

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Letter to the American Church with Eric Metaxas

(September 9, 2022)

Let me ask you a few questions. If you lived in the South in 1860, would you have opposed slavery? Or if you lived in Germany in the 1930s or 1940s, would you have opposed the Nazis? Would your pastor have opposed slavery or opposed the Nazis? I don't know about you, but many of the pastors I see out there, they won't even oppose Facebook, and yet, you're saying they would have opposed slave owners. Many of them won't even oppose Twitter, but you're saying they would have spoken their mind to the Nazis. Let me ask you a question. Does your pastor speak the truth of the scriptures, even on the most controversial topics that are now political hot potatoes? Does your pastor talk about those things? Do you talk about those things? Oh, no, no, no, we can't talk about those things. Right? We're just supposed to preach the gospel. Right? We could keep people out of the kingdom if we start talking about controversial topics. Right?

Well, my guest today has been a guest on this program many times before. We're honored to have him. He has his own program, a daily show called the Eric Metaxas show, so now you know who he is. He's the best-selling author of 14 books and we've had him on many times for many of these great books. One of them, of course, probably his most popular book I'd imagine, is *The Bonhoeffer Biography*. Dietrich Bonhoeffer who, as you know, was a pastor, a martyr, a prophet and a spy in Germany during the Nazi regime. Eric Metaxas also wrote the book, *Amazing Grace*, about William Wilberforce. He's also written a great biography of Luther and many other books. His show is on about 300 radio stations every day across the country. He's written in some of the top newspapers and magazines in America and he and his family live in New York City. So, here he is ladies and gentlemen, the great Eric Metaxas. Eric, how are you?

Eric:

I'm thrilled to be back with you. You make me smile because your voice of truth and courage out there. Thank you.

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Frank:

Well, thank you, brother, as are you. Now this new book is going to raise some eyebrows with people who are a little bit cautious. The new book, Eric, is a letter to the American church. And let's just start at the top. This letter to the American church, what's the basic theme of it and why did you decide to write it now?

Eric:

Well, this is a chilling thing. I've never written a book like this. I had a feeling, I don't know, maybe a year ago, that I had some things that needed to be said to draw some parallels with the silence of the German church in the 1930s with the idea that the American church is being silent today. And that if you really want to think: Why is America going to hell? it is because of the silence of the American church. And I don't say these things lightly, I don't say these things cavalierly, I really feel it was the Lord who wanted me to say these things. It's a very short book, probably the shortest book I've written. But I said, I have to say these things.

I was going to publish it myself, but weirdly, my publisher, Salem Books - they published my book, *Is Atheism Dead?* and my book *Fish Out of Water* - they met with me at the NRB, and they said, Hey, Eric, we've got some ideas for some books we think you want to write. And at the top of the list, they pretty much described this book. And I said, This is very weird, because I haven't told anyone that I want to write this book. But really, I felt a burden, because imagine, if you're gonna write something with a title, *Letter to the American Church*, you know, like *Letter to the Ephesians*, you had better know that what you're saying is what God is trying to say to his people and not what you, Eric Metaxas, have some ideas on or some opinions on. So, I wrote it.

It's a very soberly written book. I try to take a statesman like tone. I'm not pointing fingers, I'm not trying to be incendiary, I'm trying to reason with people in the American church and to say, Listen, folks... I don't know who said it. A lot of people think Bonhoeffer said it. I don't think he said it. But there's a famous quote, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act. God will not hold us guiltless." And I said, the silence of the German church in the 30s is what led to the nightmare of the Holocaust of the Nazis taking over. Most of those German people and German pastors, they didn't know that they were helping Satan. They didn't know what the future held.

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But God sends His prophets, and he sent Bonhoeffer to try to wake them up, and they blew it off. They said, he's a hothead, he's wrong, everything's gonna be fine. Just keep your nose clean. We'll let the hotheads take the heat. If Bonhoeffer and his friends want to be loudmouths, we're just gonna go along, we're just going to preach the gospel. We don't want the Nazis to shut us down from preaching the gospel, so we're going to keep our mouths shut on the injustice that's being done, not just to the Jews, but in every other part of life. We're going to be silent. And many of them thought they were doing the right thing.

