

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek

PODCAST

What's an Easy Way to Do Evangelism? With Dr. Rice Brooks

(September 14, 2019)

Frank: If Christianity is true, and it is, one of the most important things we can do is tell other people about the truth of Christianity because we're talking about eternity here, friends. What could be more important than eternity? But what percentage of people in your church are there because of personal evangelism of other church members to bring new people to the church? What percentage of churches grow by evangelism? You have any idea? And how can you be better at evangelism in a natural way?

Last night...we're recording this on Friday...last night Rice and I were at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. We did a session called, "If God, Why Evil?" The reason we did that is because the campus, just back in April, had a tragic school shooting where two people died. In fact, one of the young men that died charged the shooter and took three bullets to do so. He took the shooter down, but he perished, yet he saved many lives by doing that. So, Rice and I went there, and we tried to minister to the students there. You can see the entire presentation on our Facebook page, also on our YouTube channel, and it's on our website as well, crossexamined.org. We spoke, Rice and I, spoke for about an hour and then we took about 90 minutes of questions. Rice is very good at dealing with not only the intellect questions, but also the psychological questions that come up from such a tragedy. So, it's always great to have Rice on.

That's what we're going to talk about today. I've got one of my favorite people in the world with me today in the studio. His name is Dr. Rice Brooks. Yes, Rice wrote the book that led to the movie series, *God's Not Dead*, but that's not all Rice has done. You might have heard of him through that, but Rice really started a series of churches back 30-40 years ago, Every Nation Churches, and they're in almost every nation. They're in about 80 nations around the country [world]. The Central Church, or the church that Rice pastors, is in Nashville, Tennessee right now, called Bethel Church. He also, in addition to starting Every Nation Churches, has spoken on college campuses in 40 different countries.

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Frank: Rice, how are you?

Rice: Frank, thank you, first of all for having me and last night was a real treat. I got to be in a Frank Turek...hopefully I'll be in Frank Turek video!

Frank: Now I'm in a Rice Brooks video now. So that's it! That's exciting!

Rice: We had a lot of fun and I think people were helped. We prayed a lot. We didn't approach last night in a cavalier way. We walked in trusting God to help that situation and to see if we could lift people and give them hope. It's always fun to be with you. We've done this before, but also to learn from you. I've learned a lot from you. You are ready. If there's anybody I know that is ready to give a reason for the hope that's within him, it's Frank Turek, and I'm hoping that that can disseminate down beyond the Frank Tureks into the pews and to the average person.

Frank: Yeah, it's one thing to give a reason though. It's also another thing to be bold enough to actually engage people with evangelism. I mean to try and bring people into the church. I mean, I'm more focused on apologetics. You're doing both. You're doing not just apologetics, but you're doing evangelism, and you're doing it in a personal way. You have a kind of an easy way of doing this that we want to share with our audience today. You also have a colleague with you, a guy I've known for a couple of years, Addison Tweedy, who is a campus minister at Vanderbilt. And in fact, Addison had me at Vanderbilt last year. He's going to have you, Rice, at Vanderbilt coming up. What? When are you going to be...

Rice: September 24th.

Frank: September 24th. In fact, you're on more college campuses than I am this year. I mean, you've been at Texas Tech, we just did UNC Charlotte together yesterday, you're going to be at Vanderbilt, several other schools.

Rice: Oklahoma State will be September 17th, so people listening today, or when they hear this, although that will be in the student center with *God's Not Dead* events. They can just go to

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godsnotdead.events and find out where we're going to be. Godsnotdead.events and that will be for that side of what we do. That's the way to see our schedule.

Frank: Addison. Addison, how'd you get into Campus Ministry? How did that happen?

Addison: Well, I was a college student at Florida State University my junior year. It's actually my second junior year. I took about six years to squeeze four into six years. It's a tough task, but I did manage to do it. But my junior year I came to know Christ. It was because of somebody, you know, coming on campus, like what you guys do, that opened me up to the idea that God was really true. I was raised in a church. But I simply thought because I was American, and Jesus was American, and I may be Christian. It was very cultural for me. Then I realized that, you know, I really wanted to know in college, was it cultural? Was it because I was American or was this really true? You know, what if I'd been born in India? You know there's kind of genetic fallacy arguments. It caused me to really seek and search and I found, in a guys like yourselves, that the material I was able to grab and understand that it was true. I gave my life to say, you know what, I want to make sure that every student has the opportunity to hear the truth of the gospel and can make that decision for themselves.

Frank: And you're doing it now at Vanderbilt. And you're also working with Rice on evangelism at churches as well, right?

Addison: Correct. Correct.

