

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

## Is the Bible Written To Us or For Us?

(February 10, 2023)

Ladies and gentlemen, I just got an email from a gentleman named Eric. If you have a question you want me to address on the program, you can also send me emails at [hello@crossexamined.org](mailto:hello@crossexamined.org). But Eric writes in and he says, "My wife called you a heretic last night". Eric's wife has called me a heretic. That's a serious charge. And what does this have to do with you and the Bible? Because, apparently, this woman is calling me a heretic because of the way I interpret the Bible. And it doesn't even have anything to do with Genesis. We've been talking about Genesis lately. It actually has nothing to do with Genesis.

It has something to do with Jeremiah 29:11. Yes, we've talked about that on this program before. People really get annoyed when you say that that promise is not a promise to 21st century Christians. In fact, let me read the entire the complaint from Eric. And hopefully this will be an instructive question, or complaint, the way he's phrasing it here, because I'll try and answer some of the objections he brings up to my interpretation of Jeremiah 29:11. And hopefully, that'll be helpful to all of us if I'm getting it right. Hopefully I am.

Anyway, here's what Eric says. He says, "My wife called you a heretic last night when she heard your comment about Jeremiah 29:11. Like you, I abhor when people go and cherry pick a single scripture verse. They need to understand the context of the verses. But that does not mean that we still cannot claim those verses. Though we agree that verses should not be cherry picked, that is where you and I part ways. You have said on multiple occasions that Jeremiah 29:11 was written to the exiles in Babylon and was only meant for them. Then why is it in the Bible? If God did not want us to claim that as a promise to all of his people, then why is it in the Bible? By that same attitude we shouldn't be quoting John 3:16 because Jesus was talking directly to Nicodemus. What about Joshua 1:9, 'This is my command, be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go'?

That was said directly to Joshua and several others throughout the years, by God Himself. And there are plenty more. Are we to disregard all of those promises because they were spoken to

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others? Based on what you're saying, yes. All the promises in the Bible were spoken to someone else And the warnings and curses, yes. They are for our instruction as well. Does that mean we aren't to be concerned about what happened to Ananias and Sapphira? According to what you said, we shouldn't be concerned. It was only for them."

Okay. And this goes on. I mean, I appreciate this guy's enthusiasm. You know, he wants to defend the Bible. I get it. But what he's defending is his interpretation of the Bible, not the Bible itself. So, let's go through this point by point, and as I say, hopefully this would be instructive. And maybe I got something wrong. That's always a possibility. I mean, the Bible is inerrant, but I'm not. Anyway, here's what he says. "We shall not cherry pick verses". Okay. "You've said on multiple occasions Jeremiah 29:11 was written to the exiles in Babylon, was only meant for them, then why is it in the Bible? If God did not want us to claim that as a promise to all of his people, then why is it in the Bible?"

Okay, before I ask, why is it in the Bible, if you're going to claim Jeremiah 29:11 as a promise to you, then why don't you claim the promise from Jeremiah 44:11, which was the promise that God made to the exiles that went to Egypt? Remember, the exiles that went to Egypt, he didn't want them to go there. He said, don't go there. So, here's what Jeremiah 44:11 says, I will destroy you and all Judah. You don't see that stitched into a pillow. You don't see that on a birthday card. You don't see that on a poster. You don't see that on a coffee mug. You don't see that on a blank journal where you where you journal back to God. But I see Jeremiah 29:11 on all those. They're both promises, ladies and gentlemen, so which promise are you going to pick that applies to you, or is a promise to you in the 21st century? The answer should be neither because neither are written to you.

I mean, let's go back to the passage Jeremiah 29. First of all, as you know, well, maybe you don't know, this is the problem. I think many times people just pick verses, they hear verses, and they don't even know where the verses come from. They don't know the context of what's going on. First of all, when is Jeremiah being written? Jeremiah is being written, obviously, by the prophet Jeremiah, around the time of the exile, which would be 586 BC. And he's basically warning Judah that you guys are in sin and you're going to be judged. And then it talks about after the judgment what God is going to do for the people that were taken to what we now call modern day Iraq, back in 586 BC.

