

## Reflecting on Ravi with Abdu Murray

(May 22, 2020)

We lost a great man this week, ladies and gentlemen. The great Ravi Zacharias went to be with the Lord earlier this week. And we knew that his time was coming because he had made it known that he had cancer and the folks down at MD Anderson could not do anything more for him. And he passed away.

As I said earlier this week, he was an unbelievable evangelist, apologist, philosopher, theologian, from whom just about everybody you know in apologetics, and many people you hear about from the pulpit, have learned from Ravi Zacharias. His winsome demeanor, but penetrating intellect, was unparalleled in the Christian world, and we mourn his loss, but we do not mourn as those who have no hope. In fact, this is what Paul said to the to the Thessalonians in First Thessalonians chapter four. We grieve, but not as those without hope, because we know we will see Ravi again.

And his work will continue here on earth for generations, because Ravi did not leave an organization devoid of talent and insight. One of the Senior Vice Presidents of the Ravi Zacharias International Ministry is with us today. His name is Abdul Murray. I'm sure you know of Abdu. He's been on our program before. He's shared the stage with Ravi many times. He's a trained attorney who has won accolades for being one of the top attorneys in the country. He speaks at churches, college campuses, business and government gatherings. He has a brand new podcast, which let me tell you, is outstanding, because what he does is, he takes the rules of evidence from a courtroom and applies them to the evidence for Christianity. The podcast is called, The Defense Never Rests. He's written several books. In fact, the last book that Ravi published called, Seeing Jesus from the East, he co-wrote with my guest today, Abdu Murray. So, it's always wonderful to have Abdu on.

### Frank:

Abdu, I know it's been a difficult week. I know you've been fielding phone calls and doing interviews. How are you doing today?

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**Abdu:**

I'm okay, Frank. You know, it has been tough. But, you know, talking about Ravi is always a pleasure. And sharing ministry, what he's done in the lives of so many, not the least of which are yours and my life, has been a real pleasure to do that. An honor, in fact. So, I'm doing okay. It has been tough and energy draining, but it has been invigorating strangely, as well. Because you're right, we grieve, but not as those who do not hope, we grieve as those who do have a hope to see our beloved once again and to see the savior that Ravi served once again.

**Frank:**

Ravi was unlike any evangelist or apologist, maybe in history, Abdu. I know you know that even better than I do, because you spent a lot more time with him than I did, although we both marveled at him from the audience several times in our lives. He was someone that could go to any venue, in any place, at any time, and speak to people even hostile to his worldview. He would go into Muslim countries, as you know, in your background as a Muslim, you had a nine year journey coming to Christianity out of Islam. But yet Ravi could speak to any group, at any time, in any way, and they would hear him. It was unbelievable the kind of impact that that man had, and will continue to have, because he continues to have it through you and the entire RZIM organization. And a little bit later in the program, friends, we're going to talk about where RZIM goes from here. It's going to be a vibrant ministry. That doesn't end because Ravi has gone to be with the Lord. But Abdu, he was such a unique individual. What was your first interaction with Ravi? How did you hear about him?

**Abdu:**

Well, I actually heard about him by providence, really. I was driving on a long road trip, in a very rural area, on a Monday morning. And this was back in the 90s, early 90s really, when iPods weren't a thing. You couldn't digitally control music and play whatever you wanted outside of your tapes that were in your car. And on this long road trip I exhausted the music choices I had brought with me, so I was beholden to the scan button on the radio, you know. I hit the button on that early Sunday morning. I wasn't a Christian; wasn't even close just yet. And I happened to go to country station, to Christian station, to country station, neither one of which was actually any appeal to me back then.

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But then I hear this Indian accented voice talking about Jesus, but I'm thinking, I've never heard an Indian talk about Jesus before. And my goodness, he's doing it so well. And so, I went back to the station, cuz you know, the button goes past the station. And I go back to it and I'm listening. It was a very short program, about 25-26 minutes on the radio, and he is quoting poetry in the middle of giving a philosophical argument that references the Bible. So, he's using scripture, philosophy, poetry, all at the same time. He was really speaking my language because he's speaking in eastern way. He's speaking in a Middle Eastern way. He's speaking in a Western way. And I'm sort of a two culture kid, you know. Born and raised in the states, come from a Muslim background, have a [unintelligible] heritage, and I know how important language and poetry is to my people. And the way in which it was important to the Easterners who are the progenitors and the authors whom God used to pen his word in the Bible.