Frank: Okay. And we're going to tell you an easy way. I mean, I love this technique that you have. This SALT technique, we're going to get into here, Rice, because I think it's...people are just . . . it's awkward for people to try and get into spiritual conversation. They don't know how to transition from a normal conversation to a spiritual conversation without seeming crazy. You know, in our culture, you don't do that. You don't talk about spiritual things with people in our culture. How do you help people naturally talk about Jesus without, without making the person talking about Jesus seem like a religious nut? How do you do that?

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Rice: Well, that's always a challenge. You mentioned SALT, so and trying to make it as simple as possible, I took that acrostic and said, or however you want to call it acronym. You always get them confused. It's either both. Acrostic to get an acronym. No. But you start a conversation.

Frank: What does acronym stands for? No, I'm just kidding. SALT. Alright. SALT's your acronym. Go.

Rice: You Start a conversation.

Frank: Yes.

Rice: You Ask questions, acronym. You Listen and then you Tell the story. So, you Start the conversation. So really, everything hinges on that. It hinges on the ability to say, how can I just begin a normal conversation with somebody without saying, "Are you saved?" or "Are you a Christian?" or "Will you come to church?" So, we have a little tool called the God Test, which, when we're on campus, you can download the app. It's been downloaded in maybe 190 countries now. Actually, we record the responses. But we teach people that you know, that's a conversation starter on campus. But if you don't have something like that, you can just start a conversation, then you ask questions. The "L" is listen. And then you tell the story. So, in that little memory device, then you're able to say, look, if I can just start a conversation and ask people questions and listen, if somebody senses that you're going to listen, then they'll usually give you the respect to hear what you have to say. So, you don't talk until you've invested in somebody by listening and sincerely listening. And my commitment when I start conversations is, if I never get to tell them about Jesus, if anything else, I'm going to have listened to them. So, the opposite of that, is we could call it the talk method. That's what we usually do as Christians. The "T" would be you start talking, then you argue, then you get louder. See, if you don't think somebody's understanding you, you just got to get louder. That's what we think, you know? It's like being in a foreign country and you see an American trying to communicate with somebody that doesn't speak English. They think, if I just talk louder, they'll get it.

Frank: They'll understand it. Yeah, right.

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Rice: That doesn't work that way. So, then the "K" would be you kick them. So, we don't want to do the talk method. We don't want to do that.

Frank: The SALT method.

Rice: We give little tools like the God Test that help, especially students, to engage other students to say, the God Test is: Do you believe in God? It's a survey. And if they say, "Yes", then there's 10 questions. You know, if they don't believe in God, then they say you ask him, "What are the main reasons you don't?" Then you have other questions that allow the skeptic of the atheist to talk. Many times, people haven't really voiced this clearly. You'll watch people as they start talking actually realize that, "Hey, I don't think I agree with what I thought I believed."

Frank: Good. In fact, we're going to show you how to get an app so that you can do this naturally. It's kind of easy. It's called God Test and we'll tell you about that right after the break.

Frank: You're listening to, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* with Frank Turek. My guests are Dr. Rice Brooks and Addison Tweedy. And we're also going to give you their website right after the break so you can bring them to your church easily. Don't go away. We're back in just two minutes.

Hey, in the first segment did I say that Rice Brooks has been in 80 countries across the nation? That's pretty funny! Yeah, I'm kind of tired.

Rice: You know what? We're both. We had a...

Frank: You're listening to...

Rice: I don't know the difference between an acrostic and an acronym. So, I had my own gap there.

Frank: You're listening to, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. At least, we're listening to it. I don't know if anyone's listening to us now. This is Frank Turek. I'm on with Dr. Rice Brooks

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and Addison Tweedy, and we're talking about how you can do evangelism naturally. The SALT method, S.A.L.T.: Start a conversation, Ask questions, Listen, and then Tell the story. Now, Rice, there's a website that you have and an app that you have that can help people do this. Tell them about that.

Rice: You go to the, just download the God Test. And this God Test, this little tool, has really helped a lot of people. You have, you know, maybe 8 different language options. I said it can convert to Spanish and it also, you can train people on it.

I used to teach apologetics through the Fuller Seminary system. I'm a Fuller grad, my Doctoral degree in Missiology. I'm a DMis, not a PhD, so people think I'm a democrat from Mississippi. I don't know what that is. But I did my doctoral research on really the evangelist. In fact, when I wrote my dissertation, I'd wrote it on the gift of the evangelist. And at the time, now we've discovered it was only one of two dissertations ever written on it. So, think about it. For wanting to know why evangelism is so irregular and inconsistent in local churches, is that the evangelist is an equipping gift, according to Ephesians four, is virtually missing in the local church lineup. You've got youth pastors, worship leaders, you could name it. But yet, where is the evangelist that you identify? And it's not just one. Our research shows that it's usually about 1%. So, if you have a church of 1000, there's at least 10 that have this gift, not of evangelism, but of the evangelist, and if you equip them, then they are the in-house personal trainers. They are the Frank Tureks and the Rice Brooks and the Addison Tweedys that are not going to leave and go to the next place. They are there.

