

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 187

ETS Conference Interviews, Part 1

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Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

Guests: Hugh Ross (HR) (2:30 time stamp)

Doug Groothuis (DG) (25:00)

Andy Naselli (AN) (36:50)

Maurice Robinson (MR) (52:25)

It's that time of year – a new round of interviews with scholars and professors at the annual meetings of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) and the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL). In this first installment, we talk to Hugh Ross about his new book, *Improbable Planet*, and his apologetics ministry; Doug Groothuis about anti-intellectual attitudes in the believing Church; Andy Naselli about his new book on “higher life” (Keswick) theology; and Maurice Robinson about his scholarly work on the Byzantine-Majority text type of the New Testament.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 187: ETS Conference Interviews, Part 1. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike, how are you doing in Rhode Island?

MH: In Rhode Island, indeed! Pretty well. It's not as cold as the last time we were here.

TS: Yeah, I never thought I'd actually ever be in Rhode Island, so when I'm texting my wife, I always end it with *in Rhode Island*. "I'm eating dinner *in Rhode Island*."

MH: Has she gotten the message yet?

TS: She replies back, "How are you doing *in Rhode Island*?" I'm actually enjoying this state. I never thought this would be a state I would make it to, but here I am!

MH: Here you are, in all your glory!

TS: Yep! [laughs] Well, we have some great interviews lined up for this episode.

MH: Yeah, we have four scholars that agreed to spend some time with us. We have Hugh Ross. He's probably the most well-known, from *Reasons to Believe*. We're going to talk with Hugh about his book, *Improbable Planet*, and a few other things that sort of go with Hugh Ross.

Doug Groothuis is next. We want to talk to him about his thoughts on anti-intellectualism in the Church. That's something that's sort of in the wheelhouse for our audience.

That will be followed by Andy Niselli. We interviewed Andy last year. This year we're going to be talking about a new book of his, *No Easy Fix*, which is about the "higher life" or the Keswick theology. If those things are new to you, stay tuned and you'll find out what those things are.

Lastly, we'll talk to Dr. Maurice Robinson, who is the world's chief defender of the Byzantine Majority Text. A long time ago we did an episode on textual criticism and you heard about the Alexandrian Text and reasoned eclecticism. Maurice represents the other view—Byzantine Majority Text. I think people are going to be real interested in what he has to say, too.

2:30 **MH:** Well, we're back at ETS again, and we have with us Dr. Hugh Ross. Of course, this is going to be a familiar name to many listeners. We're glad to have some time with Hugh. He's very busy. He's much in demand, as you might realize. But as we jump into it, maybe somebody out there doesn't know who you are [laughs], so let's start with a little bit of self-introduction and how you got to be doing what you're doing now.

HR: Well, I'm trained as an astronomer. I got my PhD at the University of Toronto and did research in quasars and galaxies at Cal Tech. It was while I was at Cal Tech that I got called into the ministry, so I've been on the pastoral staff of a church near Cal Tech for the past four decades. So I'm kind of in both camps— theology and science.

MH: How did RTB (Reasons to Believe) get started?

HR: Well, I was at Cal Tech and there was another Christian astronomer there who said, "Hugh, have you ever thought about sharing your Christian faith with someone who's not a scientist?" And I said, "Well, tell me where I can find these non-scientists. [laughter] And he says, "Walk off the Cal Tech campus." I took him literally and just went up to strangers and started talking to them about how

the book of nature confirms the book of Scripture, and I was amazed at how quickly people responded and gave their lives to Christ! I mean, with a scientist, I know I'm in for a two-year project before they give their lives to Christ.

MH: Right.

HR: But for people who don't have PhD's in the sciences, it can be much more rapid. Once they see that it's true, they're willing to move to the next step.

MH: Earlier today at the conference, we talked to Doug Groothuis, and he read a paper here that essentially dealt with anti-intellectualism in the Church. So do you run into that? Do you run into people that would sort of shy away from doing apologetics or shy away from thinking "too much" about science and nature—that we should just accept these things by faith? What do you do when you encounter that?

HR: I run into that a lot, especially in the Bible Belt. It usually stems from the fact that you've got Christians who see science as the enemy of the Christian faith, rather than the ally. So how I deal with it is I basically show them that it's the other way around. Science is the best friend we have for persuading non-Christians that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God and that Jesus Christ is our savior. Once they realize that science is the friend and not the enemy, they're much more receptive.

5:00

MH: Has your work sort of increased? Has it shifted a little bit? Have you changed tactically in the wake of militant atheism? Has it affected anything you do at all?

HR: Not really. We've always been engaging atheists, especially in the scientific community. And we engage them with a testable creation model, basically saying, "We have an explanation for the record of nature that we're convinced provides greater predictive success and a more comprehensive explanation than the non-theistic models." And I think one reason why Christians run into a lot of hostility is that they're basically on the attack, saying, "Here's why your model is wrong." And they're not really understanding how the scientific community works. They're going to hang onto their models—no matter how many flaws you point out in them—until you propose an alternative model. So we've always taken a positive approach. We engage scientists saying, "Here's our model. We want you to critique it." Well, scientists love to critique everybody else's models, so that's how we get to engage them. They're surprised when they discover this isn't what they thought it was.

MH: Well, that's great! I don't know if it's your most recent book, but it's the most recent one that I've looked at: *Improbable Planet*. The feel it gave me was sort of a Christian version of *Rare Earth* by Brownlee and... I can't remember the other author's name... Is that fair?

HR: Yes, it was Brownlee and Ward that came out with the book *Rare Earth*. What's different is that the book *Improbable Planet* was born out of a year-long study I gave in our church on the creation texts in the Bible. We literally studied every single creation text and noted that every one of these texts links the doctrine of creation with the doctrine of redemption. And then I actually taught how there are places in the Bible that declare that God begins his works of redemption before he creates anything, which means that the Bible is implying that everything God creates is for the purpose of redemption. That launched a three-year study on my part, surveying the scientific literature to put that biblical implication to the test. The book is basically the outgrowth of that three-year survey of the scientific literature, where we conclude that every event in the history of the universe—the Earth, the solar system, our galaxy, the history of Earth's life, and every component—plays a role in making possible the redemption of billions of human beings. So I've been going on university campuses saying, "We have a better way to advance science. Interpret science from a biblical-redemptive perspective and you'll make more scientific discoveries, your publishing success will go up, and our understanding of the book of nature will increase." It's a great way to engage these unbelieving scientists with a paradigm they've never really considered. And that's how we get conversations started with them, because they quickly recognize that this perspective has got merit.

MH: Can you give us a couple of examples from the scientific world that illustrate the point?