He was speaking to so many different audiences and I was enthralled by it. It would be years later before I became a Christian, but I went back and I couldn't search the internet, of course, because the internet was in sort of its infancy stage back then, to look for the radio station that he was on. And I found a couple here and there. I got the tapes to the Harvard Veritas Forum eventually and listened to those. My journey, I was exposed to other apologists, as well, through Ravi, and that got me on the search. I was on the search in lots of ways, but they were a big part of that search. And Ravi was a huge part of it. And then, of course, eventually I started speaking on the Christian faith myself. Ravi and his team caught notice and I started doing stuff with them, as they invited me to various conferences to speak with them. And eventually, they asked me to join the team.

But my real first interaction was a byproduct. I did not intend to hear a Christian preacher on a Sunday morning, which, of course, I would inevitably, in the rural area I was. But I was a Muslim kid, you know. I didn't expect that. And here he was, and God brought him into my life that way.

**Frank:**

Do you remember the first argument or insight that he gave? Now, when you were a Muslim, I mean, Abdu, that you went, I really need to check more into this. What did he say that caused you to say, this is credible, I need to look into this?

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**Abdu:**

Well, memory sometimes conflates. This is 20 something years ago. And so, sometimes I think about all the messages I've heard from him and I don't want to necessarily rely on my memory as sacrosanct. So, if it were the case that that day, he didn't even give that message, I don't want to be beholden to it. But what I do remember him talking about was the way in which a secularization of society leads to a loss of a sense of shame. And that he was talking, essentially, about the whole idea of what a secularization actually means. [unintelligible]. He's very well known for speaking on these issues. Again, I don't know if it was that particular day, or soon after that I heard these things.

But one of the things that I distinctly remember was the way in which he was talking about how God actually speaks. In the Bible, God speaks to the accuracy of the human condition, with an unblemished, unvarnished truth that tells you who you are. And part of that is that we're in a sinful condition. And that is evidence of the Bible's accuracy, because in distinction to other worldviews, it's not telling you what you want to hear. It's telling you what the truth actually is. And that was a very jarring, because that was in distinction to my own worldview, and every other worldview I encountered where the Bible is very, very honest about this, amongst other things. And he was talking about meaning when he referenced the cross, in terms of meaning. I've never seen someone connect, not just religion, the meaning, but a particular religion, the meaning. And he was referencing the cross, relative to meaning, specifically.

**Frank:**

We're talking to Abdu Murray, the Senior Vice President of RZIM, Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. We lost a great man this week, but the work goes on. We'll talk more about it right after the break. I'm Frank Turek. Back in two minutes.

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**Frank:**

Last July, my mentor and Ravi Zacharias' mentor, a man who also instructed Dr. William Lane Craig, passed away. His name was Dr. Norman Geisler and Ravi Zacharias was so loyal to Dr. Geisler, who apparently taught him so much, that when Ravi heard the news, I think Ravi was in Singapore, or Hong Kong, or somewhere in that area of the world. When he heard the news that Dr. Geisler had passed, he got on a plane, and he came all the way to Charlotte, North Carolina to do the eulogy for Dr. Geisler. And I'll never forget how he started. He said, ladies and gentlemen, we are burying a giant today. And now we are about to bury another giant, Ravi Zacharias himself.

You know, my guest today here is Abdu Murray, the Senior Vice President of RZIM. Abdu, I've been thinking of analogies. And maybe this is a poor analogy, but I think that Ravi Zacharias is to apologetics what Andrea Bocelli is to opera. And Andrea Bocelli might not be a household name, and Ravi Zacharias might not be a household name, but when the name comes into your purview, when you hear what Andrea Bocelli says, sings, does, or Ravi Zacharias says, sings, does, you take notice. I don't even like opera, but when I hear Andrea Bocelli, I go, wow. And it's the same, I think, with Ravi Zacharias. People who don't even know about apologetics, they don't know anything about Christianity, when they hear him, they go, wow, I need to check into this more.

In fact, the press secretary of the United States, the President of the United States, said a couple of days ago in a video, she learned so much from Ravi. She actually teared up in the interview, because she knew that she didn't have to check her brains at the door, she said, when she became a Christian after hearing Ravi at Oxford. He is, and was, just an unbelievable apologist, evangelist, philosopher, and theologian. Tell me about the first time you had the opportunity to share the stage with them.

