

## QUESTION

Dr Ehrman, I found this attack against you:

Bart likes to deceive his listener by claiming more variations and more copies give birth to less authenticity. Actually flip that and you'll begin to "see the light". The Bible manuscripts were transmitted not in a linear way, as in "Chinese whispers" but geometrically as in 1 produced by 5 others which in turn then produced, say 20, etc.

I think you already dealt with this claim, but I am unable to find your post.

## RESPONSE

I have to admit that I have a hard time responding to this objection because I don't know what the person is talking about. Maybe someone else can enlighten me. For openers, I'm not sure what he means that I "like" to deceive my listeners - I think that must mean I do this a lot. And the "deception" appears to be that I think lots of variations in the manuscripts of the New Testament make something "less authentic." But what does the person mean? Exactly what is less authentic? The words of the Bible? The words of Jesus? The message of the Bible? Christian beliefs? Something else? And what does it mean to be less authentic? Less than what? And - my biggest problem - what does "authentic" even mean?

I'm not simply asking a set of rhetorical questions: I genuinely don't know what this person is talking about.

I suppose the reason I have these problems is ...

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