

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Is God Immoral When He Kills People? plus Q&A with Frank Turek

(July 15, 2022)

Ladies and gentlemen, is God guilty of murder when he ends someone's life? If God floods the world, do you have the right to flood the world? If God causes a baby to die, do you have the right to cause a baby to die? If God judges someone with capital punishment, do you as an individual have the right to do so as well, to judge someone with capital punishment? Last week, we went through some of the arguments that people bring up for abortion and tried to address those. And one I didn't have time to get to at the end of the program was something from Numbers chapter 5. We'll get into it a little bit here and then we're going to answer some of your questions that you have emailed me at [Hello@CrossExamined.org](mailto>Hello@CrossExamined.org).

You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network. Our website is CrossExamined.org, and we are here once a week. And for those of you listening on the AFR network, as you know, that's normally on Saturday mornings and Sunday evenings. For those you that listen to the podcast, it's called I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist.

Alright, let's spend a few minutes on a passage in Numbers chapter 5. I don't have the time to read the entire passage, but Numbers 5 basically tells of a ritual method of discovering whether a woman has been unfaithful to her husband. This is in the context of Old Testament Israel. This is in the Old Covenant. This passage does not apply to Christians today, or anyone today. This applied just to Israel. It's from Numbers, chapter five, as I mentioned, and it's interesting that this is the sole example in biblical legal literature, where the outcome of a case rests upon God doing a miracle basically. And here's the core of what goes on here. I'm reading from Numbers, chapter 5, beginning in verse 27.

Now as you know, when we do a Bible passage, we always have to stop and figure out what's going on. S.T.O.P. is an acronym. S stands for the situation. T stands for the type of literature. O stands for who's the object of the passage. And P stands for: Is this passage prescriptive or descriptive, and to whom?

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S: What's the situation? Well, the Israelites are wandering around trying to get into the Promised Land. They've already left Egypt, and now they're wandering, and Numbers is talking about some of the laws that they are trying to adhere to while they're wandering. The T stands for Type. It's law, basically. The object of the passage, the O, stands for ancient Israel. This does not apply to us. It's not a law for us. It was a law just for ancient Israel. And the P stands for prescriptive or descriptive. Well, this was prescriptive for the ancient Israelites, but it's just descriptive to us. It's just telling us a law that God had in place for the ancient Israelites.

And as I mentioned, this section has to do with a husband who suspects his wife has been unfaithful to him. And here's what it says beginning in verse 27. " 27 If she has defiled herself and been unfaithful to her husband, then when she is made to drink the water that brings a curse...". Ok, let me stop right here. There was a kind of a bitter water that was a mixture created by a priest and the woman was to drink this water. So, after she drinks this water that brings a curse, "it will go into her and cause bitter suffering; her abdomen will swell and her thigh waste away, and she will become accursed among her people. 28 If, however, the woman has not defiled herself and is free from impurity, she will be cleared of guilt and will be able to have children."

Now, the question is: What does this passage really mean? What's happening here? Well, apparently when the woman drank this water God would somehow cause one of two outcomes. If she was guilty, her abdomen would swell and her thigh waist away, whatever that means. We don't know what that really means. Some say it means miscarry. Others say No, it means something else. But she will become accursed among her people. Maybe it meant that she would never be able to bear children. That would be a curse. If, however, the woman was not defiled, then she'd be cleared of guilt and be able to have children. So, she drank this bitter water, and if she was guilty, the threatened judgments came upon her, including sterility. If she was innocent, then she was pronounced clean and free from punishment, and she was able to live a normal life. A normal married life bearing children, says one commentary on this passage.

Now here's the here's the rub, so to speak, when it comes to people saying, well, maybe God meant here that the woman miscarried her child. Let's, say that's the right interpretation of this passage. That would be the hard interpretation of this passage that God made an unfaithful woman miscarry her child, so the child died. And some people are trying to say, Well, look, God

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isn't pro-life. God decided that this baby shouldn't live in this particular scenario here, so if God isn't pro-life, why should we be pro-life?