And my contention in this book is that this is exactly, Frank, exactly what is happening in the American church today. People have been persuaded through theological arguments which are deeply wrong, that we should just "preach the gospel". We'll just stick to gospel related issues. That's the voice of the devil, folks, because truth is a gospel issue. And when people are suffering, when you're dealing with unborn being killed, when you're dealing with every kind of lie being spread in our school systems through our media, through social media, if you do not speak up, God will not hold you guiltless. God wants His people to speak the truth. And it's because of the silence of the church in America, that we have been very dramatically speeding to the abyss. Most people can see it. And I said, I want to write a book to the American church to help them understand how it is that many of us have been silenced and why we must speak, why we must be brave.

I will say this, I was going to title the book, Faith Without Works is Dead, because I think a lot of times we talk about truth; you talk about it, I talk about it, a lot of Christians talk about truth. But if you don't live the truth, you mock the truth. It's one thing to say, I believe in this and this, I believe all these things. And I think God and the devil, they don't really care what you say you believe. Are you living what you believe? Because it's one thing to say I believe something, but to live it, that's the point of believing it. And I think a lot of evangelicals, we have been persuaded that it's just what's in my head, what I say I believe. God is not interested in what we say we believe; he's interested in whether we actually believe it and how we live our lives. What we're willing to risk shows what we really and truly believe. And I think it's time for the church to begin to live out its faith by being bold, by speaking the truth when it's uncomfortable. If we don't do that, we're already judged.

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Frank:

Again, friends, the brand new book is coming out September 20, so if you're hearing this just before September 20, just pre-order it I've read the entire book. I read it in just a few hours. It's not a long book, but it's a powerful book. It's called, Letter to the American Church, by Eric Metaxas. And, Eric, you point out four errors that we make in thinking that Christians ought not be involved in politics, or any controversial issues at all. Here are the four and we'll pick them up right after the break. One is a misunderstanding of the word faith. You just touched on that a minute ago and we'll come back to it. Second is what you call the idol of evangelism. I hope to cover that in a little bit more detail after the break. The third error we make is thinking there is a command, be ye not political, like somehow that's in the Bible somewhere. And we can address that issue. And the fourth error is thinking that merely avoiding sin is the purpose of the Christian life, that we're just supposed to avoid sin and not do anything else. You just wait for God to come take us away. That's not the real Christian life.

And after the break, Eric Metaxas is going to unpack some of those, so 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. My guest today is Eric Metaxas at EricMetaxas.com. His brand new book is A Letter to the American Church. Pick it up. We're back in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

If you're low on the FM dial looking for National Public Radio, go no further. We're actually going to tell you the truth here. That's our intent anyway. You're never going to hear this on NPR. My guest is Eric Metaxas of the Eric Metaxas Show, author of 14 best-selling books, among them Bonhoeffer, Amazing Grace, Is Atheism Dead, and the brand new one, Letter to the American Church. That's what we're talking about here.

Let me go back to my friend, Eric Metaxas. Eric, in the new book, Letter to the American Church, you talked about four errors we make thinking that Christians should not get involved in these controversial or political issues. The first one you mentioned is that we misunderstand the meaning of the word faith. Can you unpack that for us a little bit? What is that about?

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Eric:

You know, we have to understand that when people do things wrong, why? Why do they do things wrong? Bonhoeffer, and a lot of my book, Letter to the American Church, I'm taking my lead from Bonhoeffer, I refer to him a lot. And he wrote a book called, The Cost of Discipleship, and in that book, he deals with the concept of cheap grace, because you think, Grace, who could argue with grace, who could argue with faith, who could argue with any of these? And we can't argue... Well, no. But what if it's defined in a way that really makes a lie of the real thing? Okay. Real grace is costly grace. Real grace, cost, the life of the Son of God on the cross. So, if you throw it around, like, Hey, we're under grace, man, you don't understand the word grace. That is heavy stuff, what that cost?

It's similar with the idea of faith, and I write about that in the book. We say, It's all about faith. I wrote a whole book, a biography of Martin Luther, and he talks about its faith alone, faith alone. And you think, Okay, what do you mean by that? Is it real faith? If it's real faith, yes, you're saved by faith. But what if your faith is a fig leaf? What if your faith is a game you're playing. You say, I believe this, and this, and this and this, so it doesn't matter what I do. Well, God has a different perspective. God says, in the book of James, Faith without works is dead. In other words, if your faith is not lived out in your life, then it's proof to God, and proof to the devil, and proof to your friends, and proof to your enemies, you don't really believe what you claim to believe. So, when you use the word faith, and you don't live it out, you're playing a game. You're using this term faith and what you're really saying is that, well, this is what I believe intellectually. But God is not interested, God doesn't look on the brain, he looks on the heart. He looks on who you are and how you live shows what you believe.