So, our goal is to help equip and find that. We do a Saturday training. We come in for three hours, Addison does this, and at the end of it, we not only introduce you to tools like the God Test, but we help you see these evangelists. If you'll equip them and train them, then they're there. They'll turn around and help take the God Test and other tools. Maybe you just have an outreach that you help the poor or you're doing car washes. Whatever the expression that your church has, or your people have, of sharing their faith in any simple way, the evangelist can help be a catalyst to make that better.

I developed the God Test because I realized that not only are there not evangelist, people aren't clear on the Gospel. If you ask the average Christian, "What is the Gospel?" It's like asking, you

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now, you [Frank] live in Charlotte, it's like asking you, "How to get through Raleigh Durham?" and you go, "Oh, I love Raleigh Durham. I've got a lot of friends there."

Frank: Yeah.

Rice: We teach people that, if nothing else, memorize and master the Gospel. The Gospel is the good news that God became man in Jesus Christ. He lived the life we should have lived; He died the death we should have died in our place. Three days later, He rose from the dead proving He's the Son of God. He offers salvation and forgiveness of sins for everyone who repents and believes in Him. Now, as a Presbyterian growing up, I learned the doxology, the Apostle's Creed, I memorized that. But if you, as a leader, can just help the people of God, just be able to be clear on the Gospel, then tools, you know. What are the tools that can help leverage the gifts that can allow the average person to start that conversation? But that's little simple acts, you know, that little simple acronym. You Start the conversation, Ask questions, Listen, Tell the story. That's going to be a memory device that helps them engage others. The app does that. We've seen millions of responses, millions of questions answered. And we actually record the answer. If you use the app, then we know where someone took that test within about 10 feet.

Frank: So, it's the God Test in the App Store. They just type in the God Test on the App Store.

Rice: Yes.

Frank: Addison, you're on a college campus of Vanderbilt University. Have you used this with students at Vanderbilt?

Addison: I have. I have. And let me just share something about the God Test, too, because when he first came out... I'm in his ministry, I've known him for 25 years.

Frank: Rice Brooks, we're talking about.

Addison: Yeah, so he came out with it. My first reaction was okay, whatever. I also had a copy he gave me. I put it on the shelf. This is probably 2010 or 2011.

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Rice: This is the paper copy before we went to the App.

Addison: I didn't really understand. Once I heard him teach, I began to understand it more, I thought, I'm gonna give this a try. Actually, ironically, my first time I did, it was here in Charlotte. I came here to a church and I was teaching it before I really used it. The first guy I led to the Lord was a caterer for the event. We were going to train other people how to do it.

Frank: Wow!

Addison: The guy threw it to me and said, "Here show it to me with this guy right here." On the spot, led the guy to the Lord, I couldn't believe it myself. First time I used it. Started going to campuses and using it. In 2012 or 2013, I was leading about 30 people to the Lord a year. More fruitful than I'd ever been. I mean, I could not believe how, when you start the conversation, listen to people, they were so open, just to being heard, being understood that by the time you know, you got to the end, they wanted to hear your story. You would earn their respect- just that simple little shift in your paradigm, the way you approached people. Because early years, I would be more direct, more forthcoming, you know, stop people right away. But we're on a campus, just ask them, "Hey, do you have a minute? Would like to have a conversation about God?" "Sure." You just begin to talk to them for 10 minutes about their opinion. Then it came time to tell your story. I was amazed at how many responses it got. It is so easy. This is really such a great tool to leverage- whatever personality you have- to leverage your personality to be more effective in helping you, so.

Frank: Now you can teach this to churches too. You guys both have a website. It's called [Think Evangelism](#).

Rice: There's a lot of websites for giving, but it's Think Evangelism. That's kind of really saying to churches and Christians, are you willing, in light of the Great Commission, and the great commandment, are you willing to minimally think about it? I'm not even asking them to do it. I say, let's just number one, think about it. But it also, the other side is to *think* evangelism, which is what we do. We unite evangelism with apologetics. So, people have heard of servant evangelism or power evangelism or you, you know, go out and pray for people or friendship evangelism. We're introducing Think Evangelism, because there has been this separation

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between really apologetics and giving a defense and evangelism. We're seeing that come together. And the fruit has been amazing. That's why I do, as much as I equip churches like we're talking about, I also want to go and engage the lost people on campus to show church people that it actually works. If it works on campus, and students will respond, which they perceive as the hardest environment, then it can easily work in your work setting or any other place where people need to know the Lord.

Frank: So, when you're doing this, do you have the app out? Is the person you're talking to responding to the questions on the app?