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And in Jeremiah 29 it starts out this way. This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets, and all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. So, this is a promise to them. It goes on to say, this is what the Lord Almighty the God of Israel says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Alright, let me stop right here. You may have heard people say this before. Dr. John Walton said this before. And as I said before, I don't agree with everything Dr. John Walton says, but he's right about this, the Bible was not written to you, it was written for you. This section of the Bible, Jeremiah 29:11, is not written to us, it is written for us. And this particular letter, inside of Jeremiah, again, was not written to us, it was written to the exiles that went to Babylon. That's why it says this is what the Lord the God of Israel says to all those I carried to exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. And when you get down to verse 10, it says this, "10 This is what the Lord says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. 11For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord...".

Who is the you in this passage? It's not people in the 21st century, it's the people he's talking to in Babylon. "11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

So, the bottom line here is, 70 years after this letter is written, God is going to prosper these people and take them back to Judah, take them back to what we would now call Israel. That's what he's going to do. This has nothing to do with any promises made to Christians in the 21st century. So, when Eric or his wife says you're going to claim this promise, you've got to be 2600 years old, living under Nebuchadnezzar, to say this is a promise to me. It is a promise in the sense...well, it's a promise to the people who lived back then. But then you might ask, Well, why is this in the Bible? That's what we're gonna get to right after the break. I will reveal to you

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why it's in the Bible because the Bible reveals why things like this are in the Bible. So, don't go away. We're going to talk about this right after the break.

And I want to point out that, for those of you who are interested in actually presenting apologetics and answering questions, you will want to be a part of the CrossExamined Instructor Academy this year. It's going to be in Albuquerque, New Mexico at the end of July. We only take 60 students. It's not just me, but J. Warner Wallace, Greg Koukl, Natasha Crain, Alisa Childers, and many others, will help you improve your presentation and question answering skills. Just go to [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org), click on Events. Apply soon. We'll see you back here in two minutes.

Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank "The Heretic" Turek. That's what Eric's wife says I am anyway because I don't claim Jeremiah 29:11 for myself. If you're just tuning in, that's what we're talking about today. We're gonna hopefully get to some other questions that you've sent in to [Hello@CrossExamined.org](mailto>Hello@CrossExamined.org) if we can. But I've been called a heretic because I don't think Jeremiah 29:11 is a promise to us. It's not a promise to 21st century Christians, as we just talked about before the break.

Now, the question is, why is it in the Bible? Well, because the Bible is a story about God's working through history and working through the Jews to bring salvation to the world. Those things were written down for our instruction, as Paul himself says in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, I believe, and also in Romans 15, that all the stories in the Old Testament are there for our instruction. But it doesn't mean that everything in the Old Testament is a promise to us, nor does it mean that everything in the Old Testament is a prescription for us. And we'll get into why that is here in just a minute. They're not promises to us, not all of them anyway.

But now, the promise that was made to the exiles in Babylon, was written down for us, but it's not written down to us. Again, it's not a promise to us. It helps us know God's character, and it helps us know how God brought salvation to the world through the Jews, but he gave that promise to the exiles 2600 years ago. He didn't give that promise to us, just like he didn't give the Jeremiah 44:11 promise to us either, that he's going to destroy us and all Judah. And we just need to keep that in mind because it's not correct to say that God is going to prosper you 70 years from now because of Jeremiah 29:11. Or the whole passage there, Jeremiah 29:10-14,

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it's not a promise to us. It was written for us so we could know how God brought salvation through the Jews, and how God has worked through history, and how God's character shows that he will take care of his people. But it's not a promise to us.