HR: Well, the book closes by looking at the fact that you can't have billions of people living on earth at one time unless they're living during an ice age cycle, and that cycle is driven by variations in Earth's orbit. However, those variations will typically bring you enormous climate instability. And, indeed, that's been the case throughout the entire ice age cycle—except the last 9,000 years. During the last 9,000 years, seven different orbital cycles have all come into sync to give us this unique period of extreme climate stability. And we now know, for example, that the ice age cycle couldn't happen unless you have five simultaneous, unprecedented tectonic events. And I would argue that all of them are miraculous. You say, "Why?" The sun is getting brighter and brighter. The sun has never been brighter than it is today in the history of life, and yet we've got ice. For 90% of earth's history, there's been no ice. Without that ice and without it's cycling between 10% coverage and 23% coverage, you can't sustain billions of human beings. And without that unique 9,000-year period of extreme climate stability, you can't set most of the human race free from coming up with agricultural products to engage in science, engineering, technology, and develop the technology and the global communication to where billions of people can hear the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ—not in millions of years, but literally in just decades.

10:00

MH: Right. Now, you brought up climate several times. Do you get drawn in? Has anyone reviewed the book and tried to either pigeonhole you or take the discussion to the whole global warming kind of thing?

HR: We get into that a lot. I've actually written two books on that subject. Our theme is that the book of Job tells us how to manage the planet for the benefit of all life and tells us that God has designed the Earth so that we'll never face a choice between ethics and economics. That's what's driving this global climate debate. One side says we have to stabilize the climate and we need to sacrifice our economy to do it. The other side is saying you can never enforce that—people will cheat, it's not going to work. But what will work is if you come up with solutions to stabilize the climate that put more money in everybody's pockets. If people economically benefit at the same time that they do what's best for the climate and life on earth, they're going to do it. And so we're basically saying the Bible anticipated this thousands of years ago.

MH: So do you get drawn into camps, like "climate denier" versus "affirmer of what XYZ scientific model says?" I mean, do you get drawn into that, or... "

HR: We get drawn into the debates, but what's different is we're Christian and we're not climate-change deniers. We're saying, "Yes, we're at great risk for bringing about the conditions that existed throughout the ice age cycle, except for the last 9,000 years." What's different is we're proposing solutions to stabilize the climate and keep the temperature where it needs to be that actually benefit the economy, rather than kill the economy. We give several examples in our books of how we can do that. What I find remarkable is that the solutions we propose are all in the oldest book of the Bible. The book of Job basically tells us how to go about it. So I'm trying to communicate to the scientific community, saying, "Rather than trying to persuade everybody to make a draconian economic sacrifice to do the right thing, how about if we pursue solutions that are economically beneficial for everybody?" What I find interesting about the book of Job is that it doesn't tell us to focus on temperature, it tells us to focus on changes in precipitation. If we focus on those changes, it simultaneously takes care of the temperature problems. For example, because of human abuse, we have made the Sahara Desert ten times bigger than it was during the days of the Roman Empire, and we've made the Gobi Desert four times bigger. There are ways we can shrink those two deserts back to where they were. By shrinking them, we can now grow wheat in what used to be the Sahara Desert. That would provide food for people that need the food. It would give them income, and it would soak up huge quantities of greenhouse gases. Everybody wins. But it's basically focused on maintaining the planet the way God gave it to us before we started abusing the planet.

MH: Do you get any push-back from any in the science community or in the (we'll just say) religious community or wider evangelical community about that? Because (this is just me now), it seems like people have sort of planted a sword

in the ground for whatever reason. I'm sure there can be a variety of reasons. But they've just sort of staked out a position and they've aligned themselves, either for economic or political reasons, with a particular perspective. Do you get push-back?

HR: I do get push-back, but I push back to the push-back in saying, "The problem is, you're only looking at a limited number of solutions. God has designed the planet so that we're never put in that rock-and-a-hard-place position. Let's pursue solutions that are win/win, not win/lose." From a Christian perspective, we human beings are sinners. You're never going to get the whole human population agreeing to an economic sacrifice to do the right thing. The sin nature that the Bible speaks about means that won't work. And so we need to counter that. But that's what I find remarkable. There are solutions. And it tells me how wonderfully God designed the planet so that we're never caught between that economic rock and the ethical hard place. [00:15:00]

15:00

MH: With a title like *Improbable Planet* and then some of the content, as well, let's shift a little bit and talk about... You and I spoke at the same conference over ten years ago now—that God, Man, and ET thing. You always sort of get drawn into the probability or improbability of extraterrestrial life. So I remember your presentation, and I agreed with it then and I agree with it now. But for the sake of listeners, what are your thoughts on the probability there? How unique is our situation?

HR: A lot has happened since we were speaking at that conference. Today we have discovered over 3,700 planets outside of our solar system. The first ones were being discovered twenty years ago. The anticipation of the astronomical community was that these planets were going to be just like the planets in our solar system. Well, none of them are. Not only have we not found a twin of the Earth, we haven't found a twin of Venus, we haven't found a twin of Jupiter or Uranus or Neptune. In fact, we're finding all kinds of planets that are very different from our planets—things that we call "Super Earths" and "Mini-Neptunes" are actually the most common planets for discovering, and our solar system doesn't have any of them. What we now realize is that the more we learn about extra-planetary systems, the more evidence we are uncovering that our solar system is unique. We're not finding any other system that has the capacity to sustain advanced life. It's actually led to the recognition of something we didn't know before: every single planet in our solar system plays a role in making advanced life possible here on Earth. So Venus has to be exactly the way it is. Mars has to be the way it is. Every one of the planets must be exactly the way they are to make our existence possible here on Earth.

MH: I just recently read something about Jupiter and how it shields us from a certain number of asteroid collisions, potentially. I'm sure that's not the only one. In what I was reading, it was kind of the most obvious illustration just because of

the size, but I'm sure the arrangement is what it is, and then that causes issues with orbits and trajectories and all that.

HR: It's necessary that Jupiter be the most effective shield. So it's crucial that your biggest gas giant be the most massive and the closest to the sun, but it won't work if Jupiter has to do it all by itself. You need another gas giant—smaller and more distant—then two more that are smaller yet and more distant. And guess what? That's exactly what we have! But one of the things that impresses me is that of the eight planets we have in our solar system, we have no destructive mean-motion resonances. Typically, when you get more than three planets you're going to get destructive mean-motion resonances.

MH: And what is that, exactly?

HR: What that means is you're going to get planets orbiting in such a way that two or three will line up periodically and cause gravitational disturbances to wash through the planetary system, which would disturb the orbit of a planet like Earth and make it a non-candidate for advanced life. Of all the parameter space in our solar system for mean-motion resonances, it adds up to about 99%. We're in that 1% where it doesn't happen. Actually, the moon itself plays a critical role in breaking up those mean-motion resonances. So we actually need our moon orbiting us with a certain mass in a certain way to make sure that doesn't happen. In fact, the fine-tuning is greater. We now realize that you actually have to start the solar system with five gas giants, where one of them gets kicked out. If you don't start with five, you can't explain the Mars-Earth orbital system.