**Abdu:**

Yeah, the irony there is that it was my first day on the job. You know, it was my very first day. We're at the University of Calgary and there's this large event. We do these missions weeks where our team goes, and we speak at least twice a day, sometimes three times a day, at lunches and dinner times with the students. They can be of the gatherings from 20 to 100 who come to these different gatherings. And I had done one or two, and then I was joining Ravi for

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the main event that that week, which was going to be open forum. And it was packed to capacity. There was a waiting line to get in, if I recall right, I think the venue seated 2000 people. And we could have easily filled a venue twice the size, by my recollection, at least.

And I walk in, my very first day, and they said, please introduce Ravi, but weave some of the story of your testimony, and how Ravi helped to effectuate your coming to Christ, in the story. I said, oh, no big deal. Sure, okay. And they said, do it in about 10 minutes. I can pull that off. And then you walk into the room, and I've already talked with Ravi, I've known him for a while, and then it suddenly dawned on me, as we're walking in, and I sit down, he's never heard me speak live before. And I'm gonna do Q&A with him afterwards, and he's like the Andrea Bocelli of Q&A, and I'm going to look like a clown next to this guy. This is like first day on the job and it might be my last. He might be thinking, why did we hire him? Who's responsible? Maybe we'll fire two people; Abdu and the guy who hired him. But that's definitely not Ravi's style.

Well, we got up there. I introduced Ravi. He was so gracious about the introduction itself, he invited me, and Andy Bannister, who was [unintelligible], to come and join him for Q&A. And it was just really marvelous because he was handling the questioners so compassionately. There was plenty of possible questions, there were some obvious Christians who were asking questions, as well. But he did it in such a gracious way. And he also did it incisively and insightful way. He would also cut right to the point, but he used story to get there, but he also knew the heart of the person talking.

Give you a quick example of it. So, we're sitting there, and a young man walked up to the microphone. He's Indian. And he says, I was born in India, to a Hindu family, and my question for you is, if God wants me to be a Christian so badly, why did he put me in India to be born into a Hindu family? You know, in other words, you know, religion is all relative to where you're born. Not really any one is true kind of thing. Now, naturally speaking, you have a British guy in Andy Bannister, you have a Lebanese guy in me, and you have Indian, with a Hindu background in terms of his ancestors, on the stage. But naturally, the guy who would answer the question would be Ravi. He looks at me, he says, that's for you. And I didn't know why at the time.

**Frank:**

Oh, you're kidding me. He passed it to you, Abdu?

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Man, I was on stage with him once, and thankfully, the question was so difficult, it was directed at him and I was sitting right next to him, and I'm going, I am thanking the Lord right now that Ravi's answering this and not me. So, how did you answer that, Abdu? What did you say?

**Abdu:**

Well, I got up and I said to him, you know, it's so interesting that you say that, because you just said that if God exists in the Christian bible, but he has placed you in India to become a Hindu, but he wants you to become a Christian; God's not interested in the label you call yourself. What he wants you to do is to know who his son actually is, because you can call what you want, but to be a Christian is to know his son. That's what it is to be. Here's the question you have to ask yourself, my friend, because if you ask this question, this is a good question. And you're asking about destiny and meaning here. So, my question for you is this...the question you have to ask yourself.

The apostle Paul says that God determines where every man should live, that they may seek after God, though he's not far from any one of us. The reality is this. Here you are in a western country that has freedom of religion and you could ask this question in the open air of a former Muslim, a transplanted Indian, and an Anglican. You can ask all of us this question in a free country. So, the question you have to ask is, not why did God put you in a Hindu family in India? But why did God place you right here at this microphone where you can ask us about Jesus? Maybe that's the question you should be asking yourself.

And the answer is this...is that I was born into a family that was not Christian, yet here I am now, not wanting Christianity to be the truth, because of my tradition, but following the truth where it led because I was given the opportunity to follow where God placed me in that particular position. So, the question we all have to ask ourselves is, are we going to use our traditions as excuses to not follow the truth or are we going to follow the truth wherever it leads? I can tell you that I did not want Christianity to be true, yet I found it to be true. And by God's grace, I embraced it as true, eventually. That's what I think God wants for you. He doesn't want you to have a label of being a Christian. He wants you to know his son and he's given you good reasons and good opportunities to follow it. The question is, what will you do with it?

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**Frank:**

I'm sure, Abdu, that that job interview went very well that day.