If you want a similar promise to us, and for us, then go to say Romans 8, where Paul talks about how nothing is going to separate us from the love of Christ. Even if we go through pain and suffering and even death here, it's not going to separate us from the love of Christ. In that same passage it says, For we know that all things work together for good to those that are called according to His purpose. It doesn't say all things are good. You might not prosper here on Earth, you may be cut down, you may be martyred, you may die an early death, you may have persecution. In fact, that's promised to people who are Christians.

Paul says anyone who lives a faithful life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. Jesus said that if they persecuted me, they're gonna persecute you. You will have trouble in this world, but take heart, I've overcome the world. So, if you want a promise for your ultimate future, go to the New Testament and read those promises. Again, that doesn't mean we're going to be prosperous necessarily here on earth. God may do that but it's not a promise. What is a promise is that you'll never be separated from the love of Christ, that your eternity is secure, even if you run into difficulty here on Earth.

So, Eric, then writes, "By that same attitude, we shouldn't be quoting John 3:16, because Jesus was talking directly to Nicodemus". Okay, there's a number of differences here than Jeremiah 29:11. Jesus is giving a universal truth for all people, he just happens to be talking to Nicodemus when he's doing it. And this universal truth is amplified by Paul and other writers of the New Testament. In fact, it's also amplified by Jesus himself when he says, the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. And he said, I came to call people to repentance.

Remember, there's two covenants. There's an old covenant and, of course, Jeremiah is part of the Old Covenant. And there's a new covenant, and the new covenant is in the New Testament. And the writer of Hebrews 8:13 says that the Old Covenant is obsolete. The Old Covenant is not a promise to us, it was a promise to ancient Israel. The laws that God made to ancient Israel were just for them. Now, many of the laws of ancient Israel are repeated in the New

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Testament, and in that sense, they are binding on Christians. But they're binding on Christians because they're repeated in the New Testament and they're part of God's universal law like, thou shalt not murder. It's part of the 10 commandments. That was written just to Israel. However, thou shalt not murder is part of God's universal morality, which does apply to people outside of Israel. It does apply in the New Covenant and it's mentioned in the New Covenant.

All of the 10 commandments are reiterated in the New Testament, with the exception of keep holy the Sabbath, because the Sabbath has arrived. Jesus is our Sabbath. So, we have to keep our covenants straight. The Old Covenant does not apply to Christians. When I say apply, maybe that's not the right word, because it applies in the sense that it helps us know something about God and how he's worked through history. Maybe a better word is to say it is not binding on Christians. It does apply in the sense that it instructs us. But the promises and the laws are not promises to us and the laws are not binding on us. They are binding on us if they're in the New Covenant, in the New Testament.

So, when Jesus is saying John 3:16, And he's saying it to Nicodemus, he is by extension saying it to all of us, because he's now in the new covenant and he's pointing out how people are saved universally. He's not just talking to Nicodemus, as if that's just a promise to Nicodemus, unlike Jeremiah 29 where God is just talking to the exiles who went to Babylon. That's why he says 70 years from now I'm going to take you back to Judah. Okay. This passage here has nothing to do with Judah, or it has nothing to do with taking people back to a land, it has to do with the universal covenant moving forward. The New Covenant. So, we need to keep our covenants straight if we're going to understand what the Scriptures are all about, and which applies to us and which doesn't.

And then Eric says, "What about Joshua 1:9? This is my command, be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or discouraged." He goes on to say, Well, should that apply to us? And he said, "That was said directly to Joshua, and several others throughout the years, by God Himself. And there are plenty more. Are we to disregard all those promises because they were spoken to others?" Well, you got to talk about which promises are you speaking of, but if you're talking about Joshua 1:9, that was a promise to Joshua. He said that directly to Joshua. He also said to Joshua to wipe out the Canaanites. Should you do that too? He said, Be strong and courageous. Okay, yeah, we like that. Let's be strong and courageous. Alright. Wipe out the Canaanites? No,

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that was just for Joshua. That was just for Joshua, in Joshua's day, because God had to get the promised people in the promised land and the Canaanites were in their way. And the Canaanites were conducting evil practices, very evil practices.