MH: Has that "kicking out"... Do you run into people who would use something like that to support like a catastrophist model, like the old Velikovsky kind of thing?

HR: Well, it's not a planet coming towards the Earth, it's a planet going away from the Earth.

MH: Being expelled... okay.

HR: So it's the opposite of a catastrophe. Actually, there are two models: one which says that the fifth gas giant was completely ejected and one that says it was ejected to about fifty times the distance from the sun that Neptune is. And actually, a group of astronomers are trying to determine if, indeed, that very distant gas giant planet exists. But either way, it explains our solar system configuration.

MH: Obviously, everything you just said isn't unique to you; the scientific community knows this—the ones who are in the astronomy and astrophysics communities. But you still have so many people... I don't know if the right word is

"predisposed"... to wanting there to be extraterrestrial life or believing that it is. Do you think something else is motivating that?

HR: I would say from a non-theistic perspective that you have to believe life is common in the universe. From a Christian perspective, you can have it either way. You can say "God doesn't waste miracles, so he only has done it here" or "God is so enjoying creating that he's done it many times." And so it wouldn't be a shock to me if we find life on another planet, but I would conclude it's there because God miraculously created it. But so far, everywhere we look we see hostility. We have yet to find a galaxy that's sufficiently like ours to be a candidate for life. We've yet to find a star that's a candidate or a planet that's a candidate. I'm not saying we'll find one, but we've been looking hard for over fifty years and everywhere we look, we see hostility. The only place that's favorable for advanced life is right here.

MH: Now, on the reverse, let's say that a hundred years from now we still don't have any evidence of life elsewhere. Do you think that's going to disturb maybe a community (I don't know if you'd want to use the term "atheistic community"), but a community that really desperately wants to find something superior to us—advanced life forms of some other character, almost like a substitute theism?

HR: What I am seeing is this: as we learn more about how the moon formed, about this movement of the gas giant planets in our solar system, the unique features that are in our Milky Way galaxy and our star—the Sun... The comments you see in the scientific literature... This is actually published in the British journal *Nature*: "The more we learn about the history of the solar system, the more it's causing us philosophical disquiet." [laughter] And what they mean by that "philosophical disquiet" is that "we're not able to explain this from a naturalistic perspective."

MH: Right, right.

HR: Keep in mind that the Bible told us in advance that the majority of humanity will reject the evidence for the creator God of the Bible, no matter how strong the evidence gets. There will be a large majority that will accept... That's something I've personally seen in the scientific community. There is a significant minority of research scientists that are saying, "You know what? I can't deny the evidence. This testifies of the God of the Bible." But for a majority, they're just saying, "This is sure causing us a lot of philosophical disquiet."

MH: Right. Let's go back to the Christian orbit. You once told me that the only place that you have ever been picketed was at a church. Do you still have any of that going on? Do you find churches more broadly or denominationally or whatever are more open to thinking about other models, including your own?

HR: We still see hostility at the church level, but it's nothing like it was thirty years ago. As time goes by, we're seeing more and more openness, mainly because we've taken the approach with churches and pastors that there's a mission field out there to be reached and you're not going to reach scientists and doctors and dentists and lawyers and engineers with an anti-science message. We're basically taking them back to the Belgic Confession, Article II: God gave us two books. And so as I was speaking today at this conference, God gave us a book of nature to bring people to the book of Scripture and to the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ. We're finding increasingly—even with pastors who have no training in science—that they're appreciating that the book of nature (science in particular) can be a powerful tool to bring unsaved people to faith in Jesus Christ. So as I engage pastors, I'm basically exhorting them to focus on the front door, not the back door. Focus more attention to who you can bring into the church than who might leave.

MH: That's good advice. How can people get and read *Improbable Planet*?

HR: Well, we have a website: www.reasons.org. I also have a Facebook page and a Twitter page where I answer people's questions. They're welcome to engage me there. All of our resources are available at www.reasons.org.

TS: Earlier you referenced eight planets, so I take it you don't consider Pluto a planet, then? [laughter]

HR: Pluto got demoted.

TS: He did!

HR: The reason Pluto got demoted is when it was discovered, we grossly overestimated its size. We now realize there are asteroids bigger than Pluto. So if we keep Pluto on the list, we've got to add about thirty more bodies. And so they either call it a dwarf planet or a non-planet. So now there's come a new term, where you get "Pluto-ed." That means you've been demoted. [laughter]

MH: That's pretty good! Well, thanks again!

HR: You're welcome!

25:00

MH: We're here again at the Evangelical Theological Society annual meetings. This year, of course, we're in Providence, Rhode Island. We have with us Professor Doug Groothuis. Could you just start off by telling the audience a little bit about where you teach, what your degree is in, and what your specialties are?

DG: Yes! I teach apologetics and ethics at Denver Seminary. I'm Professor of Philosophy. I've been there since 1993. I have a PhD from the University of Oregon in Philosophy from 1993.

MH: Good. Well, we wanted to have Doug on the program because he's given a couple papers. One that really caught my eye was a paper about anti-intellectualism in the Church. So how would you define that? In other words, what prompted you to propose that?

DG: Well, I teach apologetics at Denver Seminary, and I have for 25 years. Sadly, I have to make an apologetic for apologetics [laughter] at the very beginning. The thing that impedes (or even can destroy) apologetics is anti-intellectualism, which is the idea that faith and reason are completely separate and that one ought to not apply argument and analysis to matters of theology or matters of the spiritual life. Over the years I have talked about how the different aspects of theology—the topics of theology—all oppose anti-intellectualism, in terms of the doctrine of God, Christ, salvation, and so on. And so I've put that together in a paper that I'll be reading at the conference called "Anti-Intellectualism and Systematic Theology." That's maybe a little more technical than what we want to do here. But this is a plague on the Church because we're called to give a reason for the hope that we have when people ask us why we believe. This is part of reverencing Christ as Lord, and part of our sanctification is to think well with unbelievers, and to think well with believers. So it's a great concern that I have, and I've had it really ever since I became a Christian back in 1976. I'm a thinking person, I'm a philosopher, and I need to engage my intellect for the cause of Christ. The first summer I was a Christian (1976), I really didn't know what to do with my intellect. I was around a number of Christians who were terrific evangelists and they were learning about the Christian life, but they didn't have any theology of the intellect. Or I should say, what they had was bad. [laughter] So my first summer was very frustrating because I still had all these questions about Christianity. I had converted out of a background of atheism and some mysticism, but I didn't know what to do with them except read the Bible, pray, speak in tongues, witness to people... But in the fall of '76, I discovered Francis Shaffer's book, *The God Who is There*, which I've now probably read ten or twelve times. And he gave me a charter for developing a Christian mind so that I didn't have to be afraid of the great matters of controversy and the perennial questions of the ages. And that's what I've tried to do ever since—know what I believe and why, and take that to as many people as I can.