**Abdu:**

It did go well. It did go well. It was just so funny, because after I answered the question, I suddenly realized, [unintelligible], because Ravi came from a nominally Christian background. You know his ancestors were priests of the highest Hindu caste, but his great grandmother, or somewhere earlier down the line had converted, which is why his last name is Zacharias. A lot of the Hindu converts take on a Christian name from the prophets of the Old Testament, or figures of the New Testament. But he was raised in a nominally Christian home, at best. So, he did not feel comfortable, when there's a former Muslim on stage with him, saying that he came from a background different than Christianity, that would speak to this man, because we're asking him to consider, from a Hindu background, the Christian faith. And he thought that I would be the most applicable person to speak, which, one, goes to his care for the individual who's asking the question. Two, goes to his wisdom for seeing what the question is really about. And then three, giving an opportunity for someone else on the team to answer an important question. And I was brand new. I mean, I was literally eight hours old in RZIM, and he trusted me with that answer.

**Frank:**

Well, it was a perfect answer. And I pray that that young man, who got that answer, did pursue the truth. And that Acts 17 passage that you brought up, Abdu, where Paul says that God has pre-ordained where people should live so that people will reach out and find him, I think answers a lot of questions with regard to the question, what about those who have never heard. Any of those questions, which, by the way, are moral questions, you know. They're basically implying that God is somehow immoral if he doesn't get his Gospel to every living person. And I've heard Dr. William Lane Craig say, well, it could be that people who never hear the gospel wouldn't have believed it anyway. And that's certainly possible, right? That God has so pre-ordained where people live, that even those who never hear the gospel, if they had heard the gospel, they wouldn't have believed in it anyway. But that was a very astute answer that you gave. Your job interview went exceedingly well that day, Abdu.

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And by the way, I need to I need to ask people right now, as soon as this podcast is over, you need to go to [rzim.org](http://rzim.org), and you also need to go to their YouTube channel, because you will see so many videos from the college campus, and from churches, where both Ravi, Abdu, and Vince Vitale, and others are answering questions. And Abdu, I remember an answer you gave. You're sharing the stage, I think, with Ravi, with John Lennox, and yourself, and maybe one other person, and a question came that was so difficult. It was like a three prong question about, I want to say it was about women in the church, the LGBTQ question, and why did God kill the Canaanites? And you had, like, just a few minutes to answer. Or the question came to everybody and Ravi just turned to you and said, Abdu, you got this?

And right after the break, we'll maybe give a short answer to that, because it was a brilliant answer. And folks, you can see that answer, as I say, if you go to the RZIM YouTube channel. There are several videos up there that you will see. Ravi and his brilliance. And by the way, Abdu, as we're coming up to the break here, one of the things that I always tell people about Ravi, one of the great insights that I learned from him was, whenever you're answering a question, you need to remember that you're really answering a person. If you just jump into some rote answer, and you're not trying to discover why that person is asking the question, it can be a disaster. And Ravi was so good at that, Abdu.

**Abdu:**

He was excellent at it. And that's been...he often said this, before he answers a question, he always envisions himself giving a verbal hug to the questioner.

**Frank:**

Amazing. We're talking to Abdu Murray. His latest book, written with Ravi Zacharias, by the way, is called Seeing Jesus from the East. We're having a bit of a tribute to Ravi today and we'll do more right 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. And we're back in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

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**Frank:**

Welcome back to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek and the American Family Radio Network. Our website is crossexamined.org. That's crossexamined with a D on the end of it .org. But what I want you to do right now is go to RZIM.org. In fact, if you're a monthly contributor to crossexamined.org, thank you so much for supporting us through this difficult time. But if you give monthly to us, I'd really love it if you would take one monthly donation and go to RZIM and provide what you normally give to us to them this month, because they are going to move forward with amazing effort and amazing talent, which we're going to tell you about here in just a minute.

Abdu Murray is my guest today. He's the Senior Vice President of RZIM, and despite the fact that Ravi has gone to be with the Lord, the organization is going to continue, and these talented people are going to continue to bring Christianity in a very thoughtful and winsome way all over the world. And they do it through evangelism, they do it through philosophy, they do it through apologetics and theology. There's really no other organization like it, so if you can support them this month, and even going into the future, that would be wonderful.

But before we get into that, Abdu, I got to ask you...how you answered that question I mentioned before the break was brilliant. I think you went for maybe seven minutes, and you covered women in the church, LGBTQ, and also the Canaanites. We can't cover all of them right here, right now. People can go to the YouTube channel and see your complete answer. But let's just do women in the church, because people think well, you know, Christians put women in a second class way, and that's not true at all.