And somehow, in the evangelical church, we've drifted away from that. We say, well, that's that Catholic stuff, that's works. No, no, no, no, no, folks. If you do not live out your faith, if people don't look at you and say, I know what that guy believes because of the way he lives; he stopped sleeping with his girlfriend, he used to be really rude to his wife or to his parents or to... Some things have changed. Like I could see what he believes.

Now, the point is, when you say what you believe it's going to be carried out in how you live. We're not perfect, but the point is that God is mocked when we say we believe things. So, if you say to somebody, Hey, it's all about faith, it's all about what you believe. What do you believe?

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And they say, Well, go to the website of my church and you'll see a statement of faith, that's what I believe. Or the Nicene Creed or the Bible, that's what I believe. You realize that that's a lie. If you're not living that faith out, it doesn't matter that you're pointing. You say you believe that. You're not fooling God, you're not fooling the devil, you're fooling yourself.

So, I think a lot of us in the evangelical church have kind of locked on to this idea of faith, but it's not faith that's lived out it's this intellectual enlightenment idea of I believe these things, but do you live those things? So, the question what I talked about in the book is not it's not what you say you believe. The devil believes in God. Right?

Frank:

James says that.

Eric:

The demons believe. Okay, so, it's not that you believe whether someone exists or whatever, the thing is, in whom do you trust? To whom do you give your life? Do you give your whole life to God? If you give your life to God and trust in God and are willing to live for Him, even when it costs you, then we know you really have faith in God.

So, something has happened in the evangelical church so that we've gotten to a point where there are a lot of people, they don't seem to understand that your character, how you live, is a picture of your faith. It's not an intellectual thing. And somehow we have allowed this idea to move along through life, and we no longer talk about character. We no longer talk about courage. Do you have the courage to stand up for what you believe or is it enough that you just lock it in there and say, I believe it intellectually? No, we're supposed to live it out. And I make the case in the book, that the reason things are going to hell in America is because many in the church, including many, many church leaders, have shrunk from this idea that I have to live out my faith so sacrificially.

And specifically, Frank, what I'm talking about is, you know, when people say, All I care about is gospel related issues. I only care about evangelism, or I only care about... They forget that we are to live out our faith in every sphere. So, when somebody says, one plus one equals three, if I'm around somebody that I want to show them the love of Christ, I'm going to say to them, No,

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that's not right. It's one plus one equals two. If you go one plus one equals three, that's going to lead you to disaster. I'm telling you that because it's true and because I care for you. I love you. If somebody says there are more than two genders, if somebody says that it doesn't matter who you sleep with, if somebody tells you critical race theory is a good thing, if somebody tells you that BLM, this organization is a good organization, it's not a Marxist organization; when people are speaking these things that are not true, if you keep silent, because you think it's going to help you maybe somewhere down the line evangelize that person, you have already been silenced and you're already participating in lying.

And I really think that many in the American church, we've kind of compartmentalize this stuff. We've said, Well, these are gospel related issues. I actually write in the book about Wilberforce, in his day, he spoke against slavery. Why? Because he felt the Bible and his faith in the God of the Bible compelled him to speak up for those who had no voice for the African slaves. He must speak up. Tons of people in his day, Christians, Christian leaders said, Hey, shut up, keep your politics out of faith, keep your faith out of politics. These are not related. And he said, Where do you ever get the idea that they're not related? On the contrary. I am going to live out my faith in every sphere. If it happens to be in politics, if it happens to be in the culture, if I have to lose friends over this issue, I am going to be God's representative. I believe in God, and I'm going to speak His truth. And so, he gave his whole life over to speaking out against the slave trade.

But I want to be clear, tons of Christians told him, shut up, do not bring that into this. Don't bring politics into faith. Keep them separate. Bonhoeffer was told by tons of German Christians, shut up. That is not important. We need to focus on "preaching the gospel". Don't speak against Hitler, don't speak against... Just shut up. It's not your job to talk about that. And how many in the church today, we're doing exactly the same thing? We're being silenced. Because we've been persuaded somehow, that the only thing that matters is this idea of evangelism. And I think to myself, you know, what, if you want to lead somebody to faith, if you live out your faith heroically and speak the truth when it's not popular, that's attractive to people. People look at you and they go, Wow. I don't know where he gets the courage. That's very interesting, because I'm afraid. I'm afraid I might lose my job. I'm afraid I might lose my neighbor's approval. When you see courage, you see this person is not afraid. They somehow have a source and that's powerful.

