

Is Inspiring Philosophy a Secret Inerrantist?

CIARAN: “Is Inspiring Philosophy a secret Inerrantist? Well, let us take a look at this video, and see.”

ZAC SECHLER: “How do you go about the Inerrancy of Scripture, is that an idea that you have?”

CIARAN: “The correct answer to this question is ‘no’. That’s it! ‘No. I do not hold to the idea of the Inerrancy of scripture.’ This is the correct answer but let us see what Michael Jones says.”

MICHAEL JONES: “I don’t even know what that means, anymore.”

CIARAN: “Ok, so Michael Jones supposedly does not know what ‘inerrancy’ means anymore so let us explain it to him: if we come into CodePen, here. The term, ‘inerrancy’, comes from the Latin word, ‘errāre’, and ‘errāre’ means ‘to err’; ‘to go astray’; ‘to make a mistake’; ‘to wander away from the truth’. That is what the ‘errāre’ part of ‘inerrant’ means. That is what the ‘errant’ part of ‘inerrant’ means. And then we have... then we have the word, ‘in-’, and what does ‘in-’ mean? Well... I apologise, this is my first time using streamyard. Eh, so ‘in-’ is Latin for ‘privative’ and so ‘in-’ ‘ means ‘not’. ‘in-’ is a prefix. ‘in-’ is a privative prefix that means ‘not’ so ‘inerrant’ quite simply means ‘not errant’. ‘inerrant’ quite simply means ‘not having any mistakes’. ‘inerrant’ means ‘not having any errors’ and I find it hard to believe that Inspiring Philosophy does not know the definition of the word ‘inerrant’. This is a *tactic*¹ of Greg Koukl’s.

When one is to ask an apologist for the evangelical Christian Faith a difficult question, they say: “What do you mean by that?” and so here Inspiring Philosophy has essentially said: “What do you mean by that?” in the vein of Greg Koukl’s *Tactics*. And so *this* is what I mean by that: Does the Bible have errors? Does the Bible go astray? Does the Bible make a mistake? Does the Bible wander away from the truth? And the honest answer to that is ‘yes! It does!’ and if you want a list of all errors in the Bible than this right here (pointing to *Skeptic’s Annotated Bible*) is a great way to start and the list of errors in the Bible presented by this book is by no means exhaustive. And so let us get back to our friend, here. Inspiring philosophy.”

MICHAEL JONES: “I don’t even know what that means, any more.”

¹ Koukl, Greg (2019). *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions*, 10th Anniversary Edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.

CIARAN: “This is a dodge! This is a shuffle! This is an evasion! The honest answer is: ‘No! I do not hold to the idea of Biblical Inerrancy.’ But Inspiring Philosophy, instead, just simply sidesteps the question.”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “I remember I was at ETS...”

CIARAN: “Evangelical Theological Seminary. Michael Jones arguing towards academia. He brings the PhD, Mike Licona, into it, which is simply an ‘argūmentum ex auctōritāte’ or ‘an argument from authority’.

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “... last year, and I attended a lecture by Mike Licona, and he said the same thing: ‘depending on who you talk to, what does “inerrancy” mean?’”

CIARAN: “Well, depending upon whether the person is intellectually honest or not, ‘inerrant’ means ‘does it have errors?’; ‘Does it have historical errors?’; ‘Does it have scientific errors?’; ‘Does it have moral errors?’; ‘Does it errors, in Math?’; ‘Does it add things up, wrong?’ And the answer and the answer to all of this is ‘yes, it does! The Bible has all of these errors in it.’ And so, if you ask an intellectually honest person what ‘inerrancy’ means, they will give you an honest answer. However, if you ask a Christian fundamentalist apologist what ‘inerrancy’ means, then they will try to muddy the waters by bringing in concepts such as ‘functional inerrancy’. You know the Bible is only inerrant essentially where it doesn’t make a mistake and all the places where the Bible does not make a mistake. Eh, well... that is not *covered* by ‘functional inerrancy’², because God really has nothing to say about these issues. So, it depends: if you ask an intellectually honest person what ‘inerrancy’ means they will give you an intellectually honest definition. I think this is an extremely intellectually honest definition of what ‘inerrancy’ means.”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “... I don’t think that we should even use the term, anymore.”

