

Manuscripts and Trustworthiness – What We’ve Learned

“The facts that I explain about the New Testament in *Misquoting Jesus* are not at all ‘news’ to biblical scholars. They are what scholars have known, and said, for many, many years.”

(Ehrman, *Misquoting Jesus*, 253, cited in *Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament: Manuscript, Patristic, and Apocryphal Evidence*, ed. Daniel B. Wallace, 20)

“The NT is by far the best-attested work of Greek or Latin literature from the ancient world.”

(*Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament: Manuscript, Patristic, and Apocryphal Evidence*, ed. Daniel B. Wallace, 30)

“Let us not forget that the distinctive challenges in our field [biblical textual criticism] are actually the result of enormous quantities of data (unavailable for other documents whose originality we take for granted!).”

(Moises Silva in *Rethinking NT Textual Criticism*, p.150)

“To date, more than one million quotations of the NT by the [early church] fathers have been recorded. ‘[I]f all other sources for our knowledge of the text of the New Testament were destroyed, [the patristic quotations] would be sufficient alone for the reconstruction of practically the entire New Testament,’ wrote Bruce Metzger and Bart Ehrman.”

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“Essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament.”

(Bart Ehrman, pages 252-253 of the HarperSanFrancisco 2005 edition of *Misquoting Jesus*)

“No essential doctrine of the Christian faith is jeopardized by any viable variant.”

(*Credo Courses – Textual Criticism*, Daniel B. Wallace, 216)

“In the appendix to *Misquoting Jesus*, Ehrman says about his disagreements with Bruce Metzger, whom Ehrman described as his doctor-father and to whom he had dedicated *Misquoting Jesus*, ‘[E]ven 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 and textual 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 looked like, there would be very few points of disagreement – maybe one or two dozen places out of many thousands.’ (252).”

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“Even though we are looking at the same textual problems and arriving at the same answers most of the time, conservatives are still conservative, and liberals are still liberal. What is the issue then? The text is not the basic area of our disagreement; the *interpretation* of the text is.”

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