And we've talked about it many times on this program before, I don't have time to get into it now, whether that's hyperbole, as Paul Copan says, or whether that was literal, as say Clay Jones says. Either way, God has the right to move people out of the land, or even kill them. I mean, God has the authority to do that because God is the creator of life and he can resurrect life. We don't have the authority to do that because we're not the creator of life and we can't resurrect people, but God can. But I digress. You can go back and listen to any of those shows we've done on the Canaanite issue, either with Paul Copan or Clay Jones.

But when we're talking about Joshua being told to be strong and courageous, that was a command to him. But it is also a command to us, not because it's in Joshua, but because it's in 1 Corinthians where Paul says, Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. This is First Corinthians 16:13. Well now, of course, Eric's gonna say, but that was written to the Corinthians. Yes, but it is written to New Testament believers in Corinth, so most of what is written there also pertains to us because we are also New Testament believers. You see, when you're reading New Testament documents to churches, churches that are filled with New Testament believers, most of what is said in there applies to us as well. But there are even some things in those letters that don't apply to us. They're not commands to us.

For example, sometimes when I sign a book, if someone asks me to sign their book, I'll sign my name and I'll put Romans 16:13 under there. And people go Romans 16:13, what's that? I've never seen anybody put Romans 16:13 under a signature. I gotta go see what that means. You know what Romans 16:13 says? Greet Rufus. Well, have you greeted Rufus today? You haven't greeted Rufus today? You're in sin. What's wrong with you? Well, of course, this is a joke. Why? Because what it says in Romans 16:13 is not a command to us, it was a command to the person bringing the letter to Rome, or it's a command to people in Rome who are receiving the book of Romans. Paul knows Rufus and he just wants to send his greeting to them. So, even some things in the New Testament letters, while they might sound like commands to us, really they're not. They're commands to the people either reading the letter in Rome at the time, or the person bringing the letter to Rome. And it should be obvious from the context what's going on there.

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In fact, some, some theologians argue whether certain passages in Corinthians, particularly with regard to women being silent in the church, did that have to do with just the Corinthian church - because of the way the church was set up that the men were separate from the women when they sat in the congregation, and the women were sometimes trying to ask their husbands questions during the service, and Paul may have said, Hey, just be silent. Wait until you get home and ask your husband that question. That's not something that applies to the church today. And we know that women weren't silent in the church, because in that same letter, Paul told women to prophesy in the church.

So, there are some things in even some of the letters that are not commands to us. You just have to figure out the context, though, to discover which of those are. Most of them are commands. But you say, oh Frank, this is all very complicated. No, it's actually not very complicated. It just takes a little bit of thinking to realize that when you're reading the scriptures, you have to know the context to know whether or not it is a command to you or promise to you. Much more after the break. Don't go anywhere. Back in two minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, what should you do when a loved one deconstructs? In other words, when a loved one decides to leave the faith. Well, this Monday night, February 13, at 8:30pm Eastern Time, I'm gonna have the great Alisa Childers on and we're going to talk about that topic. What should you do when a loved one deconstructs and maybe even thinks you're toxic if you're a Christian? Are the typical tactical approaches that we take by asking people questions. is that going to work? Is apologetics going to work? Is anything going to work with somebody who thinks you're a toxic believer?

Well, Alisa has written on this, has talked about this quite a bit, has done a lot of research on this topic. And what we're going to do in this live stream on our YouTube channel, also our website at [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org), is we're going to talk about this topic and we're going to take your questions and hopefully we'll even be able to bring some of you on live via Skype, so you'll be able to talk to Alisa and myself directly. But you have to tune in live this Monday night, February 13, at 8:30pm Eastern. We'll have Alisa on and we'll take your questions. This is a big issue now. here's kind of a fad going on. It's kind of a trend going on. You ever notice how many more trends there are since the Internet has become ubiquitous? People just follow other people in trends and now people are thinking it's cool to deconstruct. Man, it's really hip to say

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you're not a Christian anymore, because wow, you've really seen the light. So, how do we deal with that?