CIARAN: “No, the term is accurate. And this is a very Orwellian part of Michael Jones. He redefines words. He discards words. You know, ‘inerrancy’ is a good term. Is... Does the Bible make mistakes? In the genealogy of Jesus Christ, Matthew can’t even add up the generations right... He makes a mistake in arithmetic. So, there are arithmetical errors in the Bible. So, it is not the term that is at fault: it is the fact that the Bible fails the inerrancy test. So, let us keep the term, ‘inerrancy’. Let us keep the term, ‘inerrancy’, so that we can say of this book: ‘no, it is not inerrant!’”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “I don’t know what it means!”

² Robert M. Price PhD discusses ‘functional inerrancy’ in *Inerrant the Wind*. The *function* of Scripture is arbitrarily defined to be ‘The Good News of Salvation’, and so innerancy only covers what is deemed to be ‘The Central Gospel Message’ of Salvation through the atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This allows the Bible to be saturated with errors in History, Science, morality, and arithmetic, whilst remaining ‘functionally inerrant’. Cf. Price, Robert McNair. (2009). *Inerrant the wind: The evangelical crisis of biblical authority*. Amherst, N.Y, New York: Prometheus Books.

CIARAN: “You don’t know what ‘inerrancy’ means!? I mean, I am ... This is why I think that Michael Jones is the most intellectually dishonest apologist on the internet... because he says wild stuff, like this.”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “And everyone pretty much agrees...”

CIARAN: “Michael Jones here, is about to make the question-begging fallacy, here. He is going to beg the question that there were perfect originals... and, in begging the question, here, he actually gives the proper answer! The proper answer... you know, we have to deduce this out of him. The proper answer is that he thinks that the originals were inerrant but the copies... we only have copies of the Bible, and so the copies of the Bible: they aren’t inerrant. So so on the one hand he says: “I don’t know what inerrancy means”, but, here, he essentially says, well yes the autographa³, the autographs, the *Ausgangtexte*⁴, the originals: they were inerrant, so... in this, in the first, in the first few seconds of the video, he says: ‘I don’t what it means.’ And then, in the last seconds of the video he says: ‘Well, I kind of think that the originals were inerrant.’ So, let us go back to see Michael Jones commit the question-begging fallacy:”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “I mean everyone pretty much agrees, there are scribal errors.”

CIARAN: “This is begging the question: ‘scribal errors’: ‘scribes’ copy texts, they don’t write texts. So, here he is begging the question that the originals were perfect. So, I mean, in this... you know, we can kind of, you know extract, from him here what he *actually* thinks: he kind of *actually* thinks that the originals were perfect; that the originals were inerrant.

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “... like in Ezra or if you compare lists between Chronicles or Kings: there is going to be a little bit of discrepancies there.”

CIARAN: “‘discrepancies’, you know, if a document is ‘discrepant’, I mean, this is a synonym for ‘error’, so he will use the word ‘discrepancy’; he won’t use the word ‘error’. He’s... ha ha ha! he’s tap-dancing around the word, ‘error’!

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “I don’t see that as much of an issue.”

CIARAN: “Ha ha ha! Well, it’s evidence against your religion! It might not be conclusive evidence, but it is evidence against your religion, because for, until roughly the time of Spinoza, the Christian Church *did* hold to inerrancy, but then Spinoza began to notice mistakes and errors in the Bible, in The Age of Enlightenment, and since then there has been a slow retreat from the Doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy. And it’s evidence against your religion, eh, I mean, this is a tactic of his friend, Testify’s, as well. Testify will say: ‘Oh well that doesn’t *disprove* Christianity!’ No, okay, it doesn’t *disprove* it but it is evidence against it. If your God *actually* inspired a perfect and inerrant book, then that would be evidence *in favour* of Christianity. So, the fact that this book, supposedly written by God is *saturated*

³ ‘autographa’ is derived from Latinised Greek. ‘autós’, in Ancient Greek means ‘himself’. ‘graphein’, in Ancient Greek means ‘to write’. Thus, etymologically, the ‘autographa’ are ‘the original manuscripts as handwritten by the original authors’.