Rice: There's little touches and they know that their answers are being recorded, which means that...and the tagline is, "add your voice to the global survey".

Frank: Ok.

Rice: So again, there's so many great tools. You know, Bill Bright had the four spiritual laws. There are other things. Whatever your tool may be, whatever's in your hand. We have a chemist friend named Jim Tour at Rice University. He's voted one of the 50 brilliant minds in the world. He, he has a little method on Sunday. He has a lunch, invites doctoral students, postdocs, other professors, Christians over lunch. That's his tool. That lunch. Somebody may say, look, I go and help my neighbors, you know, and out of that service. So, but ultimately, no matter what acts of kindness you do, you eventually have to speak. When people say preach the gospel, and if necessary, use words, it's as if you don't need to use words. I say, wait, if the apostles would have not spoken and just served people, they would have lived longer lives. But eventually you have to be able to give a reason. You have to be able to articulate the good news. It is words. It is communication.

Frank: Oh, yeah.

Rice: We want to be clear with people. We want to be able to make that defense. We want to be able to answer. I mean, my brother came home, when I became a Christian as a third year student at Mississippi State, which is not the Harvard of the south by any means, my brother was at the top his class at law school at SMU. His hobby was harassing Christians. He hated

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Christians. He came home to talk me out of my faith in Dallas, heard I was a Christian [and] thought, "My little brother's in this "born-again" thing." Well, I didn't know what I know now, but I knew enough to ask him some questions. The weekend my older brother came home to talk me out of my faith, we baptized him. They came out of the water, he said, "You haven't really answered all my questions", but I think I was asking the wrong questions. So, my journey into this started by listening to my brother and then discerning the little loose thread that he hadn't reconciled. When I pulled it, the whole thing came unraveled. He's an attorney in Austin today. Is a formidable witness for Christ as a practicing attorney.

So that's what I think. I'm not the guy that goes to the mall and let's hit the streets. That's not me. I don't like anybody messing with me at the mall. And I'm not on the streets. What I am is prepared so when that conversation comes up in the most natural of settings, then I can have that conversation. You don't have to be a personality type. It's not, Oh, you're loud. You and Frank are loud or Addison? Addison's quiet. Addison is the antithesis of a gesticulative, loud, like he's a salesman. Addison will sneak up on you. Most of the great people that are evangelists, they don't think they are because they think it's a personality type. And it's not. It's very, you know, Philip was a deacon. The one evangelist we have in the Bible, explicitly called an evangelist was Philip. So here he is waiting tables and yet he goes and sees a city turned in Acts eight. And that's what we try to do in this Think Evangelism in a church. I tell pastors, Dr. Turek, I can help you more, we can help you more on a Saturday morning than a Sunday morning.

Frank: And if people want to learn more about that go to thinkevangelism.org.

Rice: Yeah.

Frank: Addison can come. Rice can come.

Rice: There's a bunch of us. There's a lot of people. They don't need me. This is so simple.

Frank: Yeah.

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Rice: You know, I tell people, I tell some pastors, I said, Look, I want you to get a children's menu and a crayon. I'm going to run like this on that children's menu with a crayon so if you get confused, a five-year-old can explain it to you.

Frank: Now, let me ask you guys a question, though. Let's suppose you don't have the app and you're using the SALT method. You're going to start a conversation, ask questions, listen, and then tell the story. How do you transition from, you might start a conversation with, "Hey, my name is Addison? You know, hey, I'm from here. Where are you from?" You know, you're just starting the conversation. How do you transition into a spiritual conversation?

Addison: Well, that's a good question, Frank. You're saying that if you don't have the app.

Frank: Yeah, if you're not using the app, or you know, you might have it in your head. But how do you naturally go from questions about where you're from? What do you do? To talking about Jesus somehow, or talking about ultimate things?

Addison: You know, I think if Jesus is in you, and you're talking to people, it's going to come out, number one. But, number two, I think it's pretty easy to get there pretty quickly. I mean, when I ask somebody, "Where you from? You know, I'm from this city." I go, "I have a friend there." "Oh, what does he do?" they ask? I can tell them, "Oh he's a Pastor, he's a Campus Minister." Then it starts to come up. Or, you know, it's amazing. I don't even really think about it. But as talking to people, when they say, "You know, I work here." and I say, "Oh is that your career. Is that what you love to do? Is that you enjoy it? What do you what do you feel ultimately called to do?" You start asking about their own meaning their own purpose.

Rice: Yeah, I would, and what I do, that's an excellent thing. But I think not only do we deal a lot with irrational doubt that people have. Intellectual issues. But there's an existential crisis. So, all you have to do is to ask people, you know, "How's it going. Is your family well?" And they'll leak out the stress that they have. And then you can turn and say, "How do you deal with it? Do you have some kind of are you spiritual?" The segue today is easier than it's ever been because people are just, everywhere you go, people that just worn out. Frazzled. We're offering that little lifeline to them.

