

I was browsing through old posts from five years ago, and came across this one I had forgotten all about. You'll see I got a bit feisty here, but it sounds like I was having fun. Well, in a way. The whole thing really is a bit aggravating.

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Several readers of this blog have pointed me to an article in the conservative journal First Things; the article (a review of a book by the evangelical scholar Craig Blomberg) was written by Louis Markos, an English professor at Houston Baptist University. The title is called "Ehrman Errant." I must say, that did not sound like a promising beginning.

I had never heard of Louis Markos before - had certainly never met him, talked with him about myself or my life, shared with him my views of important topics, spent time to see how he ticked and to let him see how I do. I don't know the man, and he doesn't know me. And so it was with some considerable surprise that I read the beginning of his article.

"I feel great pity for Bart Ehrman."

So, from someone I don't know, that's a bit of a shocker. I can understand why a friend of mine might feel some (but not great?) pity for me at some points of my life - when I had such difficulty, for years, finding a teaching position even though I had a PhD from a very fine program; when my father died at the sad young age of 65; when I went through a divorce and was forced, then, not to see my kids grow up every day. There have been bad times in my life, and my friends grieved with me through them.

But that's not why Dr. Markos feels "great pity" (not some pity - but great pity). No, he feels great pity for me because when I was a fundamentalist I was the wrong kind of fundamentalist; if I had been the right kind of fundamentalist I never would have left fundamentalism: the kinds of things that I found to be highly problematic about fundamentalism are problematic only for the kind of fundamentalist that I was. And if I had remained the right kind of fundamentalist, I would still hold to the truth, and my life would be fantastic and not to be pitied - as opposed to the life I live now which is, evidently, greatly to be pitied.

I really can't help but think that if Dr. Markos knew anything at all ...

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