Okay, for me, this completely misses the point. In fact, a number of years ago, I was at Central Oklahoma University, and we were doing the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be An Atheist presentation. And a woman got up to the microphone, and you can see this on our YouTube channel, it's about an 11 minute Q&A, and she said, I can't believe in the Bible because all of the killing in the Old Testament. And of course, she was referring to passages like this, and the Canaanites, and these kinds of passages, the wars in the Old Testament. And so, look, I can't believe in the God of the Bible, because he appears to be very violent, he appears to kill people, and that's not right.

So, we had a little discussion on it. Again, you can see the discussion on our on our YouTube channel. In any event, at one point I said to her, Hey, let me ask you a question on the issue of abortion. Are you pro-life or are you what many people call themselves pro-choice? And she said, Oh, I'm pro-choice. And so, I asked her the question: Why is it that when God plays God in the Bible and decides who lives and dies he's immoral, but when you play God here in this world and you decide who lives and dies, regarding abortion, somehow that's your moral right? Can you justify that for me? I mean, really, why does God not have the ability to decide who lives and dies but you do? That doesn't appear to be right.

In fact, when we use the phrase, play God, what does that imply? When we say, Well, you shouldn't play God, what that implies is that God has authority over who lives and dies, and we don't. When we say to somebody, Don't play God, what we're meaning is, you don't have the right to take life, you don't have the right to decide who lives and dies. God does. When we say that, that's what we're implying, right? That God who is the creator of life, he has authority over life, he can decide who lives and dies and when they decide who lives and dies. God has the right to take life whenever he wants. We don't.

In fact, there is an incidence in the Old Testament where the baby of Bathsheba dies, whom, of course, David had an illicit affair with. And that appeared to be judgment for what had happened between Bathsheba and David. Is God wrong for deciding that the baby would die? No, he's not wrong, he's God. He decides when life begins and when life ends. Look, if

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Christianity is true, people don't really die, they just change location. And only God gets to decide when that happens. He can decide when he's going to take somebody from this life into the next life. We don't have that authority except in limited circumstances I'll cover in just a minute. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network. We're back in just two minutes.

Monday night, July 18, and Wednesday night, July 28, we'll be at Cornerstone Chapel in Leesburg, Virginia, not far from Washington DC. We'll be doing I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist and a lot of time for Q&A, so check that out on our website. Then the following weekend, July 23-24, I'll be at Calvary Chapel Port St. Lucie. We'll be doing, If God, Why Evil and Should You Follow Your Heart in the afternoon session on Sunday the 24th. Check all that out.

Also check our website for our trip to Israel. Just a few seats left. Yes, we're going this September, I want to say it's like September 14 to about the 24th. I haven't been to Israel since I think about 2018. The vaccine mandates obviously the lock downs, all that prevented trips there. But now all that has been lifted, including all the testing, so we're back to normal over in Israel. Our guide will be the great Eli Shukron, a real world Israeli archaeologist who discovered the Pool of Siloam, excavated most of the City of David. He's going to take us to places other tours can't take it because he actually has the keys to some of these places, including an unbelievable temple under the city of David that could have been Melchizedek's. So, it's just amazing stuff. I can't wait to get back. I hope you can join us. Go to CrossExamined.org, click on Events, you will see it there.

Now, just before the break, we were talking about the idea that God has the authority to take life and he has the authority to make judgments and to judge people. He can do that whenever he wants. That doesn't mean we have the authority do it. If God decides a baby should die, that's up to him. He can take that baby into eternity whenever he wants. We don't have that authority; God has the authority. Why? Because God can resurrect and does resurrect people.

In fact, I remember I was at Wright State University a number of years ago - again, this is on our YouTube channel - and a young man got up to the microphone and he said, Suppose a parent told a young child, like a six year old, Hey, there's a loaded gun in this drawer, don't touch it. And then the parent left, and the kid went into the drawer and shot himself. Would that be a

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good parent? I said no. That'd be a bad parent. He said, Okay, what if we said that the gun instead was an apple? He's referring, of course, back to the Garden of Eden. And he's basically trying to say, Is God a bad parent?

So, I said, Well, let me make sure we have the analogy right here. You're saying that in your analogy with the gun and the six year old, that God is the Father and the six year old represents basically Adam and Eve. Yeah. I said, Okay, but in your scenario, the father does not have the authority or the ability to resurrect the child. What if the father did have the authority to resurrect the child? What if he could correct the sin or the mistake of the child? Would that change things?