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Frank: All right. Well, guys, this is great stuff. Go get the app, The God Test and also go to thinkevangelism.org. Thinkevangelism.org

Frank: Alright, we're back in just two minutes. Don't go away.

Welcome back to, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* with Frank Turek on the AFR Radio Network. I want to mention that I'm going to be at First Baptist Church in Boaz, Alabama, this Sunday, September 15. Then the next night, Monday night, September 16, Snead State Community College in Boaz, Alabama. So, check that out on our [website](#). Then next week I'll be at The Heights Baptist Church in South Chesterfield, Virginia. That's near Richmond. All the details are on our [website](#).

Looking forward, I got several colleges coming up. Thanks for praying about these. We're going to be out in Stockton, California at University of the Pacific on September 30. And then October 1, Fresno State to the south of Stockton, down in Fresno. Then of course, going to be at Calvary Chapel Tucson, the weekend of the fifth of October, and then the University of Arizona on the seventh of October. Check that out.

Then, the following week, of course, is the National Conference on Christian Apologetics here in Charlotte. Now, if you're on the West Coast out in LA, or near LA, I think it's at Costa Mesa Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, there's an apologetics conference out there put on by our friend Justin Brierley of Unbelievable. He's got John Lennox coming out there, along with J. Warner Wallace. So, if you're on the west coast, you can go to that conference the weekend of October, I think 11th and 12th. If you're in the East Coast, come to the Charlotte conference. I'll be there. National Conference on Christian Apologetics, along with Stephen Meyer and Michael Brown, and Hugh Ross, and others. Right here in Charlotte. That's the biggest apologetics, I think, in the country. We do it every year here at Calvary Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.

So that's what's coming up on the calendar. Thanks so much for your prayers and also for attending some of these events. The events that we do on a college campus are normally streamed on Facebook, they're on our website, they're on our [YouTube channel](#). So, if you can't make it, you can see them there. Usually the Q&A is, for me anyway, is the most interesting part. So, tune in for that as well.

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Frank: Now my friends Rice Brooks and Addison Tweedy, were here. They had to leave because they've got another commitment. But that SALT, that SALT acronym, I think is very helpful if you want to do evangelism. Start a conversation, Ask questions, Listen, and then Tell the story. You can use the God Test app, the God Test app. Download it in the app store to do this very easily. As Addison was saying before that, and Rice echoed the same thing. Look, in today's culture, you know, you just ask people, how are things going. How you doing? People can open up to you, and then you'll have an opportunity to have a spiritual conversation, even without an app.

So, that's the way you can get into spiritual conversations. To paraphrase CS Lewis, look, Christianity is either the most important truth in the world or it's irrelevant. What it can't be is moderately important. Because if Christianity is true, then everybody's eternity is bound up in how they respond to Jesus, because He is the Savior. If they trust in the Savior, then they'll be with Christ in the afterlife. If they choose to go the other way and not trust in the Savior, then they're going to be separated from the Savior in the afterlife. Look, if there is a God and there is, and there is an afterlife, and there is, then there's only two possible destinations. You're either going to be with God in the afterlife or separated from God in afterlife. That's logically the only two possibilities, if there is an afterlife. Christ has come not just to save us to the afterlife, but to save us to a more abundant life here in the sense that we can know God and make Him known. Actually, be part of his team here to bring in the Kingdom. What could be more exciting than that?

All right, let me go to some of your questions that you've emailed in. I got a question from Michelle. She says this, "I've been listening to your podcast and I really enjoyed your book. I recently got a chance to put some of the logic arguments into practice with a friend of mine from grade school". This is from 30 years ago, she says. "I definitely got her to think about things and question assumptions. But there was one area I really struggled with during our chat. She's a PhD scientist of geology. She believes that God exists, that Jesus exists and died for our sins, but that belief in Him is not required to get to heaven. It's good work," she says. She said she has a Catholic upbringing, but her dad is Jewish.

Alright. Let me stop right there. Okay, why would Jesus need to come if it's good works? I mean, what's the point? I mean, if you could get to God by just being good, whatever that means, why

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would you need to send Jesus? In fact, Paul actually says this in Galatians chapter two. He says, "If righteousness could be attained by the law, then Christ died in vain." (Galatians 2:21) What's the point of Jesus if it's good works? But you know it can't be good works. Why? Well, first of all, if God is just, and He is, if He's the standard of justice, then He can't allow injustice in eternity. He's got to punish sin because He's infinitely just. And all of us have fallen short. All of us have done wrong things. All of us have sinned.