MH: What kind of push-back do you get? Or I could ask it this way: What do you think causes it to almost become a point of spirituality to oppose this kind of thing? Why are people taught this? What kind of push-back do you get?

DG: There are several reasons. One is a bad reading of Scripture. Paul talks about God making foolish the wisdom of this world in 1 Corinthians, and people think that means that God is against sound reasoning or critical thinking. I think if

you look at that carefully, what he's saying is that the cross is foolishness to those who don't believe. It's not that the cross or the Christian message doesn't cohere logically—it's that it's an offense to our pride. You can't just start out with human philosophy and somehow in six steps get to the cross. It's a revelation from God. It's not based on human reasoning, but that doesn't mean that it is hostile to human reasoning. So there's that selection of texts, and then also sometimes people take Colossians 2:8 out of context, which says, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, rather than on Christ." They take that to mean *all* philosophy. It says "hollow and deceptive" philosophy, which was probably a kind of early or proto-Gnosticism that Paul was dealing with. And then when you go to Paul's ministry himself, he's always having dialogue and reasoning with people—with Jews, God-fearers, and philosophers (Acts 17). All Christian philosophers love Acts 17 because Paul is dealing with the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers on their own ground—literally—in the Areopagus, and also topically. He's arguing philosophically and he's exposing the fallacies of their own philosophy.

MH: Why do you think that's so difficult, other than just bad exegesis of those two passages? Do you think the Church is sort of reflexively teaching its people to stay away from competing ideas?

DG: Yeah, I think sometimes. I think part of it may be a lack of courage and confidence that if we retreat into our realm of faith (which is private and subjective) then we don't have to out-think the world for Christ. We preach, we give, we try to lead a moral life and follow Christ, but this area of engaging the world with Christianity is absent from a lot of settings. Now, there's been a resurgence of interest in apologetics in the last 10-20 years, and also in Christian philosophy going back 30-35 years, and I'm very grateful for that. So I think there's a movement toward the reinvigoration of the intellect. But still, some churches will not preach apologetics. They won't really support people who want to go into philosophy or one of the humanities. That needs to change.

MH: This will sound like... Maybe these two things are related and maybe they're not. Do you think this attitude has both contributed to militant atheism and also, because of militant atheism, that's why we're seeing a resurgence in apologetics? Do you see a circle there, or are they different points?

DG: Pascal said in the *Pensées*, "Atheism shows a strength of mind, but only to a certain extent." I think what he meant was that in his day, to be an atheist meant you were different and you had to give arguments. You had to support it. I think today, the New Atheists are giving arguments and they are very militant about it, and part of their fuel is the Christians who say "I just believe and I know the Bible is true in my heart." So they're easy targets for any kind of a philosophical atheist. But the responses to New Atheism have been very powerful, and I think you're right and it's a good point that it sparked more apologetic engagement, because you have a Sam Harris or a Richard Dawkins on television selling tons

of books. And they don't pull any punches. They don't say, "Well, Christianity has some good points, but we think atheism is a little bit better." They're saying things like, "Christianity is utterly irrational. Faith is opposed to reason." Dawkins has even said, "I don't think religious people should be allowed to educate their own children." He's made very inflammatory statements like that. But we've always had a need for apologetics. Anytime someone says, "I don't believe because it's irrational" or "I don't believe because it makes no sense," then we should engage that person lovingly and thoughtfully.

MH: What would be some of your recommendations specifically for responses to the New Atheism—either by Christians or... I'm trying to... Berlinski—I guess he's a Jewish fellow.

DG: Right.

MH: Somebody like that, who has sort of thrown their hat in and at least defended theism. What would you recommend?

DG: Well, there are so many responses to atheism proper and to the New Atheism. To blow my own horn, I've got about 200 pages of natural theology in my book, *Christian Apologetics*. But you mentioned Berlinski, who is a Jewish agnostic. He wrote a book several years ago called *The Devil's Delusion*. He gives very strong arguments against atheism and for intelligent design.

MH: Yeah, I really like the book.

DG: I do, too. He's quite a character. I met him, and he's very urbane and witty when you hear him being interviewed or you see him on a video. I encourage people to do that.

MH: He doesn't seem to like Sam Harris very much. [laughing]

35:00 **DG:** No! No, I think the more knowledgeable and balanced agnostics and atheists realize there's more heat than light in Sam Harris and Richard Dawkins. Terry Eagleton wrote a book criticizing Dawkins and Harris, and Terry Eagleton is a Marxist-Atheist, but he said, "They don't even get Christianity right and they're not duly respectful towards the tradition."

MH: That's good. Well, we're glad you could spend a few minutes with us. Our audience runs into anti-intellectualism a lot. I get a lot of email and we get a lot of interaction with people who say, "I had this question in church and I got shut down. I was told not to think too much about this because that's dangerous."

DG: "Just have faith."

MH: Right—that sort of thing. So I wanted to have a well-known... and you're publishing. You're not only publishing for your students under peer-review, but you're trying to produce material for the average person who needs it.

DG: Definitely, definitely. Also, I think one of the best books you could read on this would be my friend J.P Moreland's book, *Love Your God With All Your Mind*. It's now out in a second edition. It's tremendous for developing theology of the intellect and how to think critically, how to engage in apologetics, how to create a culture of learning in your church—which we often lack, sadly.

MH: Have you read any of the books associated with reinventing the scholar/pastor role yet?

DG: Are you thinking of the book *The Pastor Theologian*?

MH: Yeah.

DG: I've read parts of those, and I support the idea. A pastor should be a thinker and should be a public intellectual for the cause of Christ. We shouldn't separate scholarship and the pastorate. Augustine was a pastor. Calvin was a pastor. Jonathan Edwards was a pastor. And theology is really for the Church. And then the Church goes out into the world and defends it.

MH: Yeah. Well, thanks for your time!

DG: You're welcome! Thank you.

36:50 **MH:** Well, we're back and ETS and we're with Andy Naselli. Some of you might recall that we interviewed Andy last year. For those who didn't hear that, we're going to ask him to introduce himself again. Give us a little self-introduction: who you are, where you teach, what your degree is in, what you teach, that sort of thing.