Well, he didn't like where that was going, because I just pointed out that his analogy didn't work. Because in his analogy, the earthly father doesn't have the capacity to resurrect his six year old, but in the Garden of Eden, the Father, our Father, God, does have the authority and the ability to correct the error, correct the sin, correct the mistake of Adam and Eve, and that's exactly what he does. He sends the deliverer almost right away, at least he talks about sending the deliverer right away, through the offspring of Eve. Genesis 3:15 is the first prophecy in the entire Bible, that a deliverer is going to come through the offspring of Eve. So, God has the authority and the ability to resurrect life.

And by the way, of course, if there is no God, then human life isn't any more valuable than any other life, not from an objective perspective anyway. It'd be just your opinion. One of the reasons we know that we have certain rights is because God has made us in His image, and he is the standard of goodness, righteousness, and justice. And he has endowed us with certain unalienable rights, as Thomas Jefferson said, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These rights are given to us by our Creator. If the Creator doesn't exist, there are no rights. So, just because God judges people and has the authority to do so, doesn't mean we have the authority to play God the way He does.

Now, there are situations where we do have the authority to take life. For example, in a just war, or in self-defense, or if we are part of a duly appointed government, a real government, that God has delegated capital punishment, as he does in Genesis 9 and in Romans 13. And even in, I think it's John 19, where Jesus is talking to Pilate and Pilate says to Jesus, Don't you

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know I have the authority to kill you? And Jesus says, Yes, you do, but you get that authority from above. So, Jesus is actually affirming that Pilate, being a government official, has the authority to execute capital punishment. So, we do have the authority in certain circumstances, but it's only an authority given to us by God and only in specific circumstances. And it's never to take innocent life, it's only to take guilty life.

This is why there's a difference, by the way, between abortion and capital punishment. I don't know what your views on capital punishment are, but some think that pro-lifers are inconsistent if they're pro-life on abortion and they're not pro-life on capital punishment. In other words, they think capital punishment is appropriate in certain circumstances. Well, I'm one of those people that thinks it is appropriate in certain circumstances. But the difference is, is because abortion deals with innocent life, whereas capital punishment deals with guilty life.

Now, obviously, this must be done with great caution. We don't want to execute people who are innocent. That's why some people say, Well, we can't really guarantee that so we shouldn't have capital punishment, just life in prison. Okay, that's fine. But in the Scriptures, God has given authority to governments to execute capital punishment for capital crimes. Paul even says in Romans 13 that the ruler doesn't bear the sword for nothing. We have the capacity as a government to execute people for capital crimes.

Now, let me go back to something I said last week as well. We talked about one of the slogans that the left uses with regard to abortion is, my body, my choice. And some have said, Well, if you're going to declare my body, my choice for vaccines - because you know, a lot of people said, Wait a minute, you folks on the left are saying my body, my choice when it comes to abortion, but not for vaccines? Why not? Well, the left might say, Well, why are you claiming my body, my choice for vaccines, but not abortion? We both have a double standard here, we're not completely consistent.

Well, let me point out that there's a big difference between my body, my choice for vaccines and my body, my choice for abortion. There's a critical difference. If you don't get a vaccine, you're not directly killing another human being, you're not directly killing another body. But in abortion you are. The baby has his or her own body. A baby has its own DNA, its own blood type, its own sex, it's distinct from the mother. Yes, you generally have the right, within limits,

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to do what you want with your own body, but not if you kill another body in the process. You see, that's the question for the abortion issue. Is there another body involved here, and there is? It's not just the woman's body, there's another body inside the woman, and her uterus is designed to carry and nurture that body. And yet we are saying, Oh, she has the right to kill. At least some are saying, She has the right to kill that human being. It is a human being. We know it's a human being. We've been through this already.

Now with regard to vaccines, I don't know if you saw this week, but man, this has been a big, confusing mess, this whole vaccine situation. And now the truth is really coming out. In fact, Anthony Fauci, Dr. Fauci, was just on the Neil Cavuto show just a few days ago. And here's what he actually said. Listen to this. And just so you know, here's the context here. Fauci has been completely vaccinated and boosted 1000 times, or however many boosters he's had. Right? But he got Covid. And here's what he says. "One of the things that's clear from the data is that even though vaccines, because of the high degree of transmissibility of this virus, don't protect overly well as it were against infection..."