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So ironically, there are times when we speak the truth and people look at us and go, while I'm attracted to that, I don't know what I think of what you're saying, but there's something there that's compelling. When we keep our mouths shut, because we say I don't want to offend anyone, I don't want to drive anybody away from our faith, the question is: What kind of faith do you have? What kind of empty gospel you think you're preaching if you are being silent on all of these issues, which by the way, are affecting other people. You're supposed to love other people, you're supposed to live self-sacrificially and speak up for the sake of people all around the country you'll never meet, for people around the world, to speak the truth. So, it's all related.

Frank:

That's how you love people. You tell them the truth. You don't love them by lying to them are being silent when they're actually under the thumb of a particular ideology or law that is going to hurt them. And you point that out a lot. Again, the book is called, The Letter to the American Church, by my guest, Eric Metaxas. Eric, we've got a couple of minutes before the break. You do have a provocative chapter on the idol of evangelism.

Eric:

Yeah.

Frank:

And this is where you know, you keep getting, Oh, aren't we just supposed to preach the gospel? If we get involved in politics, we may turn people off, they'll be lost for eternity. How do you respond that?

Eric:

The Idol of Evangelism, you just mentioned, is the chapter title of one of the chapters in this book. And I think it's going to be the most provocative because people think, Evangelism, what could possibly be wrong with evangelism? And the answer, of course, is nothing unless you misunderstand that being an evangelist doesn't mean being silent on every other issue except salvation. And I think a lot of Christians have been falsely persuaded that all we're supposed to care about is preaching the "gospel", as though the gospel could be reduced to John 3:16, or

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something, and the rest of the Bible doesn't matter. Speaking truth doesn't matter. Living out your faith in love self-sacrificially doesn't matter. Just stick to trying to get people converted.

And I think ironically, if you speak the truth heroically, that's attractive to people who don't know God. They say That person has courage, and they believe in something, and half of what they're saying seems exactly right on. Nobody else is saying it. So, we have to put aside this idea that I can only speak on "gospel related issues". Anything related to the truth is a gospel related issue. And some pastors have falsely put out this idea that I shouldn't talk about any of these hot button issues. It is our duty as believers to speak the truth in love. We don't speak it like we don't care about the people whose feelings might get hurt. Of course, we do. It's why we speak the truth and love because we care about people. And if they take it wrong, that's on them. But the idea that we can never say anything controversial because God forbid, I might drive somebody away from the church or whatever, if I say something - if I speak about the unborn, if I speak against slavery, if I speak against... - there are all kinds of people that may say, Well, I don't agree with you. We need to care about the truth.

Frank:

That's Eric Metaxas ladies and gentlemen. We're back in just two minutes talking much more about the contents of this book, Letter to the American Church. It's a wakeup call ladies and gentlemen. Pick it up. It comes out September 28. And we're back in just two minutes.

Letter to the American Church, is it necessary? Are we going the way of the German church in Nazi Germany, where we are just being silent over the major issues of the day? Well, Eric Metaxas says we are and that's what Letter to the American Church is all about. How can we speak up and should we speak up? What about people who are saying we should just preach the gospel, Eric? We started talking about that a little bit in the last segment and you're pointing out that people need to speak the truth. As you point out in the book, Bonhoeffer called the church the conscience of the nation. How is the church the conscience of the nation, Eric?

Eric:

Well, that's exactly right. This is the issue. I actually believe if the church were to speak up boldly and heroically on all of the issues that your average American is thinking, what is

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happening? - like who decided that boys can become girls and girls can become boys? What's going on? Is there anybody taking a stand against that? What is happening? Now, if you have a biblical view, you know that that's wrong, but if you don't speak up about it.. I mean, we have no excuse as believers, because, first of all, if you have compassion on a young person who's confused - they've been in a school where they have been led into this confusion - if you love that young person, you want to help that person, not by these lies.