AN: My name is Andy Naselli, and I am Associate Professor of New Testament and Theology at Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minneapolis. I'm one of the elders of Bethlehem Baptist Church. It's sort of a church-based school. Some people might know the name John Piper. He was the pastor of our church for over 30 years, and he's the chancellor of our school. It's a delight to be a pastor in that church while shepherding students. I teach New Testament, Theology, and Ethics. I just love, love, love what I get to do. It's a dream: teach, research, write, shepherd. I love it.

MH: What's your academic background?

AN: I went to a Bible college and then to Bob Jones University for an MA in Bible and a PhD in theology, and then I went to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (in the Chicago area) for another PhD, and that one is in New Testament Exegesis and Theology. I did that one with D.A. Carson. So I worked for Don for almost ten years as his assistant. It was kind of like getting to clerk for a Supreme Court justice. [laughter] For a New Testament guy, that was pretty cool.

MH: Yeah, it would be. Well, you have a new book! Tell us about that.

AN: The latest one is called *No Quick Fix*. It's a book about "higher life" theology, so I try to explain the history behind it—just tell the story of it—and then explain what it is, and then I evaluate it.

MH: Well, let's start with what it is, and then you can get into a little of the history of it. For someone who is like, "What in the world is higher life theology?" what would you say?

AN: It has different names. Some call it "Let Go and Let God" theology or "Keswick" theology. The basic idea is that in the Christian life, there are different stages of Christians. So in the comic world, think about how you've got Clark Kent and Superman. There's like the normal, average, failing Christian and then there's the above-average, succeeding, successful, victorious Christian. Some call it the "higher life," the "deeper life," or the "abundant life." Or they may call it the "second blessing." There are all kinds of different terms for it. The key issue is that there are two distinct kinds of Christians and you can experience something that elevates you from Stage 1 to Stage 2.

MH: Does this drift over into the whole Charismatic "baptism of the Holy Spirit" kind of thing, or is it different?

40:00

AN: The Pentecostals have a view of this Stage 1/Stage 2, as well. And for them, the key to moving between those is the baptism of the Spirit. Some say it results in speaking in tongues, or something like that. So yes, it's similar, but not the same thing. Wesleyanism has a two-stage approach, where Stage 2 is entire perfection—Christian perfection. There's another similar version that Dallas Theological Seminary taught in its early days (with Lewis Sperry Chafer, the theologian who was one of the co-founders of Dallas Seminary), where Stage 1 is that you're a carnal Christian and in Stage 2, you're Spirit-filled. What moves you from Stage 1 to Stage 2 is experiencing a crisis of dedication. You dedicate or re-dedicate your life, and then you experience Stage 2. So Keswick Theology or higher life theology says that what moves you from Stage 1 to Stage 2 is a crisis of consecration, which equals "letting go and letting God." It's kind of this passive "it's not me" attitude and just trusting Jesus to do it all, and then—boom—you enter Stage 2.

MH: When I hear "let go and let God" or "let Jesus do everything," I naturally wonder where that fits into obedience and sanctification. How is it (or is it) similar to something you'd read about in the East, where you have these sorts of meditative plateaus? Where does this fit in both a Christian and a non-Christian sort of approach to spiritual experience?

AN: The phrase "let go and let God" is so plastic—it can mean so many different things to different people. What Keswick theology meant was very specific, so it's good you point that out. I like the phrase that J.I. Packer recommends: "trust God and get going!" [laughter] So yeah—we want to be trusting God. Absolutely. Faith in Jesus—yes, yes yes! And actively pursue that growth. There's no passivity about it.

MH: What's the history behind this?

AN: The father of these movements that distinguish between these Stage 1/Stage 2 Christians is John Wesley. That moved on to other people within Wesleyanism, and then there are different branches after that. Charles Finney and Asa Mahan are one branch, and there are other versions of Christian Perfection that have kind of coalesced into the Keswick movement in 1875. Someone named Hannah Whitall Smith and her husband, Robert Pearsall Smith were kind of precursors to the Keswick Movement. But 1875 was when it all came together. Keswick is a place in the northwest part of England, where they had their first convention that became known as the Keswick Convention. That first generation went until about 1920. That encapsulates the higher life theology I'm talking about. Later on in the Keswick Conventions' history, it changed its views and became more Reformed in its views—such that, God-willing, I'm going to be in England for the first half of next year and the director of Keswick invited me to speak there in July.

MH: Wow!

AN: Knowing what I've written! I declined because I'm coming back in June, but that would have been cool!

MH: Yeah, really. So let's talk a little bit evaluatively. In your book, how do you assess this whole thing? And other than in a Wesleyan context (if it even is used any more in a Wesleyan context), where do you see this kind of thinking? So how do you evaluate it and then who is representative of this now, or something like it?

AN: It's actually pretty common right now in certain circles of Evangelicalism, and a subset of evangelicalism is Fundamentalism. That was part of my background, and it's very common there. Evaluating it... I think in my book I give ten critiques, which I preface with genuinely saying that I'm thankful for many good things about the people in this movement who loved God and wanted to be holy. There

are so many good things about the people involved—names that people would know, like Hudson Taylor, Andrew Murray, H.C.G. Moule, etc. So when I critique it, there's really one fundamental critique and everything else is secondary. The main critique is that this view of higher life theology separates justification from progressive sanctification. When I think that those two concepts are indissolubly connected (you can't separate them)... If you've genuinely experienced justification, then God will be progressively sanctifying you. We can't disconnect or disjoin those. That's essentially what this does.

MH: So you wouldn't have someone who has genuinely embraced the gospel (there's your justification element)... It wouldn't be normative to have that person not progress. Is that what you're saying? So that should be sort of this organic process that every Christian should be experiencing, and you're saying that this idea would kind of let there be a category of non-progression, then all of a sudden it hits? Is that what you're getting at?

AN: I'm saying with Reformers that the same faith that justifies a person is the same faith that progressively sanctifies. It transforms that person. There's no category in the New Testament for someone who is a Christian who bears absolutely no fruit and is permanently carnal. That's what I'm disagreeing with. And that's what higher life theology has a category for.

MH: Right, right. That would be allowed to exist within the system. Yeah. So in your book, how do you sort of get at that? What are some key passages? How do you approach it?

AN: The key passage is Romans 6, which argues that a non-Christian is under sin's tyranny, but after becoming a Christian, we are no longer slaves of sin. We don't have to serve sin anymore. The whole point of Romans 6 is saying that sin is no longer your master. You have another master: righteousness, Jesus. And you're not to serve sin anymore. You're not a slave to sin. The way higher life theology frames it makes it sound like you could be a slave to sin. So there are other passages I work through, like 1 Corinthians 2 and 3 (talking about the carnal spiritual Christian) and Ephesians 5:18 (what does it mean to be filled by the Spirit?), John 15 (abide in Christ). What do those mean? I argue in those passages that none of them have a category for a permanently carnal Christian that is fleshly in every way. Everyone is fleshly in some ways, and God is sanctifying us out of those—never sinlessly until glorification. With Ephesians 5:18 ("be filled by the Spirit") and John 15 (abide in Christ), I'd argue that those are saying that you can progressively increase in how you obey those commands. I think every Christian is filled by the Spirit to some degree. Every Christian abides in Christ to some degree. I don't think those are mystical categories that, "Oh, yeah, an elite number of Christians obey and everyone else doesn't do it."

