

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

The Toxic War on Masculinity with Nancy Pearcey – Part 1

(June 23, 2023)

Frank:

Ladies and gentlemen, where did the idea come from that masculinity is toxic? And what impact did secularism or even Darwinism have on the script for masculinity? And how do Christian men actually shatter negative stereotypes?

And by the way, can I just make a confession here? Sometimes I don't like to go to church. I know a lot of men that are Christians that don't like church. Why is that? And does it have anything to do with the war on masculinity? I think it does.

In fact, our guest today thinks it does. Her name is Professor Nancy Pearcey. You know Nancy, she's a best-selling author and speaker. She's written some really great books.

So great that The Economist has actually said that Nancy is America's preeminent evangelical Protestant female intellectual. She's been on the Washington Post, Washington Times, First Things, Human Events, American Thinker, Daily Caller, The Federalist, Fox News.

She's been on NPR, C-Span, Fox and Friends. She's actually a professor down at Houston Christian University. It used to be called Christian Baptist University until recently. In fact, Christian Houston University has some great professors. Nancy is one of them.

They also have Mike Licona, and William Lane Craig, and Mary Jo Sharp, and a bunch of other great people. Anyway, Nancy has just written another great book. She's written *Total Truth*. She's written *Love Thy Body*. This brand new book is called *The Toxic War on Masculinity: How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes*.

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And if you go to Amazon right now, you should preorder it and can preorder it. You should. It's coming out on June 27, but there's so many preorders, it might take you a couple of weeks to get it. It's always great having Nancy on the program she's been on before. Nancy, how are you?

Nancy:

Great, thank you. And thanks for having me.

Frank:

Oh, absolutely. You and I were together at the Discovery Institute's event down in Dallas in February, and it was great seeing you there, along with Titus Kennedy, and Stephen Meyer, and several others. You're always writing great books, Nancy. Why did you decide to write *The Toxic War on Masculinity*? Where did this come from?

Nancy:

Well, I had two things in mind. I saw a problem, and I saw a solution. So, you don't write a book if you only see the problem. But the problem was, of course, the attacks on masculinity. That it's become socially acceptable to lob against men today.

The one that caught my eye was a Washington Post article that was titled *Why Can't We Hate Men?* I thought, really? In a respected publication? Or a Huffington Post editor who tweeted the hashtag "Kill all men".

You can buy T-shirts that say, "So many men, so little ammunition." And then books have come out with titles like *I Hate Men*, and *No Good Men*, and *Are Men Necessary?* So, I really wanted to get to the bottom of this.

Oh, and by the way, even men are jumping on the bandwagon. A male author wrote a book in which he said, talking about healthy masculinity is like talking about healthy cancer. And you probably saw this was in the news more recently, so it's not actually in my book.

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But James Cameron, the director of Avatar, came out saying testosterone is a toxin that you have to work out of your system. So, I really wanted to understand, where is this coming from. How do we get to the bottom of this?

A lot of the book is geared towards explaining how this concept even arose. But then the good news is I was also reading sociological literature on Christian men. And like you said a minute ago, they were shattering all the stereotypes.

Because if anything, Christian men seem to be like Exhibit A of toxic masculinity. If you believe in any form of male headship or authority in the home, you're painted as an oppressive, tyrannical, domineering patriarch. I found lots of examples. I'll just give you one.

This was the co-founder of the ChurchToo movement. And she said, conservative Protestant theology leads to the rape culture that we see permeating Christianity today. So, what happened is psychologists and sociologists were looking at these claims, these accusations, and saying, well, where's your evidence? You're making these claims. Where's your evidence?

So, they went and did the studies, and what they found is that evangelical men actually test out as the most loving husbands, the most engaged fathers. And by the way, they do interview the wives separately, which is important. And so, they're really saying that the wives report the highest level of happiness with their husbands' expressions of love and appreciation.

The evangelical men test out as the most engaged fathers, both in terms of shared activities like church youth group, sports, and so on. And also in terms of discipline, like setting limits on screen time or imposing bedtime. Evangelical couples have the lowest rate of divorce. And then the real stunner, they have the lowest rate of domestic violence of any group in America.

In other words, the media messages are all false. They're completely wrong. And let me read you one quote from one of the researchers. This is my favorite sociologist. He's considered like the top marriage sociologist in the country. His name is Brad Wilcox.