Well, if all of us have sinned, then we need punishment. We deserve punishment. So how does God remain just and not punish us? He punishes a voluntary, innocent substitute in our place. So, God remains just and He's the justifier. Therefore, this is from Romans chapter three, verse 26, "God remains just and He's the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." By putting our trust in Jesus, we not only have our sins forgiven, but we're given His righteousness. You could do all the good works in the world. That's not going to change the fact you've done a number of bad works, for which you need punishment, if God is just. So, good works won't get you to heaven. Even if Jesus never came, they couldn't get you to heaven, because God is just.

Anyway, Michelle goes on to say this. "I gave this background because she agrees with parts of the Bible but not all. Her justification is that science doesn't support six-day creation. It supports billions of years. Therefore, along the way, man changed things for some agenda. She doesn't believe Jesus said He was the only way to heaven. That was a man change. Is there an argument or proof that I can counter the Six Day creation issue? I feel like if I could get her past that a lot of her reasonings would quickly fall, allowing her to consider a different viewpoint. Any advice would be greatly appreciated. I feel like she's so close to really, really knowing Jesus."

Now, when somebody says something, again, it's not your job to support, or to refute what that person says. It's her job to support what she says. So, I might, instead of dealing with six-day creation, at this point, I might ask her a few questions like, "Why do you think you can get to heaven by being good?" "What evidence do you have for that position?" "Why do you think that's true?" "Have you ever considered that if you could just be good to get to heaven that Jesus was not necessary, and God sent an innocent person here to die a brutal death for nothing? Why would he do that?" So, you might want to challenge her idea of salvation regardless of the six-day creation thing. In fact, you could even say to her, "You know, there are

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Christians that think that the Bible teaches a young earth but there are other Christians who say, no, it's, it's actually teaching an old earth.”

In fact, you could, or, let me put it this way. The possibility for old Earth, or old universe, is certainly in the in the scriptures. It's a possibility. Why? What does the first verse of the Bible say? “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” Okay, when did God create the heavens and the earth? In the beginning. Does it say when? No. I mean, if you want to take a hyper literal view of Genesis one, the heavens and the earth are created before the days ever begin. Because it says, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” You say, “Well, that's a summary statement of what's to follow. Could be but how do you know that?” The Bible is not self-interpreting here. It could be that the heavens and the earth are created, and then God goes into a poetic way of telling an historical truth.

Now, this is not Hebrew poetry, classic Hebrew poetry, but does appear to have poetic elements to it. Every day starts with the same phrase, ends with the same phrase. The first three days are creating, the next three days are filling. Days one and day four are congruent. Day two and day five are congruent. Day three and day six are congruent. And then you get to the seventh day, and God is at rest. And by the way, we're still in the seventh day right now, according to Hebrews four. So, if the seventh day is longer, maybe the other days are longer. The seventh day is not a 24 hour day. We're still in the seventh day. And so, when you look at the scriptures, you have to try and discover what the proper interpretation is.

Certainly, it's possible that the Young Earth view is true. Certainly, it's possible that the Old Earth view is true. So, to say that, yeah, you know, it's definitely a six-day, 24 hour, just a few thousand years ago, creation is not supported necessarily, by the Scriptures. I mean, you could read it that way you want, but you run into all sorts of problems when you do. Not just, has nothing to do with, you can leave this science side of it out of it. You can leave that aside and still say it's got problems. Why? Well, first of all, as I mentioned, the first verse of the Bible seems to indicate the heavens and the earth are created before the days ever begin. Secondly, the word day, “yom” in Hebrew, in Genesis is used in several different ways. It certainly could be used in a 24-hour way. It certainly can be used in a 12-hour way. Why? Because it says “He called the light day and the darkness night”. It could be used to talk about an era. Like if I were to say that, “You know, Peyton Manning was a good quarterback in his day.” you wouldn't think

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he was good for just 24 hours. You would get the idea this is an era. And then it's used in the seventh day way where it's an ongoing period of time that has no end at this point. The seventh day is still going on, according to Hebrews four. God's still at rest. Even Genesis 2:4, in the New American Standard Version, the word day there is used to cover the entire six day creation period. So that's not a 24 hour day either. So, I think we need to be very clear that when we're trying to discover what the first chapter of the Bible says, we have to bring all these things up and put all this into our calculus to try and figure out what is being communicated here. Certainly, it's communicating *that* God created, but it's not necessarily communicating *when* God created.

Also, you've got the fruit bearing plants and vegetation seem to grow quickly if you're going to take it, if you're going to take it to mean a 24-hour day. I mean, generally things don't grow that fast. If you put Miracle Grow on something, you don't get fruit in 24 hours. You say, "Well, Frank, maybe God sped it up." Well, maybe He did. But what are you doing? You're making assumptions you can't prove. They say, "Well, you know, maybe Adam was full grown when he was born or you know, he was created." Well, of course. And maybe God did that with the fruit trees and the vegetables. Maybe He did. But you're making an assumption you can't prove. The naming of the animals. It appeared to take longer than the few hours that Adam had, if that was just a 24 hour day- do you know how many animals there were in Adam's day? He wouldn't have enough time to name all the animals if he started late on the sixth day. Yet, if you're going to take a 24 hour, you run into that problem as well. And there are others we'll talking about after the break.