It's the same thing if there's a young person struggling with his sexuality. You don't want to say to him, Fantastic, keep going, that's who you are, you need to own that and forget about what other people think. You want to say that person, That's not who you are, according to the God that I know who loves you. God has a different plan for you. We need to be bold about these things. There are parents who don't have faith who are kind of wondering what's going on. If Christians will speak up about this in a loving way, if we will speak against critical race theory, which is more divisive and ridiculous than anything, if we will speak against all of these things that we know are true, ironically, people who do not have faith are going to look to us and go, That guy has courage. He is saying what I know is right and I'm attracted to those ideas. Everybody else is quiet.

Many people in the church are doing just the opposite. They think by being quiet, we're going to attract people to our faith. We are not. That's not going to happen. Listen, I speak in churches all around the country. The churches that have been bold, that have not been afraid to speak on these hot button issues, have exploded in numbers. People want that kind of truth. Believers want it, people on the fence, who aren't sure what they believe, maybe they're Christians, whatever, they're attracted to that kind of leadership. And many non-believers have decided that's the kind of church I can go to. They're not afraid to speak up against the lies, the propaganda, the insanity, coming out of the Biden administration, there are people who are willing to speak up. Most Americans are attracted to that kind of boldness, and that kind of truth telling.

But the irony is that we've got tons of pastors in the country who say just the opposite - I don't want to bring that up, I might offend someone in my congregation - those churches are losing membership. So, it's kind of an amazing thing. God calls us to be bold, he calls us to be the church, and what I'm here to say mainly, Frank, is that it is because of the silence of the

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to be an **ATHEIST**

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American church, and the silence of American church leaders, that America is going to hell in a handbasket. Going to hell with the speed of light. Because it is the job of the church, the Lord has appointed us to fearlessly speak the truth. And it really says something about our faith when we're not doing that.

There's actually another thing that it brings up, is that I think a lot of people, you know, they say they have faith in the God of the Bible, but they're kind of more afraid of making a mistake. In other words, they don't see God as a loving, gracious God who's cheering them on, but they see God as kind of like, you know, a grim policeman waiting for them to make a mistake or say something they shouldn't say, and then wham, he's gonna hit them. And you think, Well, wait, that's not the God of Scripture, that's the devil. The devil is the accuser. He's the one who wants to cancel you when you say one thing wrong or whatever.

And there's a chapter on the parable of the talents that kind of speaks to this issue. Bonhoeffer was speaking to this issue. Your faith is supposed to be an active faith, living out your faith fearlessly, because you know that God is a God of grace. Even if you screw up, he loves you, he'll forgive you. But if you don't know who God is, if you have a religious God that you're worshiping, you're mostly afraid of making a mistake and you think, I'm just gonna keep my mouth shut. So, there's a lot of theological error behind the silence of the church. And what I tried to do in the book is help people understand how we got to this place, and why we need to turn ASAP, because this country is being lost. We are under judgment. If we continue to be silent, the judgment will fall on us, as it has been falling, but it will fall just as it fell on the German church. God will judge his church when His church does not do what He created it to do.

Frank:

You know, Eric, it's interesting that these people who say they're just here to preach the gospel, they don't seem to realize that what happens in politics affects your ability to preach the gospel. I mean, if you don't think so, go to North Korea and see if you can have the Eric Metaxas show in North Korea, or the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist show in North Korea. You can't.

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Eric:

Frank, it's hilarious because I say this wherever I go, what you just said. I mean, this is you know why we're friends. I mean, first of all, here's another crazy point. People talk about Romans 13 that, Hey, whatever the authorities say [unintelligible]. In America? Okay, you know who the governing authorities are in America? It's called We the People. We the People have a responsibility that you wouldn't have in most of the times in history, in most of the places in the world. We the People have been deputized by God to govern ourselves. And so, when you abdicate that role, and you give it to some bureaucrat, or some deep state, or whoever is out there, you are ironically, violating Romans 13 in that place.

A good friend of mine named Keith Guinta - people should go to his blog. It's called WinePatch.org. He makes this exact point, at WinePatch.org, that Romans 13 is not being violated when Christians speak up, it's being violated when politicians like Joe Biden tell the church to shut up. You think, Wait a second, We the People have been given a voice by God in this unique place called America to govern ourselves and many people in the church don't understand that. So, we really have an amazing opportunity. But, so far, we've been blowing it and you can tell that I feel there is no doubt that we will go the path of Germany if we do not learn from the mistake of what happened to the church in Germany. It's why I wrote the book to clarify: What are the mistakes that they made? If we continue, we are now making exactly the same mistakes Exactly. If we do not see it and repent and speak up boldly as though we believe what we claim to believe, we will be judged exactly as Germany was judged. So, I believe the Lord is using this prophetic voice of Bonhoeffer to speak to the American church today.