Let me stop right here. Do you see what he's saying? He's saying the vaccine doesn't prevent you from getting Covid. That's what he just said there. He says, "However, they protect quite well against severe disease leading to hospitalization and death. And I believe that's the reason, Neil, why at my age, being vaccinated and boosted, even though it didn't protect me against the infection, I feel confident that it made a major role in protecting me from progressing to severe disease."

Do you see what he just admitted here? He said, Why at my age, I needed to be vaccinated and boosted. Well then why were he, and the CDC, and the Biden government, and all these people trying to say everybody needs to get the vaccine, including kids now? Kids who, if they have no comorbidities, have an actual zero chance of dying from Covid. They have more of a chance of dying from influenza, the flu, than Covid. And yet, they're saying all kids need to be vaccinated. And here's Fauci now, finally admitting it's not a real vaccine, it doesn't prevent you from getting the disease.

Ladies and gentlemen, if the Covid vaccine doesn't prevent you from getting Covid, then why are you calling it a vaccine? It's not a vaccine. It may be a pre-therapeutic, which Fauci tries to

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say tamps down the symptoms after you get it, but it's not a vaccine. That's why quietly, maybe a year, year and a half ago, the CDC actually changed the definition of vaccine from what we normally think of a vaccine, Oh, it prevents you from getting the disease in most cases, to now, Oh, it's kind of like just a pre-therapeutic. I can't remember the exact words they used, but they changed the definition, yet they didn't really highlight it to the general public.

And ladies and gentlemen, if the vaccine doesn't protect against infection, how are you affected directly by unvaccinated people? You're not. And if it does protect against infection, which it doesn't, again, how are you affected directly by unvaccinated people? You're not. But if you get an abortion you are absolutely affecting someone else because you are killing them. So, the double standard does not apply to the pro-lifers. The pro-lifers are right to say, my body, my choice when it comes to a vaccine. The pro-abortion people are not right when they say my body, my choice when it comes to an abortion, because they are directly killing another human being. That's unquestionable. It's a scientific fact. Well, I know the left doesn't really care about science anymore. When they can't tell us what a woman is, sorry, they're not involved in science anymore. They're involved in ideology that ignores science, that ignores biology, that ignores the facts.

All right, we're gonna get to some of your questions right after the break. We got questions on Mormonism, we have questions on near death experiences, and several others. Don't go anywhere. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network. Check out our website, CrossExamined.org, download our free app [two words in the App Store, Cross Examined]. Back in just two minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, what I just said about the vaccines just prior to this segment might get me canceled, right? By the way, what I'm about to say now might get me canceled. There have been a lot of medical problems with this vaccine. In fact, it's coming out now, blood clots, early death. Obviously, a minority of people have experienced that, but still more than a normal vaccine would because it's experimental. It came out very quickly, and so, there are some issues with it. Now, if you'd rather not be canceled, if you'd rather not be doxed, if you'd rather not be hunted down by your employer or a future employer, yet you still want to talk about these issues openly with other people and learn from them, other Christians in particular, then you want to join our CrossExamined Community.

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That's what we're doing now behind a cheap paywall. I say cheap because it doesn't cost a lot to be a part of, but we need a paywall to prevent trolls and prevent anybody from just seeing what you're posting and what we're talking about. There's like a seven day trial period, I think. So, if you want to just join and see what's going on, if it's not for you, there's no obligation. But we wanted to set this up so we could interact with you and talk about these issues freely and openly, and you could post whatever you wanted, regardless of how controversial it is to our culture, and we could learn from one another.

Look, I very rarely interact on social media because so many trolls are out there. I don't have time to engage with all these people. I don't have time to get involved there. But I do have time to get involved on the CrossExamined Community, because these are people who are giving honest feedback, and are asking honest questions, and they're not just there throwing rocks, and throwing stones, and they're not people out there who are just moving the goalposts, they're really open to the truth. So, I spent a little bit of time every week out there.