You're listening to, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio network. Our website crossexamined.org. That's crossexamined with a "d" on the end of it .org. We're back in just a couple of minutes.

So, we're talking about a question from a lady by the name of Michelle who has a scientist who believes that the Bible can't be true because it teaches a six-day creation and science seems to indicate that the universe is older. Okay. Well, first of all, science doesn't say anything, friends. Scientists do. Every scientific assertion or conclusion is an interpretation. Now, maybe it's a correct interpretation, but science doesn't tell you a thing. It's scientists that say things. All data needs to be gathered. All data needs to be interpreted. Who does that? Scientists do that. Now

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they may be right, they may be wrong, and when a scientist is trying to discover how old the universe is, they may use different types of dating methods. And every dating method requires assumptions you can't prove.

Now, for example, probably the one that's used the most is the light from the stars, right? It appears that the universe is 13.8 billion years old, based on the light from the stars. Now, if the speed of light hasn't changed, that's the assumption you're making, then the universe does appear to be 13.8 billion years old. If it's changed, we don't know how old the universe is. Is it a good assumption it hasn't changed? Yeah, probably. Why? Because if you change the speed of light, you got to change all the laws of physics with it. Could God have done that? Of course, He could. But why would He? You're making an assumption you can't prove. You're making assumptions when you're doing dating methods, regardless of the dating method. You're even making assumptions when you're trying to date it from looking at Genesis one. You're assuming there's no gaps in the- well the genealogy issue's another question, but there are gaps in the genealogy. You're assuming that the word "day" always means 24 hours, when I pointed out in the last segment, it has four different meanings in the first chapter and a half of Genesis. Or potentially, could have four different meanings. You're assuming that everything's to be taken in a literal way, when it could be a poetic way of expressing an historical truth. I mean, if I told you that here, I have this poem of the Civil War, you might get some good historical information from that poem, but you wouldn't stretch every word in that poem to its literal truth, because you know, it's poetry. You know, there are different ways of saying truth.

Now, you may have heard people say things like, "Don't trust man's reason, trust God's word." Now, that sounds good, it sounds biblical, but, unfortunately, the statement lacks a lot of nuance. It's actually a self-defeating statement. Don't trust man's reason, trust God's word. It begs the question what God's word actually means. In fact, we covered this in the new TV series that we're doing right now called, *How to Interpret Your Bible*. The last, or second to last lesson, which won't be aired for a couple of months now, but you can get it by going to crossexamined.org and click on store and you'll find the DVD set called, [How to Interpret Your Bible](http://crossexamined.org). We have this section in there on interpreting the Bible, and there's a section within this particular lesson, and it's in the workbook that goes with it, "Should We Trust Man's Reason or God's Word?" Here's what we say in there. First of all, it's self-defeating to say, "Don't trust man's reason, trust God's word", because that actually isn't in God's word. Nowhere does it say,

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"Don't trust man's reason, trust God's word." It's not actually in God's word. It's a product of man's reason. So why should we believe it?

[The] second reason is grounded in God and is a part of His Natural Revelation. Without it, we can't understand anything, including God's word. In other words, for you to understand God's word, you have to have good reason. You have to have good reasoning skills. You have to understand reason. You have to understand the laws of logic. You have to understand reality, in order to understand what not just the Bible says, but what any book says. In other words, from an epistemological standpoint, in other words, from a knowing standpoint, you need to know reason before you can understand a book. Any book. So, reason, from a knowledge standpoint, comes before even the Bible, because in order to understand the Bible, you need to know reason. And reason actually comes from God, in the sense that He is the ground of all reason. He's the ground of the laws of logic. In the beginning was the Logos, the word. This universe is understandable to us, because there's a source of reason. There's a source of logic behind it. This is a reasonable universe, because God, the orderer of the universe, is its foundation. Without God, we couldn't understand anything. Without the laws of logic, we couldn't understand anything. We wouldn't even exist. The reason we can do science is because this is an orderly world. Why is it an orderly world? Because there's an orderer who created the laws of nature and sustains them every minute. So, we can't kind of poo poo reason. We can't say let's not be reasonable. Reason is part of God's Natural Revelation and He's written two books. He's written the book of nature, which everyone has, which include the laws of logic, which include our ability to communicate with one another, includes creation and conscience and all these things. And then there's special revelation, which is the Bible. In order to understand Special Revelation, you have to understand Natural Revelation first.