Frank:

And you mentioned in the book - again, the book is called, Letter to the American Church, by Eric Metaxas - that when you get involved in politics, you do so because you love people, and you want what's best for them. And if Christians don't stand up for the truth, if Christians say don't stand up for the unborn, or if Christians don't stand up for the poor, or Christians don't stand up for marginalized people, who will? We're supposed to be doing that. You know, I was at a conference with our mutual friend Charlie Kirk, who had a pastors' conference out in California a few weeks ago, Eric, and there was a pastor there who said this. He said that people in the pews want to know that they are not insane. They want to know that there are really two

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genders, that men cannot become pregnant, that life does begin at conception, that marriage is between a man and a woman, and that you don't solve old racism by introducing new racism, and that socialism has failed everywhere it's been tried, and when it is tried, it hurts the poor the most. People want to be reminded that they're not insane because the culture seems to be saying, You're insane if you believe any of those things I just mentioned, Eric.

Eric:

And the silence of the pastors on these issues is making people think, maybe I'm a little crazy, maybe I should keep my mouth shut. I'm here to tell you, listen, there's a chapter in the book - and again, we're talking about my book, Letter to the American Church. There's a chapter in the book called 12,000 Pastors. It is chilling because here's the point. In Germany, in the early 30s, 3,000 of the 18,000 pastors, the Protestant pastors, 3000 of them, were willing to stand bravely against the Nazis. 3,000 of the 18,000. On the other end, there were 3,000 that were totally pro-Hitler. In the middle were 12,000 who would not commit. There were 12,000, who said, You know what? I don't want to lose my job, I don't want to lose my congregation, I'm going to keep my mouth shut. Let those 3,000 suckers, those hotheads, Bonhoeffer and his friends, let them take the heat. I'm gonna see which way the wind blows, I'm going to keep my mouth shut. I want to be alive when this is over. Those 12,000 pastors, most of whom knew what was right, but lacked the nerve, let's be honest, lacked the faith to live out what was right, they were the ones that made it possible for the Nazis and the devil to destroy Germany, to destroy innumerable millions of lives. It was the 12,000 pastors that said, I'm gonna give this one a pass, I'm not going to get involved.

We have a lot of those pastors in America today and in this book, Letter to the American Church, I'm hoping to reach some of those pastors and to say, Please, please, my brother, do not go down this path. Understand that God has appointed you for such a time as this. He has deputized you. He called you to that pulpit. He will take care of the numbers in your congregation, he will take care of your finances, whatever, you just trust God and be willing to go wherever he calls you to go. And if you really know God, you know that you can trust God. Even if he leads you to the gallows, you praise his name because you realize, oh, by the way, he defeated death on the cross. The Lord is calling us to that kind of faith right now.

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

with Dr. Frank Turek PODCAST

Frank:

Yeah, if you turn into Jeremiah and you're in a cistern and nobody listens to you, oh, well. At least you'll go to bed with a clear conscience knowing that you've done what's right, you leave the results to God. Eric, with just 30 seconds before the break, just start the answer to this question: What is the spiral of silence and how are both cowardice and courage contagious?

Eric:

This is a big one. And I do write about this in the book, *Spiral of Silence*, is the idea that when you're quiet when you should speak up, when you say, I'm going to give this one a pass, I'll be quiet, you make it harder for the next guy to speak up. You're participating in the evil by being silent. When you speak up, you are doing the opposite. When you speak the truth there are tons of people looking at you and going, Whoa, so and so just said something. I didn't know if you could say it. [unintelligible] Well, how you behave, what you say, affects everyone around you, and God is looking to you.

Alright, hold your thought, Eric. We're gonna come back. That's Eric Metaxas ladies and gentlemen. His new book, *Letter to the American Church*, we're going to talk a lot more about this 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. Back in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

On September 26, ladies and gentlemen, two courses that you can take, one for high school and above and one for sixth to eighth graders, on the evidence for Christianity. They're going to start on September 26. One is called *Why I Still Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. I will be your instructor. There will be several live zoom Q&A sessions together. And then Shanda Fulbright will be leading the sixth to eighth grade class called *Let's Get Real*. So, if you've got a sixth to eighth grader, and you want to learn, or help that child learn why Christianity is true and how to handle objections, have them enroll in that course. It's great for homeschoolers, great for small groups, great for just kids that want to know more about the truth. And Shanda will have several online live zoom sessions with your child doing that. You can take the adult course while your kid takes the sixth to eighth grade course, and then you can talk about the evidence together. Go to CrossExamined.org, click on online courses, you will see it there.

