Matt: thanks for your additional comments. I’ve given my replies below. At the outset I should say that I’m not sure I understand what a “genuine contradiction” would look like for you. If you have two authors who at least appear to contradict each other, surely the best explanation will not be one that:

- Suggests an author / speaker really doesn’t mean what he says but means something else.
- Suggests an option that has never ever happened, to our knowledge.

With that in mind, I turn to your new explanations. I’ll respond in green.

Thanks very much, Bart, for these interesting responses. I will get straight into explaining why I still don’t think you have shown that the examples you have offered are genuine contradictions.

In the case of Luke 24 you say that the grammar of the Greek indicates that ‘Luke is extremely careful to date the entire sequence of chapter 24, at the beginning of each major paragraph. It all happens on the day of the resurrection.’ But we know from Acts, Luke’s sequel, that Luke certainly does not think that all of Luke 24 happened on the day of the resurrection. He says in Acts 1:3 and the following verses that after Jesus’ suffering and resurrection, Jesus appeared to the apostles over a forty-day period, and after that he was taken up. This means that Luke is well aware that Luke 24:50-53 did not happen on the day of the resurrection, despite your assertion that the grammar makes it clear that all of the events of Luke 24 did happen on the day of the resurrection.

What this indicates is that the Greek grammatical usage here is much more flexible and much less rigid than you make out in relation to what it is saying about the temporal chain of events. It also indicates that Luke is happy to leave out descriptions of intervening events which he knows to have happened. The implication of this is that there are a number of places in the flow of Luke 24 where an intervening trip to Galilee could have occurred. Given that the Greek is much more flexible than you make out, I still maintain that the excursion could have happened between Luke 24:35 and Luke 24:36. But it is also possible that it happened between Luke 24:43 and Luke 24:44. There is therefore no necessary contradiction.

Here I see that you don’t actually address my objections but bring in a new factor: Luke appears to date the as ascension to the day of the resurrection in Luke but to forty days later in Acts, and so he could not have meant what he said in Luke.

Your logic seems to be that if a person contradicts himself, he must not mean what he says because he wouldn’t contradict himself. Is that it? I.e., are you saying ...

To see the rest of my response, point-by-point, you will need to belong to the blog. Why not join? It doesn’t cost much, and all the money goes to charity!
Could Christian Forgers Justifying Lying?
Similarities and Differences: Which Matter the Most?