MH: You've used the word "mystical" and "mysticism" a couple of times. Other than Fundamentalism, which is a small sector of believing Christianity, do you think this sort of idea has influence in "Christian mysticism?" A common pejorative would be "Evangelical Gnosticism." You see these sorts of phrases on the internet in both descriptions of "hey, here's who we are" and also in critiques of some group or movement or person or book or idea. Is there a more popular or wider context than the Fundamentalist one? Somebody that we would have heard of or maybe a book or something like that, which you either suspect or you really believe is sort of caught up in this idea and perpetuating it?

AN: Well, now you're testing my pop cultural knowledge, which is very low—very sparse. [laughter] I have friends and acquaintances and people I don't know ask me all the time this question, "Is this person Keswick...?" My answer is that there are so many people teaching today and writing pop-level books. I'm just not familiar enough to say, "Yeah, here's a perfect example." But the basic gist is present all over the place.

MH: Let's approach a little bit differently. Would there be sort of famous teachers or preachers that would let the category of "here's a Christian that never grows or shows any fruit" exist and then they have a second category?

AN: Yeah. Are you familiar with the "lordship salvation" debate that happened in the '80's-'90's.

MH: It feels old, but yes. [laughter]

50:00

AN: The people advocating for what they called "non-lorship salvation" would fit into what I'm disagreeing with. I don't like the term "lordship salvation," but the idea is that when you become a Christian, Jesus is your savior and your master. It doesn't mean you obey him perfectly, but he's your master. You can't have one without the other. So people like Charles Ryrie, Zane Hodges, Dallas Seminary (at the time) were arguing for this view that you can have Jesus as your savior but not as your master—that you could be a fruitless Christian, a permanent carnal Christian. You could be someone who was a drop-out of school, yet you could still make it...

MH: I'm trying to remember... Who's the guy here at ETS that's sort of known for this now? Wilkin?

AN: Yes, that's the Grace Evangelical Theological Society. That's exactly what they argue—non-lordship salvation.

MH: Can you talk just about society or that movement just a little bit more before we wrap up? Because somebody in the audience may not have heard of that, or maybe they have.

AN: Their basic take is a two-step view of the Christian life, which means there's a category for a permanently carnal Christian—someone who is bearing no fruit. They argue, essentially, what Lewis Sperry Chafer argued, and then they take that a step further—such that even people like Charles Ryrie wouldn't line up with them in every degree. To give you an example, on the issue of repentance, that group is well-known for saying that the Greek word for repentance is *metanoeo* or *metanoia*. They would argue that the etymology of that word is "change of mind" and they'd say it means "change of mind, and only the mind—nothing else"—That the words means you just simply change your mind about who Jesus is, factually. Who was he? And once you assent in your mind to those facts, that's sufficient for repentance. It's a change of mind. I would argue, along with most theologians throughout Church history, that repentance is a change of mind that results in a change of life. It is a 180-degree turn. You're on your way to hell in your sin, and you turn from your sin to Jesus. It's an actual turning from sin that's not simply a change of your mind—it's actually about who Jesus is.

MH: Yeah, it's a much wider net.

AN: Yeah.

MH: All right! We hope that the book does well. It's by Lexham Press. What's the title again, just to remind everybody?

AN: *No Quick Fix*.

MH: *No Quick Fix*, by Andy Naselli. Thanks for spending some time with us again this year!

AN: My pleasure. Thank you, Mike.

52:25

MH: We're back at ETS and we have a special guest with us. We have Dr. Maurice Robinson here to share some time with us. I'm going to let Dr. Robinson introduce himself. Tell where your degree is from, what you spent your career doing, and then we'll just use that as a springboard.

MR: Okay, well, I'm glad to be here and that I'm able to do the podcast. As far as where my degree is from, my terminal degree was at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth. My major area was in New Testament Textual Criticism. I did my doctoral dissertation on the singular readings in Greek manuscripts of the book of Revelation.

MH: Oh, wow!

MR: So that's part of my background. Otherwise, I can tell you a little bit about my own background. I'm actually a Yankee. [laughter] I was born in Massachusetts, but grew up in Florida.

MH: So you're sort of home?

MR: I still have relatives up in Massachusetts.

MH: Dr. Robinson, you're known very widely in the academic community (and even broader than that) for probably being the chief voice defending a Byzantine Majority text. So if you could, explain what that means and why your work is different than maybe other textual critics.

MR: Well, there's a lot of complicated things that could be talked about, but to keep it really simple, the current so-called "critical texts," which are usually the Nestle-Aland text or the United Bible Society's text, which tend to be used as the textbooks in Bible colleges and seminaries and tend to be based on what is called "reasoned eclecticism." They have a preference to follow the earliest manuscripts only because the presumption is that the earlier the manuscript, the closer the text is to the autograph and, therefore, the better the text.

MH: And those are the Alexandrian...

55:00

MR: Right. That is primarily the Alexandrian text, although there's another text called the Western text, which is also equally early with the Alexandrian, but it is not usually favored because it has so many wild and crazy readings. [laughter] I favor the Byzantine text, which really doesn't show up until later manuscripts, but the problem is that if you go to the Church Fathers of the fourth century, you will find the Byzantine text being used by them. This will include Chrysostom, Basil of Caesarea, and later you'd have Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzus. They're all using the Byzantine text without even a hint that it might be a new development. So they are apparently using a text that was already well-known prior to the fourth century, and there are other reasons (they're a little bit complicated) for preferring the text found in the later manuscripts in view of that early patristic support and also in terms of the localization of texts. The Alexandrian text comes primarily from the Egyptian region, if we could allow any geographical assignment to that because of where the papyri were found.

MH: Can you put a number on that? Like how many Byzantine Majority readings show up in the Church Fathers of the fourth or fifth centuries? Has anybody counted that?

MR: I can't put a number on it because I don't work with the Church Fathers. But John Bergen catalogued all of the biblical quotations in the Church Fathers in the first five or six centuries, and he came up with over 86,000 quotations. Of those, he said the Byzantine text was being quoted in a 3-2 proportion, which means

about 60% of their readings were quoting the Byzantine text, whereas 40% of their readings were quoting either the Alexandrian Western or just some independent variety text.