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I'm talking to my friend Eric Metaxas. His new book is called Letter to the American Church, and it comes out September 20. It is a wakeup call. You need to get the book. I've read the entire book. It's not long. You can read it in a few hours. But it's a powerful book. It's a message you need to hear. In fact, Eric, let's talk a little bit about religious liberty because I think Christians have been confused about religious liberty. How do you define that term and how has it been misinterpreted over time?

Eric:

Well, that's kind of the issue. It's a big part of the reason of why we are in the mess we're in, especially in the American church. But if the American church is messed up, America is going to be messed up. So, the reason America is messed up is because the church has misunderstood some things. Let's just say that the founders, the great men who gave us the system of self-government, which we don't deserve - it's the most amazing thing in the world that we govern ourselves - they understood that religious liberty was at the heart of everything. That if you cannot live out your faith, your lack of faith, whatever your faith is, that that is utterly free.

At some point in the 50s and 60s, a lot of these elites, you know whether in government or in other places, they began to misunderstand and twist this idea. They said, Oh, when Jefferson is talking about a wall separating church and state, what he means is we've got to keep the church out of the state, we've got to keep religious stuff out of government, out of culture. And you think, Wait a minute, wait a minute, that's precisely the opposite of what Jefferson and the founders were talking about. What they were saying is that the government has no right, the state has no right, to push the church. The state has to allow the people, We the People, to govern ourselves freely, including how we worship, how we live out our faith.

In fact, I'll go even farther. The founders understood that without robust expressions of faith we cannot govern ourselves. It's vital. So, something happened in the 50s and the 60s where a lot of people began pushing from what Richard John Neuhaus called the naked public square, pushing faith out and saying that we can have an America, but faith has to be private. And you think, Wait a second, no, no, no, no, no. That's not biblical and it's not what the founders of this country wanted. They understood that faith has to be lived out in every sphere. So, religious liberty means that I am free, not just to worship in that building for a couple hours on Sunday morning, I am free to take that faith out of that building and live it out and exercise my faith

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everywhere I go; in the schools, in the workplace, and wherever I go I'm going to live out my faith.

A lot of believers have internalized this false idea and saying, Well, my faith should be private. It's just this thing that I have, but when I leave that building on Sunday morning, I'm going to bow to the secular authority of the state. Folks, they have that kind of freedom in China. It's called no freedom at all. It's a lie. God wants His church to live our faith out in the public square, to speak on issues that everybody's wondering: What what's going on? What about the vaccine? What about election integrity? What about gender? What about...? People want to know - they want answers, they want to have conversations - where to bring our faith to bear on everything.

And I realized that one of my heroes, he became my friend, Chuck Colson, he was always talking about this. He was always talking about the idea that your faith doesn't stop on Sunday morning. It doesn't stop when you leave that building. You carry your faith, you are the church, and God designed us to carry our faith and the truth of God wherever we go as a blessing to people who haven't yet heard it. As a blessing to people who are hungry for truth or are confused about what's going on in the world. God calls us to do that.

Now Chuck Colson always quoted Abraham Kuyper, a Dutch theologian and statesman, and Kiper said, famously, There is not one square inch of all creation over which Jesus Christ, who is sovereign, does not say, mine. So, when somebody says, keep your faith in that religious corner, there is no religious corner. Your faith is supposed to enter politics. Everywhere you go, you're to carry the truth of God. And many times, Christians have been persuaded that that's not the case. And Chuck Colson really stood strongly against that.

In fact, I write about it in the book that he was participating in something he called the Manhattan Declaration, which was kind of modeled on the Barmen Declaration that the German church made in the early 30s, to say the church is the church, and we have complete freedom, and we're not going to let the Nazi state bully us on any of these issues. Chuck Colson saw already, this is 15 years ago, that the Christian church needs to take a stand, and that we're not going to be bullied by the state on issues of the unborn, on issues of sexuality, the human person. We have our faith and we're going to speak that on these issues. The state has no right.