Also, there's a difference between God's Word and the proper interpretation of God's Word. Everyone needs to use reason in order to understand and interpret God's Word. The Bible is not self-interpreting. I mean, there may be good evidence to interpret certain passages in a literal way, and others in a figurative way. We show you how to do this in this course, How to Interpret Your Bible. You need to use sound reason and good hermeneutical principles to discover the right interpretation. So, we go through this. I don't have time to get into it here on the on the show, but we go through this in this course, How to Interpret Your Bible.

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The statement, “You should use God's word, don't trust man's reason” is often used to interpret Genesis 1:1 in such a way that the universe is only thousands of years old.

Now, I'm certainly open to that being a possible interpretation. That's one possible interpretation. But whether the text should be taken literally, or metaphorically, is precisely the issue at question. It's just question begging. It's a question begging assertion to say that God's word is the literal 24 hour consecutive day interpretation and any other interpretation is man's reason. That's just, you're just begging the question, then. That's the very question we're trying to discover. Is it literal, without any gaps? Or is it metaphorical way, a metaphorical way of telling us how God created? Now it's still expressing the literal truth that God created, but it's expressing it in a metaphorical way. For example, when we say, “Jesus is the door”, when the Bible says, “Jesus is the door”, that's a literal truth that Jesus is the way of salvation. But it's not expressing that truth in a literal way. It's not just saying Jesus is the way in that part of the Scripture. It does elsewhere. But in that part of the Scripture, it's using a metaphor. It's saying that Jesus is the door, which is a way of saying He is the way of salvation. It's not expressing it literally. I mean, we don't do this kind of reasoning with every other passage. We don't say, for example, that the seven headed sea-monster in Revelation 13, must be interpreted literally, and that any other interpretation is man's reason. No, we see what interpretation best fits with the type of literature, the literary devices being used, and all the revelation God has provided.

Remember, you need to know Natural Revelation. You need to know things like reason, the laws of logic, creation, the law of causality. You need to know all these things in order to interpret any book, including the Bible. So, we try and see what all the data tells us as to how to interpret a written text. To just assert that it's man reason, man's reason and not God's word, to take Genesis one in a more metaphorical way than an absolutely literal way, is just question-begging. Now, if the Bible is the Word of God, and it is, then reason in science, and God's Word will not conflict, only some interpretations of the natural and special revelations make conflict. So, if they're in conflict, what we need to do is keep investigating to see whether we're making a mistake in reason, science, or the Bible interpretation in our hermeneutics.

So, all of this you can get in this new course, How to Interpret the Bible. It's a DVD series. It's being aired on DirecTV channel 378, on Wednesday nights, 9pm. If you don't have DirecTV, it's on Roku, ROKU...NRB channel on Roku. If you don't have DirecTV, and you don't have Roku, it's

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on this new technology sweeping America right now. It's called the internet. Yeah, you can watch it on our website, crossexamined.org. You can also watch it on our app, two words in the App Store. Cross Examined in the App Store. So, if you don't have the CrossExamined app, you need to get it. It not only has the TV show streaming live on there, it has this podcast, this radio program, it has a quick answer section on there. It's just a wealth of information and it's free. Over 200,000 downloads, so people are using it.

So, Michelle, I know I went through a lot here to answer your question. But this is kind of a big topic. So again, with your friend, your scientific friend, I would ask her to justify why she says that people can be saved by good works. If I mean, "Why do you think that? What evidence do you have for that?" and "Why would Jesus have to come if you could be saved by just being good, whatever good means, right?" And then secondly, if she wants to go down this six-day creation route and say, "I can't believe the Bible, because it's teaching young Earth and I know as a scientist it's old.", you can say, "Well, first of all, science doesn't say anything, scientists do." Then I would say, "The Scriptures have been interpreted by Bible believing people in several different ways, particularly regarding Genesis 1:1, or the first chapter of Genesis. And they're all orthodox positions. The young earth view's orthodox, the old earth view is orthodox."

In fact, my colleague, Dr. Norman Geisler, as you know, just passed away recently, in his Systematic Theology, I think he went through like 13 different possible interpretations of Genesis one and only a couple of them were unorthodox. They're old, they're young. So, you're not married to a Young or Old Earth view based on the Scriptures. Even Augustine, who lived long before there was any idea from light from the stars, or any of these things, he didn't think that the first chapter of Genesis was teaching a young earth. So, I think there's many things you can say and many questions you can ask of your friend. But again, the main point is to go back to justification. That's the key right there. You can't be saved by doing good works, because you've already done a whole series of bad works. Who's gonna pay for those?

Alright friends, great talking with you. I'll be back here next week, Lord willing. Don't forget, I'll be in Alabama this week and Virginia next week. Check the website, crossexamined.org or the app. See you next time. God bless.

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