back then, they're not dying for an empirical claim, a miraculous claim they can witness. In fact, Muhammad himself said, I don't do miracles. I'm just a plain warner. I just warned people there's one God.

All the miracles attributed to Muhammad came at least 150 or 200 years after his life, which seems to me to contradict the Quran. You know, in the Hadith, the written traditions of what Muhammad allegedly said and did, they said he did miracles. But Muhammad in the Quran says, I don't do miracles. Well, which is it? In any event, they're not dying for a claim, an empirical claim, an empirical, miraculous claim like the New Testament writers are.

Many people will die for a lie they think is the truth. Nobody will die for a lie they know is a lie. And the New Testament writers were in a position to know whether it was a lie or not. And they went to their deaths anyway. You can't get better evidence than that unless you were there yourself. Also, I might add that historical fictions don't normally ignite a movement from where the alleged miracle took place, a movement that transforms an entire empire through peaceful means.

And that's exactly what Christianity did. There were a bunch of scared, scattered, skeptical disciples who, after an alleged event, took place, a miracle where Jesus physically rose from the dead and then did miracles over 40 days, and then supposedly ascended to heaven. Somehow, these eleven scattered, skeptical disciples became the most successful, peaceful evangelical missionary force in world history through peaceful means? Yeah, you could see how Islam could spread. Why? Because it spread through the sword.

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You know, you either became a Muslim, or you died, or you paid the tax. It was a military movement. Christianity wasn't a military movement. You say, what about the Crusades? All right, first of all, take a history course, friends, if you think the Crusades occurred at the beginning of Christianity. The first crusade was ordered in 1095, a thousand, over a thousand years after Christianity began. And it was a military response to Muslim aggression in the Holy Land, which got out of hand.

Quite obviously, there were many atrocities committed in the Crusades against what the New Testament says, not in accord with what the New Testament says. But of course, Islam spread through the sword in accord with what the Quran says. So, they're completely different means by which these world religions spread. Now, let me go to C.S. Lewis, who in an article or an essay called 'What Are We to Make of Jesus Christ' in the book 'God in the Dock'? A very good book, by the way. Everything with Lewis is good, but 'God in the Dock' is. The title of 'God in the Dock' means we're putting God on trial, basically, and we're peppering Him with objections and questions.

And Lewis answers many of these objections and questions in this book, 'God in the Dock.' And here is what Lewis says in that essay. He says, another point is that on that view, meaning the view that this is a historical novel, you would have to regard the accounts of man as being legends. And what Lewis says is this. Now, as a literary historian, by the way, do you happen to know that C.S. Lewis spoke five languages, or at least was able to read them? I mean, he was a man of the classics. He was a brilliant man.

As you know, he didn't just write Christian apologetics. He's probably more known for his fiction, 'Chronicles of Narnia,' for example. Anyway, so he's a well-rounded man of the classics. He's a literary historian, as he says. He says, now, as a literary historian, I am perfectly convinced that whatever else the Gospels are, they are not legends. I have read a great deal of legend, and I am quite clear that they are not the same sort of thing. They are not artistic enough to be legends from an imaginative point of view.

Now, by the way, this is going to sound almost like he's dissing the Gospels here. He's dissing the Gospels if they're supposed to be legends, because they don't read like legends. So, here's what Lewis says. 'From an imaginative point of view, they are clumsy. They don't work up to

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things properly. Most of the life of Jesus is totally unknown to us, as is the life of anyone else who lived at that time. And no people building up a legend would allow that to be so. Apart from bits of the platonic dialogues, there are no conversations that I know of in ancient literature, like the fourth gospel, the gospel of John.

There is nothing even in modern literature, until about 100 years ago when the realistic novel came into existence.' Let me stop right here. So, 100 years ago, maybe he's writing, say, 70, 80 years ago. I rounded it off when earlier I said 200 years the historical novel came into existence. So, this is basically what Lewis is saying. "He says there is nothing even in modern literature until about 100 years ago, when the realistic novel came into existence.

In the story of the woman taken in adultery, we are told, Christ bent down and scribbled in the dust with his finger. Nothing comes of this. No one has ever based any doctrine on it. And the art of inventing little irrelevant details to make an imaginary scene seem more convincing is a purely modern art. Surely the only explanation of this passage is that the thing really happened. The author put it in simply because he had seen it."