I also want to mention that we're going back to Israel this November. And not just Israel, we're going to what I think is the real Mount Sinai in Saudi Arabia. We're going to have a week in Israel, then we're getting in some SUVs and heading into Jordan, and then to Saudi Arabia to investigate which could be the real Mount Sinai. And all the evidence I've seen lately definitely points to that. In fact, the famous split rock that Moses is alleged to have hit and all this water comes out, I think they found it right near what people are claiming to be the real Mount Sinai, right there near Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. Jebel al-Musa and Jabal al-Lawz are a couple of mountains there.

There is a split rock there that has signs of water erosion, intense water erosion, in a desert that may get a quarter inch of rain a year. And this water erosion seems to indicate that there was a lot of water that came out of this split rock. And this rock, it's got to be 70-80 feet high, if not higher than that. You know, we think when Moses hit the rock, this little boulder split and some water trickled out. No, this was a gusher that probably filled up a huge lake. And there's a dry riverbed there and what appears to be a dry lakebed there. There's just so much evidence this could be the real Mount Sinai. I don't know for sure, the real Mount Sinai, but we're going to take a look.

And if you want to be a part of it, go to [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org), click on Events and you'll see Israel Tour with Frank Turek and Eli Shukron. It will take you to the website where you can get all the details and sign up yourself. It's this November. We don't take a whole bunch of buses. We try and keep it to one bus. So, if you want to be a part of it, you need to sign up quickly because this trip will fill up quickly. We're going to be in Israel with the great Eli Shukron and then we're going to go into Saudi Arabia.

Alright, let's go back to the topic. We talked about how to interpret the Bible rightly. And I just have to point out that all the Bible is spoken to people that lived long ago. None of the Bible - I know it's gonna sound crazy to some people - but none of the Bible is written to us, but all of the Bible is written for us. Okay, some of the promises in the Bible are for us, but not all of the

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promises in the Bible are for us. Some are, but not all, so you need to know the context to discover what is and what isn't. All right.

And I think people have a misconception. They think the Bible is a book of fortunes and sayings that you can take out of context and apply however you want. That's not the Bible. It's not a list of fortunes or sayings that you can take out of context and apply however you want. You've got to see what the context is because if it was that, well, let me not even go down that road. It's just not that. It's just not a series of fortunes in and sayings. Now, there are sayings in it, like from Proverbs, that you don't need a lot of context to understand. But most of the rest of the Bible you do need to have some idea of what's going on in order to see how it applies to you. We have an entire course on this called How to Interpret your Bible. If you want to take it just go to [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org), click on Online Courses, and you can.

Alright, so thanks for your enthusiasm, Eric, but I think you have to interpret the Bible in context. In fact, let me just say one other thing about this. When you quote the Bible out of context, if I'm correct about this, and you read something like Jeremiah 29:11 - oh the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you - and then it doesn't happen, you're not prospering, you experience a lot of hardship... In fact, unbelievers are prospering and you're not. What does that cause you to do? Well, it might cause you to go, you know what, the Bible is false. There is no God, or if there is a God, he's not the God of the Bible, because I claimed this promise for myself and it didn't happen. It's kind of like the prosperity gospel people, right? I claim this promise, and I'm not healthy and wealthy, and I have enough faith, I guess God doesn't exist then.

You see how this is counterproductive? I mean, a lot of people say I don't believe in God. And then I ask them, What kind of God don't you believe in? And when they tell me and I say, I don't believe in that kind of God either. God is not a cosmic candy man. God is not here to get your will done. In fact, what's Jesus's prayer for us? What does he say? He says, Not my will be done, but thy will be done. We're supposed to pray for God's will, not our own, because God knows better. Pray for his will. In fact, Jesus, his will was not to go to the cross. He said to his father, if there's any other way Lord, if there's any other way this cup can pass from me, make it so. But if not my will, then your will. I will acquiesce to your will. Jesus, in His human nature, did not want to go to the cross. I wouldn't either. Who would? Right. But he did because he acquiesced

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to his father's will and that's what we're supposed to do. We're supposed to follow God, not whatever we want to do. So, it's critically important that we interpret the Bible rightly.