**Abdu:**

It's not. In fact, it's radically untrue. It's hard to find a book of the Bible where a woman actually isn't exalted in some way to her rightful place. You have books of the Bible that are named after women, and the courageousness of women, in times when they would have no standing whatsoever to effectuate any change. Actually, there's a lot of [unintelligible] ones who actually do make the change, whether it's Ruth, and Esther, and all these things [unintelligible] in the

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Old Testament. You have Deborah, who was appointed by God to be a judge in the time of the judges, who had that authority. you had Huldah, who was entrusted with the book of the law. You have all these prophetesses, and there are more than a dozen different women who are considered prophetesses, who were spokespeople on behalf of the Lord, in these ways.

And then you move over, and you go into the New Testament, and you see page after page of example after example of the way Jesus treated women as equals. There's a couple of examples that just jump out to me. One is just a very cursory way to look at it, it requires a lot of depth to see the understanding of it, is that Jesus actually used women in parables to describe what God is like. You see this in Luke 15:8-10, about the woman who has 10 silver coins, and if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and [unintelligible]. She finds it. So, you see over and over again, these proxies that Jesus uses women as proxies in his parables for God. And that is unheard of. That is the kind of thing that the rabbis of the day, and the leaders, that they would have considered scandalous.

Then you see this wonderful example of where you have Mary and Martha, right. So, Martha is the one who's busy. She is in the kitchen, and she's preparing the meals, and preparing the food, for all [unintelligible] that's going to come. And Mary is sitting at the feet of Jesus. And Martha is upset, because Mary doesn't know her place. This is interesting because, studies actually showed, that when women started entering into the workforce, in traditionally male roles, like engineering firms, and other places, a woman would often have to deal with some of the misogyny that was happening with the males around them. But when another woman came into the picture, they didn't form a bond. What happened was, a tokenism took over, and the first woman found herself identifying with the males and actually trying to, in some way, [unintelligible] to be ingratiated into the male dominated area she was in, picking on the next woman who was there. It was when they realized this, they begin to have this solidarity.

So, Martha is doing this to Mary. She's like, Jesus put her in her place. She belongs in the kitchen with me, instead of at your feet. At your feet was not an insult. It was an honor given to students who could [unintelligible] the teaching of a rabbi. And educations were denied women in those days. And what does Jesus say to Martha? He says, Mary has chosen what is better. She has chosen an education and it will not be taken from her. He was an advocate for the

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education of women. He wouldn't even let other women take it from women. He was telling Mary you deserve this too.

Did you see that there? Of course, the culminating miracle of the entire scripture, of history really, is the resurrection of Jesus. Once the creation of the world happened, then you have the resurrection of Jesus. And the most important miracle, theologically, is that Jesus saves by his death, and resurrection, and who are the first ones to see it? It's the women followers. If you were making that story up, you would not make it the women followers. Yet, it's not just that it lends credibility to the account that Jesus rose from the dead because, you know, the writers of the New Testament told it like it was. They wouldn't have faked the women seeing him. They would have faked Peter, or James, or anybody else who was a male, rather than the women. It's not just the credibility of the account that's at stake here. It's the dignifying of women who were there at his cradle, the Bible tells us that they financially supported Jesus's ministry, they were there when he was being murdered, and they were there at his resurrection. Jesus dignified women, with some of the most important events in all of history, as the primary witnesses. It becomes a thing where one wonders, how could it be that we actually thought that Jesus was somehow against them, when he was so for them...

**Frank:**

There's also a spot in your book, Abdu, Seeing Jesus from the East, the last book that Ravi published, and he published it with you, where you talk about an incident, I think in the Gospel of Matthew, where a woman seems to correct Jesus on something. And when we read it with Western eyes, we really don't quite get it. But with Eastern eyes, it makes a lot of sense. And that's what your book, that you just did with Ravi, helps people understand. It helps people understand the Eastern culture in which Jesus ministered. Can you describe that account, or that incident, that Jesus had with the woman and how knowing the Eastern culture will help us understand that passage?

**Abdu:**

Yeah, absolutely. It's found in Matthew chapter 14, where Jesus was approached by a Canaanite woman. And this is very important; she's a Canaanite. She is not the kind of person that the Jews would have been in love with because of the history of the Canaanites, and the Jews interactions with the formation of the very nation of Israel. So, not only is she a woman,

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but she's a Canaanite woman. So, there's ethnic and racial issues involved in this whole discussion, and of course, there's the gender gap between men and women at the time, in the way women were treated.

So, here she comes in to ask the Jewish rabbi, Jesus, for help for her daughter. And what the crowd expects is for Jesus to treat her with ethnic disdain, and for gender disdain, and he just wants to teach them something. He wants to teach everyone, including his disciples, how you actually interact with somebody in a very dignified way. So, what he does is he says something that seems undignified. He says to her, it's not right, when she asked for the favor, when she asked for the blessing. It's not the right for the food meant for the children to go to the dogs. Meaning Jews, for the children, should not have [unintelligible] going to the non-Jews.