Lewis went on in a book called 'Christian Reflections' to say this. "I have been reading poems, romances, vision, literature, legends, and myths all my life. I know what they are like. I know none of them are like this." Meaning the gospels. "Of this text, there are only two possible views. Either this is reportage, meaning they're telling what they saw, or else some unknown writer, without unknown predecessors or successors, suddenly anticipated the whole technique of modern novelistic, realistic narrative.

The reader who doesn't see this has simply not learned how to read." So, Lewis is coming out swinging, saying, no, I know what legends are. This is not a legend. These are not legends. I know what historical novels are. And by the way, they're only about 200 years old. And this is not a historical novel. So, I don't think the historical novel approach makes any sense. And let me add to that, if I could, that this is not an invented text either. Remember, we've got three possibilities.

Either they invented this, they which would be an historical novel, they were mistaken, or it really happened. But we point out in 'I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist', the writings

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are early, and they have scores of details that only an eyewitness would know or somebody that knew an eyewitness. Some of them are in the book of Acts. Some of them are scattered throughout the Gospels. They include embarrassing stories they never would have invented. Right?

You don't have Peter denying Christ three times. You don't have the women be the first witnesses while the man ran away for fear of the Jews. You don't have them doubting that Jesus is standing before them, resurrected and at the Great Commission in Matthew 28:17. You don't have, if you're making this up, Jesus not knowing when He was coming back. You don't have him on the cross saying, God, why have you forsaken me? You don't have Him being called demon possessed, a madman, a drunkard. You don't have two prostitutes in His bloodline. This is not a made up story, okay? It's too embarrassing.

In fact, Dennis Prager, whom you know is a conservative Jewish man who's actually written some commentary on the Old Testament, says, one of the major reasons I believe the Old Testament is true, because nobody would invent such an embarrassing history of themselves. And he's right. I mean, the Old Testament has one embarrassing gaffe after another about these people. They're hardheaded, stiff necked people who can't seem to learn to follow the one and only God. They sin. They sin like they get the gold medal in sin, one thing after another.

They never seem to learn, and God judges them. And they admit all this. Well, my question, of course, for somebody like Dennis, who says, hey, embarrassing stories seem to authenticate the Old Testament. Well, why don't embarrassing stories authenticate the New Testament? Because there are just as many embarrassing details per page in the new as there are in the old that wouldn't have been invented.

There's also the excruciating deaths I already mentioned. They wouldn't have willingly died for a lie when they knew it was a lie. And then there's embedded confirmation where one account inadvertently fills in details that corroborates another account about an historical event. This wouldn't have been possible if they were inventing all this. These are called, by the way, undesigned coincidences, little things that if you're making up a story, you wouldn't be able to do this, not without a lot of contrivance.

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And the Gospels are not contrived. And there's so many of these. I'll just give you one example. For example, one gospel says, I think it's the gospel of Luke, which says, when Jesus is under trial with Pilate. Pilate says, are you the king of the Jews? And Jesus is recorded as saying, you have said so. And then Pilate goes out to the Jews and says, I find no fault in this man. And you're kind of left scratching your head going, wait a minute. He seems like he just admitted the charge.

He's king of the Jews, which means he's no friend of Caesar. So, why would you say, I find no fault in this man? So, Luke leaves us with a question mark. You go over to John's account, and John gives you more of the dialogue. Luke summarizes it, but he leaves something out that John clears up in John's account. When Pilate says, are you the king of the Jews? Jesus says, yes. But then He says, but my kingdom is not of this world. And so, Pilate's thinking, okay. Yeah, He's king, but He's kind of a loony. He's the king of another world.

So, in that case, he's no real threat to the Jews. He's no real threat to Caesar. So, then he can go out and say, I find no fault in this man. Now, you wouldn't know that if you just read Luke's account. But when you read John's account, you go, oh, okay, I see why in Luke's account, Pilate came to the same conclusion, because John fills in a detail that Luke left out. And this is just, there's, this is casual, it's undesigned. And there are at least 60 of these in the New Testament.

Some of them are between, most of them are between authors of the New Testament. But some of them are between, say, a New Testament book and Josephus, or Suetonius, or some external writer. This could not be a contrivance. This is not an invented storyline. And why is it that they couldn't have been mistaken? I mean, that seems the most incredulous of all. How could they be mistaken about a guy who they spent at least three years with day after day?