MH: That's really interesting. My field is Semitics and Old Testament. None of the text (for lack of a better term) families or types... You've got the Samaritan Pentateuch, what was underneath the Septuagint, you've got the Majority text, but they all hit the same chronological wall because of Qumran. It sounds like that's sort of the same situation.

MR: Well, the Byzantine text hits that wall in terms of our actual Greek manuscripts. We have only a very few Greek manuscripts that actually date from before the fourth century, and they're all papyri. Almost all of them are very highly fragmented. The most complete ones that we have would be ones like the P66 (Papyrus 66) of the Gospel of John or Papyrus 75, which has about half of Luke and half of John. Others are just extremely fragmentary. They're all found in the sands of Egypt or in southern Palestine because of the climate issue. Papyrus won't survive in a damp climate.

MH: Are there any pre-Nicene Church Father readings that use the Byzantine Majority?

MR: There are, because that's what Bergen's catalogue really was.

MH: So it went back even further.

MR: The 86,000 quotations went all the way up to about the fifth or sixth century, but the bulk of them actually were coming from the fourth century and earlier.

MH: Okay. When we get into the Byzantine Majority text discussion or just New Testament textual criticism, but especially Byzantine Majority, the subject of the Textus Receptus comes up. If you can summarize it, what's the relationship between the TR and the Byzantine Majority text?

MR: Most people are familiar with the TR as being the Greek printed text that underlies either the King James version or its predecessors, whether it's the Bishop's Bible, the Geneva Bible, or even the Tyndale Bible. It's very close to the Byzantine, but not exactly, because some of the readings in the Textus Receptus actually come from a minority of Greek manuscripts—a very small minority in certain places. Some even come from the Latin without any Greek support.

MH: Right. The whole Erasmus issue.

MR: They raise some of these issues because Erasmus... Jan Krens had written a book on Erasmus and Beza as conjectural critics because of certain conjectures they made in their own printed editions of the Textus Receptus that

had no Greek manuscript support. But if you're talking in terms of overall comparison, the Textus Receptus is probably about 98.5% identical with the Byzantine text, which is a closer relationship than, say, the Byzantine against the Critical text or the Textus Receptus against the Critical text. They are probably at about only a 94% agreement. It's still extremely high, which is why we have a reliable text in virtually all of these editions. The only question is, in that last 6% between the Critical text and the Byzantine or the last 1.5% between the TR and the Byzantine, which readings are more likely original?

MH: Now would your argument or your position be, "Don't use the Alexandrian material. Don't do that reasoned eclecticism stuff. Use the Byzantine Majority?" Or are you saying, "We should use all of this and give equal weight to the Byzantine Majority?" How would you articulate your position?

MR: The equal weight argument would be something like what David Alan Black or Harry Sturz would hold, where they considered all three of the major text types—Byzantine, Western, and Alexandrian—to basically be equal in authority, and then they would usually go with a two-out-of-three majority of those. My position on the Byzantine text is to follow exclusively Byzantine reading. I have various reasons for it. Some of them get complicated, but I follow primarily the Byzantine text all the time. I think we should be aware of what is in the Western text and what's in the Alexandrian text, which also means to be aware of what's in the various other printed editions, whether it's the Critical text or even the Textus Receptus. We should know what they do read and why I would reject certain of their readings on the basis of my Byzantine priority position.

MH: Mmhmm. Now you've brought up the name Bergen, and his name usually gets used (right or wrong) by like King James-only advocates. What's your position on that? How would you talk to someone... If you don't side with the King James-only crowd, how do you talk to someone in that camp to get them to think differently?

MR: Well, I obviously am not in the King James or the Textus Receptus-only type of camp. I consider it a mistake on their part, mainly because they don't seem to read Bergen for what he says, because Bergen clearly says he's not trying to establish the King James or the Textus Receptus as totally perfect, and in numerous places throughout his actual published works he says, "Here is where the TR is wrong, and if the TR is wrong at that point, then the King James would be wrong at that point, as well." He has very many readings where he clearly states that he would not support the TR or King James at those points, although he says for public reading in churches, he did happen to prefer the King James version.

MH: Sure. Right.

MR: But for actual study, he would say no, there are places where it's wrong. The current King James-only and Textus Receptus-only people seem to overlook that when they try to elevate Bergen as one of their supporters. He simply is not.

MH: Can you give us an example or two of where Byzantine Majority emphasis helps resolve some issue, like what role might it play... This is random now. If these aren't good examples, don't get distracted! [laughs] But like John 5, I believe it's around verse 4, the stirring of the waters... Does it help there? The ending of Mark problem? How would the Byzantine Majority text really sort of resolve that or be equally coherent?

MR: If one is following a Byzantine priority approach, then all of these passages are part of the Byzantine text.

MH: They are present.

1:05:00

MR: The ending of Mark... The short ending at 16:8 ("They said nothing to anyone for they were afraid") only appears in two old manuscripts. The UBS edition cites another 13th century manuscript (304), but 304 actually has (as James Snapp has demonstrated on his blog site) a commentary of Theophylact that just simply was not finished and that breaks off at 16:8. So it should not really even count. On the John 5 passage, yes, the Alexandrian text and these earlier manuscripts do omit the angel stirring the pool. "The first one to go in would be healed of whatever disease he had." The Byzantine manuscripts all have this and there may have been reasons for omitting that, and that might be something to do with, for example, how Paul talked about the question of possibly illegitimate worship of angels. So there could be considerations that are theological that would lead to the omission. Usually, the commentaries that favor the Alexandrian text omission at that point say that the Byzantine added it because they were just adding in some local legend. But if they did that, then where are all these other local legends that aren't getting added in and why did that one get added in?

MH: The other thing that's curious about this is that later in the passage, where there isn't a textual problem, the same thing is referred to—the stirring of the water.

MR: Right, which is a problem. Later on in verse 7 of John 5, Jesus says to him, "Do you want to be made well?" And he says, "I have no one to put me in when the water is stirred."

MH: Right, right.

MR: And if you leave the passage out, then that makes no sense at all, because if I were the reviser that had removed that passage, I didn't do a very good job. I would have gone to verse 7 and I would have said, "Do you want to be made

well? And he said, 'Yes, Lord.'" It would have been an easy scribal revision, but it never was made. There are no manuscripts that omit or change it at verse 7 at that pool.

MH: Let's shift a little bit into some more contemporary things. Do you have an opinion... I'm not asking you for insider information, but do you have an opinion on... I guess it's probably been the last two or three years about supposedly a fragment of the New Testament that goes back to the first century. Dan Wallace has mentioned this, and I think Craig Evans mentioned it a couple times. Any opinion on that?

MR: I have an opinion that I'd like to see it! [laughter]

MH: With everybody else!