Now he knows what she'll say back. He knows that this Middle Eastern banter that they're going through. This is how Middle Easterners talk. To make a point stick, they engage with the banter, the back and forth. He dignifies her with the conversation. He doesn't send her away, which everyone wanted. He engages in the conversation with her. And what does she do using her savvy that Jesus knows she has? She says, ah, but even the crumbs that fall from the master's table can go to the dog. You see how clever she's being. He used what she said to the people around them, and he says, great is your faith. He tells a non-Jewish woman that her faith is great. And he dignifies her by making her the teacher of everyone in the area.

I tell you this as a lawyer. A lawyer is trained to tell the story through other witnesses and Jesus tells a lesson through another person. He uses her as the teacher to everybody. It's interesting, because this is the Middle Eastern way of doing things. This is the way Middle Easterners often make their point. And I heard someone who complained that Jesus had to learn to not be a sexist, and not be a racist, and this incident is evidence that Jesus, in the early days, was a sexist and a racist. My response is this. You have looked at that through solely Western eyes. You have imposed your Western sensibilities onto the conversation that Jesus was having and so you have actually forsaken the ethnicity of Jesus. And in doing so, I wonder who is really being racially insensitive, because you haven't taken into account the ethnic differences between the way Middle Easterners talk and the way Westerners talk. And you didn't see that Jesus dignifies her in the way he included her in the whole episode and taught people around him. And if you look at the middle eastern eyes, you'll see the beauty of that conversation. But if you refuse to

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do that, and you impose a Western view on it, then you have to wonder who's the one who's being ethnically insensitive?

**Frank:**

Now, you're a former Muslim that, originally, your family came from Lebanon. What mistakes do Christians make in trying to evangelize people from the east, particularly when it comes to well, we don't want to offend anybody. Are we making a mistake when we think that way?

**Abdu:**

I think that we are making a mistake when we go too far with that kind of thinking. Obviously, we don't want to offend people unnecessarily. The Gospel itself becomes a defense. We know that the Bible literally tells us that people will be offended by the message of the gospel, because that message is, you're a terrible sinner, I'm a terrible sinner, we need someone who's not us to save us from ourselves. We can't save ourselves. That's already offensive. But what people mean; it's right hearted but wrongheaded, because they're so afraid of offending someone. But they actually begin to insult another person, because they're saying to a Muslim, or a Hindu, or a Buddhist, or whatever it might be, I don't want to offend you, because I think you're made of porcelain. And if I have the slightest barbs going your way, you're gonna shatter into a million pieces. That's not the case. Give them the dignity of difference. Tell them, I respect your belief system, and what you believe so much, I don't have to agree with it to respect it, but I respect that you hold it, and that your system is different than my system. There's a fundamental difference and our differences make a difference. So, you can disagree without being disagreeable. But disagreement does not equal offense. Disagreement, just equals disagreement. And you can do that intelligently and compassionately at the same time.

So, I want to caution listeners don't approach everyone with kid gloves, like they're made of porcelain. That itself is an insult. Instead, treat them as a person made in God's image, who holds a different worldview to you. Every human being deserves respect, but not every idea is created equal. And that's an important position for us to understand.

**Frank:**

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We're talking to Abdu Murray. He is the Senior Vice President of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. He is integral in that organization. And right after the break, we're going to tell you about how that organization is going to go forward and how you can help. And we're also going to have some other insights, or I should say memories, about Ravi, because he taught each of us so much, and so many other people, he's taught so much, that it would be very appropriate for us to reflect on that a little bit and remind our listeners the kind of insight that Ravi Zacharias had, and will continue to have, by the way, because his ministry is going to continue. Not just through recordings, but also through the people you're listening to right now, like Abdu Murray, and several others at RZIM.

So, don't go anywhere. I'm Frank Turek and you're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, on the American Family Radio Network. And we're going to come back here in two minutes with Abdu Murray.

**Ad:**

Hi friends. Frank Turek. You can only have two things; either you can have hope, or you can have despair. Every day during this coronavirus season at 11:30am (ET) / 10:30am (CT), we will be live online with a new live stream called, Hope one. It's at [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). Go to [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org) and we're going to give you hope. Every weekday, Monday through Friday, 11:30am (ET) / 10:30am (CT). I hope you can join me.