In fact, Wednesday night, we just had our second live Q&A Zoom where I come on and answer questions. We do that once a month on the CrossExamined Community. And next month I think we're gonna have Melissa Dougherty on to answer your questions. So, anyway, check it all out. Go to CrossExamined.org, click on CrossExamined Community, you'll see it at the top of the page there.

[Areas in brackets are Frank's additions]

Let me go to some of these questions you've emailed me. Tyler writes, "I was wondering if Dr. Turek was ever presented with a question of Joseph Smith [the founder of Mormonism] dying in Carthage, Illinois jail. I would wholeheartedly agree that Joseph Smith's revelations are fraudulent, but for our LDS friends [that means Mormonism] who would seize on the idea that one does not die for what they know is a lie, yet Joseph died for his testimony, how would Dr. Turk respond to that line of reasoning?"

Well, here's how I respond. Joseph Smith was not a martyr; he was killed by an angry mob in a jail. It may not have mattered whether he repented or not. They were angry with him for some of the things he was saying and doing, and he was murdered. It wasn't like he had an

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opportunity to repent, as far as I know. Anyway, in fact, I was just at the Mormon museum out there out in Utah, when we spoke there at the University of Utah. In fact, we're going to go back out there next semester and speak again. And they had the golden plates there. You know when people say, Well, what did Joseph Smith claim he saw? Well, he claimed he saw an angel, the angel Moroni, and all this, and these golden plates were left behind.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, are golden plates a miracle? I mean, a resurrection would be a miracle, right? Parting the Red Sea would be a miracle. Walking on water would be a miracle. But seeing golden plates? I mean, how do you know they weren't manufactured by somebody here on Earth? How do we know Joseph Smith didn't manufacture them, or somebody else did? We don't. It's not a miracle to see golden plates. And by the way, this was just one guy. It wasn't like a whole bunch of people went to their deaths, per se, and they saw something that was miraculous. Which again, golden plates are not miraculous. This was just Joseph Smith and I think his brother was killed there too. But how were they killed? They weren't given an opportunity to repent. They were just murdered by an angry mob.

And the other thing you might want to point out is that Joseph Smith was involved in the demonic. He used the seer stone. And for many years, the Mormons hid this, but now they're very open about it. He may have been deceived, he may have thought he actually saw something, but since he got involved in the demonic, he may have thought what he saw was true and it really wasn't. So, even if he went to his death thinking it was true, doesn't mean it really was, because he may have been deceived.

Now, it's really hard to make this argument for the New Testament writers. Remember, the New Testament writers were all Jews except for Luke. Everybody else is a Jew. They believe they're God's chosen people. What they didn't believe was that somebody could claim to be God as a man - that would be blasphemy - and they didn't think somebody could rise from the dead in the middle of time. They thought we'd all rise from the dead at the end of time, according to Daniel 12. But they didn't think a man could claim to be God and would rise from the dead in the middle of time.

Well, why then do we have all these Jews claiming this is exactly what happened? They write it down in the first century, they fill their texts with eyewitness details only an eyewitness would

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know, verifiable eyewitness details that we could discover today. They then put all sorts of embarrassing details in there, they never would have invented. You know, they run away, the women are the brave ones, they deny Jesus, you know, they're doubters. They put all this in there and then they die for what they said they saw. They saw Jesus, they touched Jesus, they ate with Jesus. This is unlike anything from Joseph Smith. It's unlike anything from Islam.

The Muslim martyrs today don't have evidence that they witnessed that shows them that Islam is true. They haven't witnessed anything. They just have faith that Islam is true, and they will sacrifice themselves for that. The New Testament martyrs, on the other hand, saw Jesus rise from the dead. They touched Jesus, they ate with Jesus, they verified that Jesus had risen from the dead. Yes, many people, or at least some people, will die for a lie they think is the truth. Nobody will die for a lie they know is a lie. And maybe the Muslims think it's true, but it really isn't. It's alive. Maybe Joseph Smith thought it was true, but he was deceived by a demon, and it was a lie. Or maybe he was just killed by an angry mob, and he never had the chance to repent.