MR: We've been waiting for several years now for it to come out and there's been speculation that maybe it's part of the Green Collection at the Museum of the Bible and maybe they're going to announce it or publish something...

MH: A big splash, yeah.

MR: But we don't even know if Green has it. Dan Wallace knows something, but he's had to sign a non-disclosure agreement. So we don't know what's going on with that. If the stories that have been told about it are correct, it was supposedly a fragment that was used as mummy cartonnage in a mummy mass in Egypt and apparently, because of the date of the mummy, that's why they could determine that this was made in the first century. Now, it may be correct and it may not, but until it's open for actual scholarly examination and scrutiny, we can't really say much of anything. I would love to have a first century fragment of Mark. But unless I see what happens, all I can say is that right now we have no actual evidence.

MH: I don't know too much about it because my field is not New Testament textual criticism, but last year we talked to Peter Gurry and his new methodology or new means of classification or sorting out... What do you think of some of the newer developments? Are they going to change the way scholars look at the "buckets?" Are they going to change any of the buckets, or is it something that's less fundamental?

MR: This new method is called the CBGM and it stands for Coherence-Based Genealogical Method, which is basically the creation of Gerd Mink over at Münster, where they create the Nestle-Aland text. It's based on a computerized program that once you plug in the proper information, you run it through the computer and it gives out a diagram of the textual flow of all the manuscripts at that point. And it does this for each individual variant reading at a different point within a given chapter or book. The trouble is, very few people understand it

(including myself), and the data—the program itself—has not been made fully public, so we have no way to really evaluate it. Now, Peter Gurry has actually worked with it. His dissertation was on that. He's had access to it that other people have not had. Whatever he says is probably based on a lot more knowledge of it than I have, but I am extremely skeptical of it.

MH: What are they trying to detect? Are they trying to detect patterns in manuscript problems or scribal copying mistakes?

1:10:00

MR: It's a new method that goes to some of the research that Klaus Wachtel has done [01:10:00], where basically instead of having individual text types, like we've been talking about (Alexandrian, Byzantine, and Western), the new concept is that there really is only one text and that variations within it flow in different directions. Then manuscripts tend to group and cluster together according to the way that textual flow went. But it's the idea of eliminating text types and trying to get back to the archetype manuscript, which they term in German the "initial text" or the *Ausgangstext*, from which all other variant readings at a given point may have derived. It's a supposed improvement upon the traditional practice of textual criticism, which for most people is called "reasoned eclecticism," where you are looking at external evidence and internal evidence and trying to get a balance between the two. This CBGM works strictly with the external evidence, and then once the data comes out, the researcher can apply his own internal evidence to try to evaluate it.

MH: I guess if Peter were here, I'd want to know, what does "flow" mean? And what about the assumption that there is an *Ausgangstext*?

MR: The flow is really just trying to say what reading was the mother of the readings that go in one direction or the mother of the readings that go in another direction.

MH: So it's actually making comparisons?

MR: It's comparing all of the manuscripts to try and determine by computer which reading...

MH: Wow... which reading produced all the other ones.

MR: ...and then they create a whole tree of descent of the manuscripts, saying that the manuscripts down at the bottom of the tree are the ones that are the furthest removed from that initial text, where the ones at the top of the tree are the closest to the original text.

MH: Okay, you just made me a little more skeptical! [laughing] So much for any intuition!

MR: I hope so, because I'm skeptical myself.

MH: If Peter listens to this... Peter, we'll have that conversation. [laughing]

MR: I'm sure you will.

MH: Wow. Well, thanks for sharing what you do. We should alert people who've had some Greek and are interested in this. Where can they get copies of the Byzantine Majority text? I work for Logos, so we have that in digital, of course, in the software. But for people who like to handle books, where would they go?

MR: Well, digitally, first of all, it's available by almost all software products. Bibleworks has it, Logos has it, Accordance has it. There are several of these others out there that have it. We've released our Byzantine text in the public domain so anybody can use it. But as far as the printed copies, the 2005 original printed copy, as far as I can tell, is totally out of print. The only way to get it is online in a PDF.

MH: Is that on the new website?

MR: It's on the new Byzantine website that is being posted over in Denmark. Ulrich Peterson is handling that. I've been working with Ulrich Peterson, and his assistant is Daniel Mount. Daniel Mount is putting together, in fact, a collection of my essays and published articles to be printed in the book eventually. But that new website has not only the volumes of the 2005 edition, it has a PDF of the Reader's Edition that came out in 2010. The Reader's Edition has not only the Greek text, but it has all the verbs parsed and it has basic lexical entries for all of them.

MH: Vocab frequency, yeah...

MR: So all of that can be obtained from the website. But in printed form, right now I think the Reader's Edition can still be had, maybe through Amazon. It's being published in Germany, so that's the question. It's publishing on demand, I think. But I think you might be able to find it on the internet. And we are going to come out with a new edition of the Greek New Testament—not the Reader's Edition, but a new edition of the Greek New Testament in a paperback format that's about the same size as the United Bible Society's edition, and that's being published in Germany, as well. It should come out sometime next year—I hope early next year.

MH: For listeners, my website... I blogged about the new website. Ulrich is someone I know because we've worked with him through Logos and he gave me a heads-up about that and asked me to post it, which we did. So listeners should be aware of that. Go up to www.drms.com and just put in the word "Byzantine"

1:15:00

and you're going to find it. If you want access to that site, you can Google it and use that means, but you'll be able to find it and get the materials you want. So thanks again for spending some time with us!

MR: Glad to do it!

MH: Thanks

TS: All right, Mike. Those were four great interviews. I'm glad Hugh Ross cleared up the Pluto issue for me. [laughter]

MH: It's no longer a dilemma.

TS: There you go—you heard it! Yeah, other than those four interviews, Mike, we've attended a couple of papers. What did you think about the last couple we went to about technology and nanotech?

MH: Yeah, it was a bioethics section. The first paper was on the ethics of creating chimeras, and then there was one that focused a little bit more on synthetic biology and new advances in genetic technology and what-not. To be honest with you, I thought the Q&A for both of those was actually more interesting than the paper. It's interesting to hear people interact with what the speaker said. I was a little bit familiar, probably, more with the chimera/transhumanist one than the other one, but when people sort of probe what the speaker is saying with questions, it's just more helpful. I think, actually, for the synthetic biology one, the way it ended was about "Hey, is there really a difference... if we can build life from the ground up, is that really life or human life or creation life, or can we even use the word 'creation' about it? Should we use something else, like 'building' or 'making' or something like that?" That's what I was hoping the whole paper would be. But since it ended that way, we had some good discussion afterwards. I can say I'm glad that we went to both. I learned a few things and, of course, got exposed to some scholars working in these areas that we'd consider important.

TS: Stay tuned for Part 2. We want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God bless.