**Frank:**

Before we get back to reflecting on the great Ravi Zacharias, I need to mention that coming up this August, the CrossExamined Instructor Academy is scheduled to go on in Dallas, Texas. Myself, Greg Koukl, J. Warner Wallace, Brett Kunkle, Richard Howe, so many others, are going to be your instructors at the CrossExamined Instructor Academy, CIA, our 13th annual. It is a three day intensive event. We only take between 50 and 60 people, because we want to train you on how you can become a better apologist, where you can bloom where you're planted. If you want to apply to it, you need to go to [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). Click on events. You'll see CIA there. Go through the queues and I hope to see you in Dallas in August. Now don't worry about the coronavirus. Viruses cannot survive in Dallas in August. In fact, very few people can survive in Dallas in August. So, we hope to see you there, the CrossExamined Instructor Academy.

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Okay, I'm talking to my friend Abdu Murray. His new book, with the late great Ravi Zacharias is called, Seeing Jesus from the East, and you need to pick up a copy of it. We haven't had that much opportunity to talk about that book here on this broadcast. But trust me, it is a wonderful resource. It will help you learn more about Jesus in angles you probably haven't thought of before, and it will also help you interact with and evangelize people from that part of the world. But Abdu, before we go any further, I know people are thinking, you know, when Billy Graham dies, what's the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association going to do? When the great Ravi Zacharias passes on, what is RZIM going to do? What is the future Abdu?

**Abdu:**

Well, the future is actually quite bright. Despite our sorrow right now, it is a temporary sorrow, because we know we are going to see Ravi eventually. We're going to carry him with us for years. But the reality is, is that Ravi had the prevision a long time ago. In fact, I would even say at the inception of the ministry, where his name was on the door, he always the ministry was not about him. He wanted it to be about other people, in terms of other speakers, who were going to do the work of an evangelist, using apologetics around the world. And Michael Ramsden is one of our earliest, sort of, recruits under Ravi's tutelage. Michael Ramsden is now the President of RZIM, a brilliant guy from the UK, who's coming over to live in the United States, to work at our HQ, and he's a global speaker, as well. Stuart McAllister is one of the earliest speakers on the team, as well. Amy Orr-Ewing, who is another Senior Vice President with me. She's based in the UK.

But in the US, we have so many wonderful speakers. We have Vince Vitale, PhD from Oxford, who's studied at Princeton. A fellow in New Jersey guy, Frank.

**Frank:**

Fuhgeddaboutit.

**Abdu:**

And yeah, forget about it. He's as Italian as they come. And his wife, Jo Vitale. Now you hear Jo Vitale, and you think a good old Italian guy. But Jo Vitale is Joanne Vitale, who is as British as they come. Everything she says sounds brilliant, but it actually is brilliant. The British accent is just is doubly unfair. And she's in our US office. We have so many speakers, Alycia Wood,

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Cameron McAllister, so many other speakers [unintelligible] in the United States. Ravi built an organization that has 57 full-time speakers, and almost 100 speakers total, including adjuncts and various different levels of affiliation with RZIM. And they're [unintelligible] from 15 countries. He never envisioned this to end when he...[unintelligible]...he never envisioned it to end then. He always envisioned it to continue as long as the Lord carries and then when he comes, we don't need apologetics anymore.

So, Michael is taking the charge in terms of the presidency. I'm actively involved in ministry. And really, when you look at Ravi, his manner, his demeanor, the kind of man he was, sharp mind he had, compassionate heart he expressed himself with, and interacted with people with really attracted some amazing people. They really did. You know, Ravi would say, we don't go and find people, they find us. And so, people who are like-minded come to the ministry and through our various means we've managed to bring people on board who want to perpetuate the kind of evangelism Ravi did.

You know me; I'm six foot eight, I am 280 pounds, I have size 15 feet, but none of us can fill Ravi Zacharias' shoes, and we don't intend to. What we intend to do is perpetuate the ministry that Ravi had, but also do it uniquely, because he would always tell each one of us, be you. The Lord has gifted you to be you but be you in the most Christlike way you can be. Don't be Ravi. Be like Jesus but be the one that God has made you to be. And he would always encourage us in our specific gifts, in our specific background. Ravi never had the chance to get a PhD. He always wanted to get an earned doctorate. As you know, he's got multiple, multiple honorary doctorates, but he never got an earned doctorate. He wanted to [unintelligible] so badly but he never got a chance. So, he was encouraging to members of the team to go and get that education. We have PhDs of every stripe, from people who are in sciences, and the actual criticism, and philosophy, and all these things, because you really wanted to impact this world to reach the cultural influencers and the thinkers. That's why the motto of the ministry is, "Helping the thinker to believe; that's evangelism. But helping the believer to think; that's discipleship in training." And so, we have every intention of just catapulting this ministry Ravi started into the future.