And taking passages out of context is not the way to do it. In fact, Eric even writes, "I don't like when people take verses out of context". Well, if you're gonna say Jeremiah 29:11 is a promise to you, you're taking it out of context, as you can plainly see. So, you've got to know what applies. Well, again, it all applies, but you've got to know what is a promise to you and what is a promise to the ancient Israelites. You need to keep those two things straight.

Okay, Nikos writes this. "I saw this argument online and I'm puzzled. I know you have an answer or answered it already in one of your podcasts. Can you let me know?" And here's apparently the problem. "If God created the universe, then who created God, and who created the creator of God? Congratulations, you have encountered a problem that is called infinite regression. Some theists claim that everything needs a creator and that the universe cannot have existed forever or just come into existence out of nothing. The creator of the universe they call God.

Then they immediately break their own rule that everything needs a creator and claim that God does not need one and has always existed. That, of course, is illogical nonsense. Either everything needs a creator, even God, which leads to a never ending chain of creators and the infinite regression, or nothing necessarily needs a creator and then the universe does not need a creator either. This is all nothing but prestidigitation, which is another way of saying magic. This is nothing but magic to cram God into the equation. Nothing more.

The counter arguments usually go along the lines that God is beyond human reasoning, and therefore, it is reasonable to break off the infinite regression at God. But that, of course, is paradoxical because you cannot base human reasoning on something that is beyond human reasoning. Religious beliefs of that kind are inherently irrational. Today, people are expected to act rationally and behaving in some kind of God and believe in some kind of God at the same time. That leads to desperate attempts to rationalize those irrational beliefs, amusing at the start, but rather tedious if repeated ad nauseam. Kind regards, Nikos."

Now, I don't know if this is Nicko's question where he's saying all this. He seems to say he's found this online. I don't know if it's a friend of his, or how he's found this online, but let's just

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go through it line by line. Okay, he says that some theists claim that everything needs a creator. All right, let me stop right here. There is no intelligent theist who has ever said such a thing, that everything needs a creator. The law of causality does not say that everything needs a cause. The law of causality says that everything that comes to be needs a cause. Everyone understands there has to be an uncaused first cause. That cause is either the universe itself or something outside the universe. Those are the only two possibilities. It's either the universe or something outside the universe. It's either nature or something outside of nature, something super nature, something we would call supernatural. Okay. Because you are correct, you can't go on an infinite regress of causes. That's impossible. So, there has to be a cause, an ultimate cause, and as I say, it's either the universe or something outside the universe.

Here's the problem for the atheist. All the evidence shows that the universe is not the uncaused first cause, therefore, there has to be something outside the universe that is the uncaused first cause. Now, if you're going to attack the law of causality, if you're going to say that, well no, things can pop into existence out of nothing without a cause, well, number one, that goes against all of our experience. And number two, you'd have to get rid of science then. And usually, the people claiming that the universe doesn't need a cause are the same people who are claiming that science can explain everything.

Well, science can explain nothing if cause and effect don't hold because that's what science is. Science is a search for causes. When you're doing science you're trying to discover what particular cause caused a particular effect. And if there is something that can come into existence out of nothing, then the law of causality does not apply. Why doesn't everything pop into existence out of nothing? And we'll pick this up 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. Our website is [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). Check it out. Don't go anywhere. We're back in just a couple of minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, in addition to the live stream that we're going to have with Alisa Childers this Monday night, February 13, later that week I'll be in Dallas, Texas at the Dallas Conference on Science and Faith put on by the Discovery Institute. That's Friday, February 17th and 18th. I'll be down there with Stephen Meyer, Titus Kennedy, Jonathan McClatchy, Nancy Pearcey, and other great speakers. So, check all that out on our website. I hope to see you there.