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He's at the University of Virginia. And to show you how prominent he is, he wrote this in The New York Times. He gets published in places like The New York Times. And he said, I will quote this to you.

It's so amazing. *It turns out that the happiest of all wives in America are religious conservatives.* And of course, the studies often are asking the wives because the assumption is that the wives are going to be unhappy and are going to be oppressed, and silenced, and so on.

The happiest of all wives in America are religious conservatives. Fully 73% of wives who hold conservative gender values and attend religious services regularly with their husbands have high quality marriages.

Even Christians don't know this. I had to go digging in the academic sociological literature to find this. And so, this was really the reason I said, I've got to write this book. I've got to get this information out there both to the church, to encourage Christian men that they are doing a good job. And then in the wider culture, too. To show how the media narrative is just so off. It's so wrong.

Frank:

Nancy, I may have missed this because my audio clicked out for about 20 seconds. What is the actual divorce rate across the board in the US? Is it 50%? And what is it for evangelical Christians?

Nancy:

Well, actually, that's the first pushback I always get, by the way, is that haven't we all heard that Christians divorce at the same rate as the rest of the society?

Frank:

We have, yeah.

Nancy:

In fact, in my research, I found that's one of the most widely quoted statistics by Christian leaders. And it turns out, it's wrong. It's false.

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What researchers did, they went back to the data, and they separated out committed church going Christian men from nominal Christian men. By the way, my students don't know what the word nominal means, so I have to explain. It means in name only. N-O-M is Latin for name.

So, these are men who might, in a survey like this, check the Baptist box, for example, but who actually attend church rarely, if at all. And they test out shockingly different. Their wives report the lowest level of happiness of any group in America. They are the least engaged with their children. They have the highest rate of divorce, higher than secular men, and they have...

Frank:

The nominal Christian. The nominal Christian men have a higher...Okay.

Nancy:

And the nominal Christian has a higher rate of domestic violence than secular men. So, that's how the numbers get so skewed. If you just do a blanket study of evangelicals, you're going to get men who are better than secular culture, and men who are worse than secular culture. So, if you put them together, of course the statistics are going to be misleading.

Frank:

Well, we'll cover more of this with my guest, Professor Nancy Pearcey. Her new book, *The Toxic War on Masculinity: How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes*. A lot of myths are going to be burst in this podcast and radio program, so don't go any further. You're listening to *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* with me, Frank Turek. Back in 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 listening to *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network.

You're not going to hear this on NPR. We're talking to Professor Nancy Pearcey. The name of the new book, *The Toxic War on Masculinity: How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes*. And Nancy, just before the break, we were talking a little bit about the divorce rate.

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And I was always under the impression until relatively recently, that everyone said one out of two marriages break up in divorce. But that's not actually true, is it? What's the truth about that?

Nancy:

No, the numbers are skewed because they're taking a whole population of people who some of them have been married 70 years, and some have been married 30, and some have been married two. And so, that's where you get the skewed statistics.

And if you look specifically at Christians, they have the lowest rate of divorce of any group in America. Now, I want to qualify that like we did before the break. This is church going, committed, authentically, living it out Christians.

In America, unfortunately, we do have a lot of cultural Christians, more so than other nations. And so, we do have a lot of nominal Christians who divorce at a higher rate than the secular world.

So, you've got these two extremes. Authentic Christians divorce at a much lower rate, whereas nominal Christians divorce at a much higher rate. And so, this means that the Church has an interesting task here. In other words, how do you support men who are doing a good job and who feel like their masculinity is being attacked? In general...

I'll quote a Wall Street Journal psychotherapist. She writes regularly for them. And she said, young men coming into my practice are demoralized and beaten down because they feel like they're growing up in an environment that is hostile to masculinity.

In fact, recently a poll showed that 46% of American men agreed with the statement, these days, men seem to be punished just for acting like men. So, even Christian men are feeling that. And so that's why these numbers are so important, why we have to get these statistics out of the academic literature and into the Church.

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First of all, to support Christian men. I'll tell you, Frank, I was telling my students one day that I was writing a book on masculinity, and one of my male students shot back, what masculinity? It's been beaten out of us. So, that's the attitude a lot of younger men have today.