If the angry mob had come to him and said, Joseph, renounce this or we'll kill you and maybe would have said yep, it's not true. Okay, we don't know. But we don't see anybody recanting from the ancient world, the ancient Jewish New Testament world. They all go to their deaths saying it was true and they witnessed it. Now, we have really good evidence for four of them doing that. Peter, Paul, James, the half-brother of Jesus, and James, another apostle who dies in the book of Acts 12. We can add Stephen in there, too. He's in the book of Acts as well. And we have lesser evidence for some of the other apostles. In fact, Sean McDowell, Dr. Sean McDowell, his PhD was in the martyrdom of the apostles.

What we don't have is anybody from the ancient world who was an eyewitness recanting saying, Oh, no, Jesus didn't rise from the dead. I'm given all this up, don't kill me. Nobody says that. Nobody says they're gonna give it up. In fact, there was a letter written from Pliny, who was a civil servant, and he served in Northern Asia Minor, which would be modern day Turkey. He served there from about 111 AD to about 113 AD. And he writes to the Roman Emperor Trajan about Christians. I don't have time to read the whole thing to you. You could just Google Pliny's letter to Trajan. And in this letter, Pliny actually says, because he's writing to Trajan saying, What do I do with these Christians? Here's what I'm doing, because you know, they're

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not worshipping the Roman gods. And he basically says, Look, I give them an opportunity to repent, if they do repent, then I don't kill them. If they don't repent, I execute them.

And in fact, he actually says, in this letter, "Those who denied that they were or had been Christians, when they invoked the gods [meaning the Roman gods] in words dictated by me, offered prayer with incense and wine to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for this purpose together with statues of the gods, and also cursed Christ – none of which those who are really Christians can, it is said, be forced to do..."

So, here's a Roman official in 111 AD saying, anybody who's a true Christian will never curse Christ. Okay. We can kill them, but not going to curse Christ. And he goes, ..."these I thought should be discharged". In other words, those that recanted Christ. But the true Christians won't recant Christ. Anyway, Pliny writes to Trajan, and Trajan writes back to him, and you can just Google Pliny's letter to Trajan, and you can read all about it.

Oh, the other interesting thing about this letter is that the people who had left Christianity, apparently, not under duress, but said they were Christians at one point and are no longer, said this to Pliny. He said, "They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to do some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food — but ordinary and innocent food."

In other words, Pliny is saying these ex-Christians - who again, had left Christianity before he put the screws to them - had said, Look, all we used to do is just sing songs to Jesus, who was God. And we pledged to be good citizens. You know, we pledge not to commit fraud, or theft, or adultery, or any of these things, and to be trustful citizens. That's all we pledged to do as Christians. What is this telling us? That as early as 111 AD, we have in written form from a Roman official, that he's getting eyewitness testimony that the Christians from the earliest times thought Jesus was God. And they were just pledging their allegiance to Jesus as God and pledging to live good moral lives. So, no extra charge for that. I just wanted to point that out.

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It's now known, beyond any reasonable doubt, that from the very earliest periods of Christianity, all the way back to as soon as the early Christians recognize that Jesus had risen from the dead, they believed Jesus was God. This God thing didn't evolve and come decades later. They thought Jesus was God from the beginning. That's one of the reasons why Pliny says, Look, if they're true Christians, you can threaten to kill them, they're not going to recant, because that would be denying God Himself.

Now, we got another question. This one comes from Josh, and I'm not gonna be able to answer it before the break, but it's about near death experiences. And these are very interesting experiences that are veritcal. What do I mean by veritcal? That we can verify them, that someone had remote viewing. In other words, somebody saw something at a great distance from where their physical body was. They were over their body; they were outside the hospital while their body was on the table. We'll get to it right after the break. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network. We are back in just a couple of minutes, so don't touch that dial. Or don't switch off this podcast. We're back in just two minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, why does God allow evil? Why do we suffer for Adam's sin? Why do bad things happen to good people? What is the destiny of the unevangelized? How could eternal punishment be fair for temporal sins? Why did children and animals suffer? These are all questions that are going to be answered in the course about to start with Dr. Clay Jones called, Why Does God Allow Evil? The online course begins July 20. If you're hearing this after July 28, there's still a few days to sign up the online course. The premium version has Dr. Clay Jones in several live Zoom Q&A sessions. You can take the Why Does God Allow Evil course at any time, but if you want to be with Dr. Jones and ask him questions live via zoom, and get some other additional parts of the course, you need to sign up for the July 20 course by going to CrossExamined.org and click on Online Courses. You will see it there. Why Does God Allow Evil? Again, it's a six week course, I think its six weeks, begins July 28. Again, you can sign up a little bit after that if you want to, but just go to CrossExamined.org and click on Online Courses. You will see it there.