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Then I'll be at Liberty University for Why We Can't Not Legislate Morality. That's Tuesday, February 21. Then I'm down in Orlando with Samaritan's Purse and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association at the Sharing Hope in Jesus' Name conference. That's going to be February 24th and 25th. And what else do we have after that? We got a lot more coming up in March. Just check the calendar. I'll be out in Tucson, Arizona on March 6, at a conference at Calvary Chapel Tucson. In fact, Natasha Crain will be there, Greg Koukl will be there, and Skip Heitzig will be there. Many other speakers. You'll want to check that out. We'll be doing a bunch of college events coming up after that. It's all on our website, [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). Just click on Events, Frank Turek Calendar, and you will see it all there. I hope to see you out there on the road.

And don't forget about CIA, I mentioned it's coming up. Actually, it's going to be at Skip Heitzig's church at Calvary Chapel of Albuquerque at the end of July. If you can't make it, you might want to take the online version of that which starts next month in March. Just go to [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org), click on Online Courses, you'll see it there. If the landing page isn't up quite yet it will be up in the next couple of days. We only take 24 students in that. I'll be your instructor, as well as J. Warner Wallace, Natasha Crain, and Alisa Childers. We will be live on Zoom with you helping you improve your presentation and question answering skills. You'll also get presentations by Greg Koukl, Brett Kunkle, and many other presenters. So, check out CIA online.

Alright, let's go back to the question Nikos brings regarding the fact that he's trying to say, or at least someone is trying to say that Christians believe that everything has to have a cause. And we Don't. In fact, most scientists will agree not everything has to have a cause but everything that comes to be has a cause. In fact, he goes on to say, "Either everything needs a creator, even God, which leads to a never ending change of creators, the infinite regression, or nothing needs a creator, neither does the universe. And that's a false dilemma built on a false premise.

It is not that everything needs a creator. It's true that everything needs to have an explanation of its existence, either by its own nature, or being caused by another. And when we say by its own nature, whoever the first cause is, that first cause is self-existing and has always existed. And that's what we mean by God. Think about it this way. The cosmological argument says space, matter, and time had a beginning. And that's what the evidence shows even scientists

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are admitting, that space, matter, and time had a beginning, that everything that comes to be has a cause. The universe came to be therefore the universe has a cause. Well, ladies and gentlemen, if space, matter, and time had a beginning then whatever created space, matter, and time must transcend space, matter, and time. In other words, the cause must be spaceless, timeless, and immaterial.

Now, if you're timeless, do you have a beginning? No, you don't have a beginning. And if you don't have a beginning, do you have a cause? No, you don't have a cause. So, the question, who made God, is answered by pointing out that since God is timeless, he didn't have a beginning, which means he doesn't have a cause. You don't ask who created the uncreated Creator? Because he didn't have a creator. That's the whole point. He's uncreated. He's outside of time. He didn't have a beginning. It's like asking a bachelor, What's your wife's name? It's a category mistake. Bachelors don't have wives. Uncreated creators don't have creators. And that's not special pleading. It's not that we're just saying, well, let's just assume God doesn't have a creator. No, what we're saying is, the evidence shows that whoever created the universe is outside of time. And if they're outside of time, they don't have a beginning, which means they don't have a creator.

By the way, again, Nikos, I don't know if you have written this, or you've quoted this from somebody else on the internet. But just a piece of friendly advice regarding communication. When this person says, this is nothing but prestidigitation to cram God into the equation, nothing more - in other words, the word really means magic. - if you want to help people understand what you're saying, don't use \$1,000 words. I mean, take CS Lewis's advice. CS Lewis would answer everyone who wrote him because they would mail him. Obviously, there was no email. And I remember one lady was asking him a question: You write really well. What are some of the rules that you use to write? And he says, write simply. For example, don't say mortality rose, say more people died. If you want to reach more people, don't use a word like prestidigitation. Only about a half a percent of people who read that are going to know it without looking it up. Okay, just use magic, if that's what you mean by it.