And we need to be able to show them that this isn't just a sermonizing, "Yay Rah!" kind of message. This is based on concrete, rigorous, empirical testing. These are sociologists and psychologists who've come up with very solid data on the fact that Christian men are doing very well compared to the rest of society.

Frank:

I think that might be one of the reasons why Jordan Peterson has really arisen as a figure that men follow now, because he has pushed back against this idea that being a man, a masculine figure, is somehow toxic.

And young men, as you mentioned, are just adrift. They don't know who to follow. They don't know what to do anymore because it's been beaten out of them, as one of your students said. But isn't it interesting when we see these characters, Nancy, in some of the movies...

These action movies that so many people love, it turns out that they make the women more masculine. The women are beating up the men now, and they're fighting men. Instead of really saying that these traits are bad, they just kind of apply them to women, which seems quite odd.

Nancy:

Yeah. There was once sociologists who did a very interesting study, and I actually put this at the front of my book. I'll give you some background that's not in the book. This has turned out to be the most controversial book I've written, which was very surprising to me. I did not expect that.

I really thought my earlier book, *Love Thy Body*, would be the more controversial book because it deals with issues like abortion, homosexuality, and transgenderism. Which is of course, the cutting edge issue today. But in fact, this one triggars people even more.

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And, for example, I taught at my classes. I did a lot of reading groups, focus groups, and they would tell their friends and family about the book. And invariably, the first question would be, whose side is she on? With that tone, whose side is she on?

Frank:
Really?

Nancy:
As if you have to be either a male bashing feminist or an angry reactionary. And so, what I did is, I found a study that was done by a sociologist. He's very well known, and so he speaks all around the world. And so, he designed this ingenious experiment where he asks young men two questions.

He says, first of all, what does it mean to be a good man? If you're at a funeral and in the eulogy, somebody says, he was a good man. What does that mean? Young men had no problem answering that question. They said duty, sacrifice, integrity. Do the right thing. Help the little guy. I like that one. Help the little guy.

Frank:
Provide for a family.

Nancy:
Then provide, you're right. That's it. That's the next word. Provide. Be a provider. Be a protector. Be generous. Be responsible. And the researcher would say to them, where'd you learn that? And they'd say, well, it's just in the air we breathe.

Or if they were in a Western country, they would say, it's our Judeo-Christian heritage. But it was fascinating. People all around the world, men are made in God's image. And so, they do know what it means to be a good man. They do know that their unique masculine strengths were not given them just to get what they want, but to provide, and protect, and if necessary, even to fight for those that they love. But then he would ask...

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The same sociologist, I said that he had two questions. So, the second one would be, what does it mean to you if I say, man up, be a real man? And the young man would say, oh, no, that's completely different. And they would say, that means be tough, be strong. Never show weakness. Suck it up.

Win at all costs. Be competitive. Get rich, get laid. That was their language. Get rich, get laid. And so, he concluded that there's really two competing scripts out there. There's men's innate knowledge of what it means to be a good man.

And Romans 2 right? We all have a conscience. We know right from wrong. So, men have an innate sense of what it means to be a good man. And by the way, this sociologist is not a Christian. So, he doesn't say, because they're made in God's image.

He just says, whoa, where's this coming from? But men do know what it means to be a good man. But they have a competing script that says, oh, no, you have to be a real man. And the real man involves traits that most of us might think as more toxic.

Certainly, if they're separated from a moral vision of the good man, they can easily slide into entitlement, and dominance, and control, and so on. And so, I would say the real debate is not so much between men and women, as it is within men's own head between these two competing scripts.

And it does give us a better strategy for dealing with it, because men do not respond well to being called toxic. Right? Nobody does.

Frank:

Right

Nancy:

But what this means is we can affirm, and support, and encourage men in being the good men, which they already know innately. We can be positive that they already know what that means. And so, it gives us a very positive strategy for dealing with these issues.

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Frank:

Where did this come from, this main idea about masculinity being toxic, Nancy? Because in the book, again friends, the book is called *The Toxic War on Masculinity* by Nancy Pearcey, my guest today. By the way, her website, NancyPearcey.com. All your books are up there and much, much other material about you. But where did this idea come from, this idea that somehow masculinity is toxic?

Nancy:

Yeah. Most people assume that maybe it came from second wave feminism in the 1960s. But I discovered it's much earlier. It's really at the time of the Industrial Revolution. Before the Industrial Revolution, men worked all day with their wives and children on the family farm, the family business, the family industry.