How could they be mistaken that He wasn't risen from the dead, if he appeared to them on at least twelve different occasions over 40 days. Some in groups, some individually, and His tomb was empty. I mean, if his tomb wasn't empty. Yeah, okay. Yeah, you made a mistake. It's some kind of group hallucination which has never been recorded in human history, a group hallucination. But his tomb is empty. The Jews are coming up with an excuse for the empty tomb. The disciples came and stole the body. Why would they come up with an excuse for the empty tomb if the tomb wasn't empty?

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And by the way, Matthew says that this is the story the Jews had been saying to this day. In other words, to the day Matthew was writing, this is the Jewish explanation for the empty tomb. The disciples came and stole the body. Now, if Matthew is trying to convince Jews that Jesus is the Messiah, and He is. It's the most Jewish of the Gospels, why would he lose all credibility by putting this detail in the text with the very people he's trying to reach?

If the disciples came and stole the body explanation was not the Jewish story to that day, everybody reading Matthew's gospel would have said, Matthew, you're discrediting yourself. That's not our explanation. Why should I believe anything else you say, including the claim that your guy is the Messiah? No, that must have been their explanation. Otherwise, Matthew would have discredited himself and blown his entire cover. Cover that he wouldn't have had. I mean, why would Matthew want to say Jesus had risen from the dead if He hadn't? He's a Jew. Why take all the abuse?

Why change your worldview for something that didn't happen, and you knew didn't happen? Makes no sense. So, we could talk a lot more about this, but thanks for the questions there, Mike. And keep sending them in and other folks as well. I want to mention this weekend I'm going to be in Murfreesboro at the World Outreach Church for a Christianity and Culture conference. Not only myself, but Eric Metaxas and several others will be there. I don't have it in front of me right now, but it is the 26th. Let me get the dates anyway. It's on our website. So, you can click on it. It is the 26th and 27th.

I'll be speaking on the 26th. That's a Friday, but it goes right through the 27th. So, that's Friday and Saturday. And then don't forget about the Unshaken conference on the 18th of May in Pittsburgh, or near Pittsburgh. And we've got several more archaeology sessions coming up. We're going through, 'Digging Through the Bible.' This is livestreamed every, well, not every Monday night, but several Monday nights coming up: April 29, May 6, May 20, and June 3 at 7:30 p.m. on our YouTube channel, the CrossExamined YouTube channel. We're going through the top archaeological discoveries in the Bible, from Genesis all the way to the book of Revelation.

We're right now talking about Jesus and His crucifixion in the New Testament. You're going to see seven different people who have been found in the dirt who were part of the crucifixion of

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Jesus on the 29th. I hope we'll get to it by then. The 29th of April. Now, these are only put up for about a week. So, you've either got to watch it live or in the first week. Then they're taken down. They'll eventually be on our TV program, which is on every Monday night at 9:00 p.m. Eastern on DirecTV, channel 378, or the NRB Network, which you can find on Roku. If you can't find it in those two places, you can also see it on our website, [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org) 9:00 p.m. Eastern time on Monday.

Also, I'll be at Central Church of God in Charlotte Monday. Not Monday, Wednesday. The first four Wednesdays in May: May 1, May 8, May 15, May 22, Wednesday night, 7:00 p.m. We're going to be talking about 'If God, Why Evil?' We're also going to be talking about 'Should You Follow Your Heart?' And we'll also talk about 'Does Jesus Trump Your Politics?' So, May 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, that'll be at 7:00 p.m. if you're anywhere near Charlotte, North Carolina. Love to see you over there at Central Church of God.

And don't forget about the Steven C. Meyer course coming up, ladies and gentlemen. That's 'Reasons for Faith.' It's going to be live on Zoom. Stephen, much of the time is going to be coming from Cambridge in the UK to teach this unique course, never been taught before. Then he's going to teach it at Cambridge after he's done teaching it to you. So, you don't want to miss this unique opportunity to be with the great Dr. Stephen C. Meyer. Go to [Crossexamined.org](http://Crossexamined.org). Click on online courses. You will see it there.

We will see you this coming Friday with the great Bobby Conway, who has a brand-new great book out. We'll talk about that. And by the way, I do want to mention, I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, we're going to have Dr. Chip Bennett on to talk about how the Scriptures actually talked about Jesus being resurrected from the dead from the Old Testament. And we haven't had a chance to have him on. We thought we were going to. Then he got sick, then Easter came. Then he went out of town. Then he had other things going on.

So, we're going to get him on soon. You're not going to want to miss that. So, stay tuned for that, friends. It's been great being with you. Go to our website, [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org) for more, for the calendar, for online courses, so much more. And I'll see you here on Friday. God bless.

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