⁴ German for: ‘texts as they left [the hands of the original authors when they were finished writing them].’ ‘aus’ is German for ‘out’. ‘gehen’ is German for ‘to go’. ‘ausgehen’ is German for ‘go out’. ‘der Text’ is German for ‘the text’. Thus, ‘der Ausgangstext’, etymologically, is ‘the text as it went out from [the original author when he/she had completed writing it]’.

with errors is, in my view, evidence against it, so, it *is* an issue. It is an issue, but, you know, here is Michael Jones hand-waving the issue away.”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “I am more interested in talking about reliability⁵...”

CIARAN: “The Bible is not reliable. Genesis to the Book of Ruth is pure fiction, and if you read *The Oxford Bible Commentary* they’ll even say that 1st and 2nd Samuel: it’s fiction, but some of the characters in there like Saul and David actually existed. Eh, the New Testament is full of forgeries. Read Bart Ehrman. The Gospels are anonymous novels that are full of contradictions. The synoptics and the Gospel of John have Jesus crucified on different days. So, again, he is side-stepping the issue. The question was: ‘Do you hold to the idea of inerrancy?’ but Michael Jones shuffles towards the totally different question: ‘Do you think that the Bible is historically reliable?’ Well, that’s not the question, Michael Jones: The question is: ‘Do you think that the Bible is inerrant?’ and you’ve totally dodged and evaded this question.”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “... than inerrancy, because I don’t even know what ‘inerrancy’ means,”

CIARAN: “You don’t know what ‘inerrancy’ means. You know I find that... That’s staggering to me!”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “... anymore.”

CIARAN: “‘anymore’ So you once knew what it meant. So, have you become more ignorant? Ha ha ha! Have you... Usually, people acquire and augment their knowledge as they go on: they don’t get more and more ignorant. So you used, so you used to know what ‘inerrancy’ meant, back when you probably believed in it, but now that you kind of pretend that you don’t believe in it, anymore, you don’t. You’ve suddenly lost the ability to discern what the term, ‘inerrancy’, means.”

INSPIRING PHILOSOPHY: “It is different depending on who you talk to.”

CIARAN: “‘depending upon who you talk to’ yes! If you ask an intellectually honest person what ‘inerrancy’ means, then they will define it, thusly. They will define it thus: ‘Does it contain errors?’ ‘Is it not-errant?’ ‘in-’ means ‘not’; ‘errāre’ means ‘to make a mistake’. ‘Does the Bible contain a mistake?’ So, yes, it does depend on who you talk to: if you talk to an intellectually honest person, they will define it, something like this. If you ask a Christian fundamentalist apologist, then they will try to redefine ‘inerrancy’ so as to account for all the errors. And this is why I call Michael Jones a Gish-galloper extraordinaire. This video has been a few seconds, and yet it has been full of errors. I don’t know how long this video I’m recording is⁶, but it is significantly longer, than this video here. And, as I often think to myself: ‘one could just have an entire counter-apologetics channel devoted to critiquing Inspiring Philosophy, because he puts out so much error.

⁵ Michael Jones is more interested in talking about Biblical Reliability, because this is a much easier tenet of Evangelical Christianity to defend than Biblical Inerrancy. If we take Licona’s and Habermass’s approach, then what we can say is that, at a minimum, the Bible gets a number of facts correct! These are the much-vaunted “minimal facts”! I side with Pine Creek Doug: the best way to counter-apologise is simply to laugh at Apologetics.

⁶ It turned out to be sixteen minutes and fifty-five seconds long.