Okay, this question comes from Josh in New Orleans dealing with the question of Near Death Experiences. I'm summing up his question because it's a long one. He basically says, Hey, thanks

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for your courses, thanks for your books, thanks for what you do on the podcast. He says, There was an atheist I was conversing with who couldn't get to see beyond naturalism. I talked about objective morality, laws of logic, mathematics, even cited examples from the Stealing from God book. It wasn't until I cited modern near death experiences and the scholarly research that he immediately went back to realizing he had better been more skeptical of evolution and naturalism. And it was an idea I got online from Gary Habermas.

He said, I pointed out that there have been 30 million people who have reported near death experiences in North America and Europe in modern times. And if these things are true, then materialism is false. And of course, he's right about this. He said, The Stealing from God non-material arguments are good, but I think that the Near Death Experience/Miracle Empirical Evidence - I think when he talks about miracle empirical evidence, he's talking about the miracles that have been documented in Craig Keeners book, a two volume set called Miracles. Anyway, he's saying, I think that the near death experience and miracle empirical evidence might be what breaks the shell of naturalism and at least sow a seed that it could be possible. And he says, From there, anything is more reasonable than a resurrection, changes significantly. So, he's basically asking the question, should we use near death experiences?

Yes, I think we should. But we also need to point this out, that this world is a miracle, if you think about it. Because even atheists are admitting that space, time, and matter had a beginning out of nothing. Now they don't think it was God, but the question is, What else could it be? If space, matter, and time at the beginning out of nothing, as I've mentioned many times, whatever caused it seems has to be spaceless, timeless, immaterial, and powerful to create the universe out of nothing. Personal in order to choose to create. Also, intelligent to have a mind to create. And that seems to be what we would call God, a spaceless, timeless, immaterial, powerful, personal, intelligent creator. If that being exists, and if Genesis 1:1 is true, then miracles are possible, and naturalism is false.

In fact, for naturalism to be true, every single spiritual experience and miracle claim in the history of the world has to be false. Every near death experience has to be mistaken. Is that possible? Yeah, it's possible. Is it reasonable to say that every spiritual experience, every miracle claim, every near death experience in the history of the world has been mistaken, has been false? No, it's not reasonable to say that. So, atheism, naturalism, is a really high bar to

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get over to say that their claims are true. And by the way, if naturalism is true, they can't know their views are true, because they're just molecular machines, they're just moist robots, so why should we believe anything they think?

But let me go back to near death experiences for a minute. Gary Habermas on his website, GaryHabermas.com, if you go there, you can find articles and videos where Gary talks about NDEs (near death experiences). And he will point out that there have been several that have been verifiable, meaning you can verify that these really happened. There's someone on an operating table, and after the surgery they say, During the surgery, I flatlined. And of course, the doctors know that. They saw that the monitors went flatline and the doctors are trying to revive this person. But he says, I saw an accident on Third and Maine. And the guy was on the table the whole time. Yet, when the doctors check it out, they realize the guy saw that accident. There's no way he could have known that accident happened on Third and Maine. He was on the table when it happened. And as soon as he wakes up, he tells them, I saw it. So, he's remotely viewing something while his body is on the table.

This defeats naturalism itself because naturalism says there is no soul, there's just a body. There is no mind, there's just a brain. If any of these verifiable near death experiences are true, naturalism is false. And they are. There are scores of these that they can verify. So, if you want more on that, if you want to just crack the shell of naturalism, as Josh says here in his question, then maybe what you ought to do is bring up near death experiences and talk about them. You can do that by going to Gary's website. And there's journal articles on this. I mean, these are medical journals that talk about these things. Most of the references are in Gary's website. So, check that all out.