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Well, the wonderful family of Ravi Zacharias needs to be commended Abdu, because they sacrificed quite a bit while Ravi and his team were on the road, sometimes up to 240 days a year. So, we want everyone to pray for Margie, for the three children, for the grandchildren, for the entire organization. Would you send a donation to [rzim.org](http://rzim.org) to keep them strong, moving forward, because as Abdu mentioned, the talent that they have to go out to a lost and dying world is at the very top of what we find in the world. People who are great theologically, they're great philosophically, they're obviously great apologetically, and they do it all in a winsome way. So, I'm urging everybody if you can, if you can support them, to go to [rzim.org](http://rzim.org).

And do you have any details, by the way, Abdu, as to who is doing the memorial service? Or are there a number of speakers? Do we even know that yet?

**Abdu:**

Yeah, there's a number of people who are going to be doing it. It's going to be invitation only because we're in a covid world, you know. And it's going to be livestream. So, the good news is, is that people can't make it, and obviously, it'll be very, very limited capacity, but it will be livestreamed. So, details will be coming up, but the most important detail for listeners to know is that it will be livestreamed, and we can all pay our respects that way, and reflect on a life extremely well lived, and a champion of faith. The world is a little dimmer because he's gone, but it will brighten back up.

**Frank:**

You know, I was thinking about this the day he died, just a few days ago, and I don't even know if this is a valid thought or not, Abdu, because this has not been revealed. This is not in the scriptures. But you know, when somebody famous dies, particularly a Christian, you look at Ravi, you look at Nabeel who died very young. And some people will say, oh, what did he do wrong to deserve this early fate? And of course, Jesus nullifies that and Luke 13. You can go read about it. He says, no, these people were not worse sinners than you, but unless you repent this will also happen to you. But we don't often look at it in in in the reverse. It wasn't a judgment on Ravi, or Nabeel, or anyone. They're with Jesus now. It may be more of a judgment on us, that we haven't been listening enough to people like this, and God finally says, if you're not going to listen to my people, I'm going to bring them home. Now, again, this has not been revealed. I'm just speculating here and that's all it is, is speculation.

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And then I see just yesterday, the Babylon Bee, which is a Christian satire site, had a headline that said something like, Ravi Zacharias Deemed too Worthy for this World, or something like that, you know.

**Abdu:**

Yes, I saw that I saw that.

**Frank:**

Just the way he carried himself...and okay...he was a sinner just like you and I are. We know that, but you know him personally, I know him personally, and we can both vouch for the fact that he was the same person off the stage as he was on the stage as well.

**Abdu:**

He was and I get that question asked so often. Ravi tells a story...I remember him telling the story about how he had given a talk, and someone had invited their atheist friend to come. And they sat in the audience, and they listen to him speak, and the friend was driving home, and they literally recounted this to Ravi. The friend was driving home with their atheist friend, and he said, well what did you think? He said, compelling, I was compellingly delivered, but the content was really something. So, do you have any questions. They said, I only have one question. Is he really like that? Is he like that in his private life? And Ravi said that it really meant something to him that that question was in the minds of people.

I never met somebody who was more uncomfortable with being well known, than Ravi, because while he didn't have a false humility, he also knew that sometimes these things can be, you know, facade. He never wanted to be a facade. He always wanted to be authentic. He was the man on stage that he was in real life and vice versa. You know, he preached that message so often, that every human being is made in the image of God and therefore has an essential worth and an objective dignity and value. And he treated people that way. I've heard him, I've seen him, shake the hand and speak to people in the highest positions of any government, captains of industry, celebrity with every stripe. He speaks to them just like he speaks to the rickshaw driver, and the cab driver, and the bellman at the hotel. So, whether they're in charge

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of an entire country, or all they do is push the button in the elevator at the hotel we're at in Asia, whatever they happen to be, speak to them the same way.

**Frank:**

Abdu, thank you so much for all you're doing. And we're going to pray for you, RZIM, and everyone there moving forward. Thank you, brother.

**Abdu:** It's my pleasure, Frank. Thanks, so much for having me on.

**Frank:**

That's the great Abdu Murray, ladies and gentlemen. Seeing Jesus from the East, is his book, along with Ravi Zacharias. Pick it up, and we'll see you here next week. God bless.

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