And then he goes on to say, "The counter arguments usually go along the lines that God is beyond human reasoning". No, that's not the counter argument, although God may be beyond human reasoning in the sense that we don't understand everything about God. And look, it

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wouldn't be strange if an infinite God wasn't strange to us. We're not saying we can't know anything about God, what we're saying is we can apprehend God, even if we can't completely comprehend God. Just like you can apprehend there's an ocean in front of you, even though you might not be able to comprehend everything going on in that ocean. Okay. So, we're not saying that God is beyond using human reasoning completely. We are saying yes, he is beyond our limits of reasoning, because we're finite creatures and we can't completely understand an infinite God. But that doesn't mean we can't know anything about him. So, it's not beyond human reason to know that everything that comes to be needs a cause. Causality is a necessary condition for science.

And then the objector goes on to say, "Religious beliefs are kind of inherently irrational". Let me let me point out that no, atheism is inherently irrational. Inherently irrational. Why? I can't say anything better than CS Lewis. And I've said this on this program before, but it's worth repeating. In the context of what most atheists believe now, which is that we are just molecular machines, that we're just moist robots, that every thought we have is the result of the laws of physics, that materialism is true, there's no immaterial reality, there's no God, there's no soul, there's no mind, there's just molecules, we just dance to our DNA, as Richard Dawkins said, if that's the case, then rationality is impossible. If your thinking is completely driven by the laws of physics, then you shouldn't even believe your thinking is driven completely by the laws of physics. You shouldn't believe anything precisely because you're not following evidence, you're just reacting. You're not reasoning, you're just reacting.

And here's how Lewis put this. He's he points out that atheism, the belief in materialism, makes rationality impossible. Here's how we put it. "Suppose there was no intelligence behind the universe. In that case, nobody designed my brain for the purpose of thinking. Thought is merely the byproduct of some atoms within my skull. But if so, how can I trust my own thinking to be true? But if I can't trust my own thinking, of course, I can't trust the arguments leading to atheism, and therefore have no reason to be an atheist or anything else. Unless I believe in God, I can't believe in thought, so I can never use thought to disbelieve in God." Boom! You can't say it any better than that.

Unless I believe in God, I can't believe in thought, so I can never use thought to disbelieve in God. Yeah, if you're a molecular machine, you shouldn't believe you're a molecular machine. In

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fact, you shouldn't believe anything, because you're not reasoning you're just reacting. And the same people that are claiming that well, science can answer everything is nonsense.

By the way, science did not rise to rebel against God, but to marvel at God by understanding how he keeps the universe going. You see, even by atheist's admission, they think science is just about finding natural causes in the natural world. Well, even if you take that definition, that should not tell you anything about supernatural causes from outside the world that may cause things inside the world. If you're going to define science just as natural causes inside the natural world, then science, by that philosophical definition or presupposition, can't say anything about a supernatural being that might cause things inside the natural world. If you're going to define science that narrowly, which is what most atheists do, then science says nothing about God.

Of course, as I've said before, science really doesn't say anything, scientists do. Because all data needs to be gathered and all data needs to be interpreted. But our very ability to do science presupposes our ability to reason and we can't reason if we're just molecular machines, we can only react. So, actually, science needs God in order to have a universe, to have orderly natural laws, and to have beings with minds that can ascertain truths outside their skulls. That's best explained by God. It doesn't get rid of God. You need God as a ground for an orderly world and an orderly mind to even understand cause and effect, which is what science is trying to do.

So, for all this bluster about religious people being irrational, it's really the atheists that are being irrational. Their worldview should not give them the ability to do science. But since they can do science, they ought to change their worldview to a worldview that can explain why they can do science.

All right, friends, we'll cover this again in the future. Don't forget to write us at [hello@crossexamined.org](mailto:hello@crossexamined.org) if you have a question. And don't forget about the Monday night live stream with the great Alisa Childers. God bless. See you next week.

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