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Well, and I write about this in the book, when he was trying to get pastors to sign the Manhattan Declaration, he got pushback from people that I think are good people. From pastors, he mentions them, Alistair Begg, John Piper, McCarthy. They said, No, no, no, no, no. We just want to preach the gospel. We don't want to get involved in that stuff. So, ironically, the very issue comes up over and over and over again. Good people get this wrong. They think our faith is just supposed to be focused on the "gospel", that we're not supposed to be involved in the political.

And you think, imagine if you were a slave in 1802, and you think, I wonder if there's any Christians out there who believe in their Savior so strongly that they would speak out against slavery, that they would speak up for me, and for my children, who are being ripped away from me. I wonder if there are any Christians out there whose faith touches on that issue or if they will be silent because they don't want any trouble. They don't care about me; they care about themselves.

I really believe God is shining a light on his church today and it's exactly where we are today. We have been silent on transgender, we've been silent on sexuality, we've been silent on the Marxism that's infiltrating everywhere you look. The Democratic Party has gone Marxist left. They are no longer the party of Sam Nunn. If we are not awake to the evil being done in America and we say, well, that's just politics, I don't want to have an opinion, how can you not have an opinion, when some people are really trying to destroy your ability even to speak? So, we're in a, an extraordinary place, Frank. I just have to say that I know that there are many people that God wants them to hear this message. It's why I wrote the book Letter to the American Church. I don't want to be divisive. I want to speak what God is speaking to His church, because we're in desperate times and what happened to the German Church, which is a nightmare, it is happening to the American church right now. And unless we wake up and do what they did not do in Germany, and unless we stop doing what they did, unless we do something different than what they did, we are already going down that path. We need to know that that is what is happening right now. Because of the silence of the church, America is being destroyed.

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Frank:

Let me let me throw a couple of thoughts out here and then get your final comments. One is what you just said there. A lot of people are gonna say, Well, you're trying to impose a theocracy. No, we're not trying to legislate religion. We are trying to legislate morality. All laws legislate morality, and the left is trying to legislate its morality, really it's immorality, on people. So, if good people don't stand up and say, No, we're not going to take this, then that's going to be imposed.

The second thing that I think people don't realize is that Jesus got involved in politics directly. You say, How so? Who were the politicians of his day? The Pharisees. Rome delegated much of the day to day lawmaking authority to them. They were on the Sanhedrin. And what did Jesus say to them? You've neglected the weightier matters of the law. Jesus went after these people because they were governing improperly. And in our country today, our Congress will tell us what light bulbs we can and can't use, but they won't say, don't kill your children in the womb. We're majoring in the minors in this country, we're neglecting the weightier matters of the law, and if people don't speak up, as Eric points out, in the new book, Letter to the American Church, we're gonna go to the point where not only are we not gonna be able to take care of the unborn, and we're not gonna be able to take care of the poor, we're not gonna be able to take care of people that need to be taken care of, we're not even going to be able to preach or live the gospel. So, we better get involved and we better get involved soon. Now, with that said, Eric, there's so much more in the book. People just need to get the book. But I do want to give our listeners an idea of where they can find out more about you, your radio program, your website. Tell us a little bit about that.

Eric:

Well, I'd be really grateful. Since YouTube wiped out my radio program, I ask everybody, please go to my website, EricMetexas.com. If you go to EricMetexas.com, you can find all kinds of stuff, but you can certainly find my speaking schedule. I'm going to be speaking all over the country in the months ahead. And you can sign up for my newsletter and once a week, I will send you the interviews that I do on my radio and TV program since YouTube has censored me. And if you want to know if this is real, the idea that my whole program was wiped out by YouTube because I dared to talk on the stuff that they said, Oh, you can't talk about that. And I thought, I'm an American. I can talk about anything I want. Who says that I can't talk about

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that? I'm a Christian. I'm going to speak the truth in love. And people died so that I could have that freedom in this country. So, folks, we're living through this right now. But we should rejoice that the Lord allows us to live during a time when how you live your life, that's going to affect millions of people. So, I am ultimately hopeful, but this is an absolute warning cry to the church. We must heed this. I hope that people will give a copy of this book to your pastor. Don't say anything. Just see what he thinks.

Frank:

Thanks so much, Eric. That's Eric Metaxas. Check him out there. The book, Letter to the American Church, pick it up. I'm Frank Turk. Don't forget about the online courses and I'll see you here next week. God bless.

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