Another question I got from a comment on one of our videos has to do with fictional stories. And the question is regarding the use of stories to communicate moral and theological truths. Can we use stories as a bridge to the gospel and to point out moral and theological truths? And of course, my son and I have written a book on this. It's called Hollywood Heroes: How Your Favorite Movies Reveal God. And some people are upset because we're talking about stories in there that have some things that are unbiblical, shall we say, in them. They have a divination in them, like Harry Potter, or they have murder in them, or they have violence in them. Well, my son and I will be the first to admit that not everything in a movie or story should be seen or

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heard. And not everything is age appropriate. But to write off stories and movies completely because they contain evil behavior, would exclude the Bible itself ladies and gentlemen.

Look, the Bible is rated R. It contains wars, murders, adulteries, idolatry, divination, rape, mass killings, theft, abuse, crucifixion, polygamy, indentured servitude, martyrdom, Armageddon, hell, sufferings of nearly every kind. Ladies and gentlemen, if God's revelation includes the actual struggle between good and evil, which yields moral points and lessons for us - in fact, Paul actually says that in First Corinthians 10 and Romans 15, that these stories in the Old Testament were written as examples to us, so we don't follow their footsteps. Yeah, we got David's adultery with Bathsheba in there. That's in there but it's not a prescription - God doesn't want us to commit adultery - it's a description. Look what happens when you commit adultery. But it's telling the truth as to what has happened, all the evil that has occurred.

In fact, this is why Dennis Prager, who as you know is a conservative Jew, says, I really believe that Hebrews were telling the truth in their Old Testament. Why? Because they make themselves out to be such evil, wicked people. It's embarrassing. This is another vein of embarrassing testimony. People tend to hide embarrassing things about their own lives. This is why social media is such a such a ruse. It's fake. It's not true. People aren't having their best life now; they just make it seem that way. Right? Very few people put, Oh, I really screwed up again today, on social media. They make it seem like they're living in airbrushed life. Everything's just so hunky dory. Everything's just so great. Why isn't your life this way? Well, your life isn't that way either. We all have troubles. We all have struggles.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, if God's revelation includes an actual struggle between good and evil, which he yields these moral points and lessons to us, why is it wrong if fictional stories do so as well? Should we exclude all fictional stories that instruct? I mean, stories about evil can yield a moral point more powerfully than straight didactic teaching. In fact, Jesus used stories to communicate moral and theological truths, even though the stories themselves were not true. What? Jesus told false stories. No, listen to what I'm saying here. When Jesus told parables, were they true stories? Really, were they? Like, if you were if you were with Jesus and he just told the parable of the Good Samaritan and you were to ask him, Hey, Jesus, what was the name of the Good Samaritan? What would he say back to you? Oh, his name was Bob. Or his

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name was Harold. No, he wouldn't say that. He would say, This is just a story to illustrate a theological and or moral point.

In fact, that's why he could get away with telling these stories, because while they were yielding true points, they weren't really true, in the sense that they had already happened. He was just pointing out these true moral and theological lessons, even though the stories themselves were invented to illustrate these points. That's why the Pharisees, he could get away with saying some of these things, because his defenders could say, Well, he's just telling stories. Right? And Paul does the same thing. By the way, when the Apostle Paul was in Athens in 51 AD, he's trying to reach the Greeks with the gospel. He didn't quote the Old Testament, as he did with the Jews. He found a bridge to the Gospel by quoting their own poets and referencing their beliefs in their own gods.

In effect, Paul was using the stories of his hearers to bring them to faith and that's what we're doing in the book *Hollywood Heroes*. We're using the stories of this day to bring people to faith in the Gospel. We're saying, Look at the parallels in these stories. Look at all these heroes. Why do you love them? Because they're pointing to the ultimate hero. We are enthralled with these movies because they speak to a deep desire that all of us have. We want to be rescued from this world of pain and suffering and be taken to a place of bliss. That's what these superheroes and fantasy movies do. And that's what Christianity promises. So, use these age appropriately, to try and point out the truth of the gospel. If you're interested in these stories, you should be really interested in Christianity, because that's what they all point to.

Alright friends, great being with you. Check out our book *Hollywood Heroes*. Back next week. God bless.

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