And so, the ethos, the expectation for men was very much geared towards a caretaking role. Men had to be gentle and patient because they're working with their kids all day. They're training them in their adult skills. Even authority at that time had a very specific meaning.

Today we tend to have a fairly negative view of authority. But back then it meant the person who was responsible for the common good. So, in other words, I look out for what's good for me. You look out for what's good for you. But who looks out for the common good?

Whether that's of the marriage, of the family, the Church, the school, the civil society, and so on. And authority was seen as an office, and the person in that office was supposed to be disinterested. That was a favorite word at the time. Meaning he was not supposed to look out for his own interest. He was supposed to look out for the interest of the whole. How did we lose that?

Well, the Industrial Revolution took work out of the home. Which meant men had to follow their work out of the home into factories and offices. And for the first time, men were not working with people they loved and had a moral bond with, but they were working as individuals in competition with other men.

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And so, for the first time it seemed in this sort of industrialized workplace, you almost had to look out for number one. Be aggressive, be competitive, be more egocentric, self-interested, and so on. And that's when you start to see the literature change. That's the first time you see people start to say what's happening to our men?

They are losing that caretaking ethos that they had prior to the Industrial Revolution. They're becoming morally hardened and acquisitive, and like I said, self-interested, egocentric. These are the kinds of words that were used at the time.

People were protesting. I mean, they weren't happy about this. They were protesting that the masculine character was not the high moral standards that they had in the colonial era. And of course, at the same time culture was becoming more secular.

After the Industrial Revolution, there arose a large public sphere of factories, and industry, and financial institutions, and banks, and universities, and of course the state. And people began to say, well, these large institutions need to be run by scientific principles, by which they meant value free.

Frank:

Impossible, as you know. [Laughter]

Nancy:

Exactly. Yeah, but that was the goal. And so, since men were the ones who were getting that secularized education, working in that secularized realm, men became more secularized in their outlook earlier than women did. And so that was another part of the changing language of the day, was what's happening to our men?

They're losing their biblical commitments. They're losing their biblical ethic. They're being socialized into a very secular mindset. So, that's where the language begins to change, all the way back then.

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Frank:

And what can we do about it now? And how has it infiltrated the Church? And how has Darwinism had anything to do with this? More with Professor Nancy Pearcey. Her new book, *The Toxic War on Masculinity: How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes* right after this. You're listening to *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. Back in two.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you want to learn how to present the evidence for Christianity and how to answer questions, you need to join us for the CrossExamined Instructor Academy, CIA. We may have two or three seats left, if that. It's going to be next month, end of July in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Go to Crossexamine.org, click on Events. You'll see it there.

I'll be there. Greg Koukl, Alisa Childers, Natasha Crain, Jorge Gil, Richard Howe, Brett Kunkel, Allen Parr. He's going to be a new instructor for us. Hillary Morgan Ferrer, John Ferrer, and several others. You don't want to miss this. Three days of learning how to present the evidence for Christianity, and how to answer questions, and even questions about cultural issues. Something my guest today is so good at.

We're talking to Professor Nancy Pearcey, NancyPearcey.com. The new book, *The Toxic War on Masculinity*. And Nancy, that's so fascinating to think that the real literature, or the real idea of toxic masculinity sort of came out of the Industrial Revolution. When men weren't working on a farm with their families, they had to go out into the world and basically compete with other men.

And it led to some of these so called toxic behaviors. But I want to ask this question, Nancy. Because this is a question I always ask people, particularly non-Christians or atheists, when they try and say something's right or wrong. I always ask them, what's their standard.

The big critics of masculinity out there, the big ones in society today... Who are they, and by what standard do they judge any of these behaviors as toxic if there is no God?

Nancy:

Well, right. And actually, before the break, you mentioned Darwin. And so, I would like to say this is where a lot of them are getting their standard, and it's a very bad one. When Darwin's

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work was published, *Origin of Species*, Darwinian thinkers began to say that the men who won out in the struggle for survival, the one who came out on top, were rugged, ruthless, brutal, savage, barbarian, and even predatory.

And this is the language that started to be applied to men. And the implication was to get in touch with your true manhood, was to get in touch with the animal within. This is when books, the Tarzan books, for example, became very popular. I don't know if you know, there's a whole series. There's about 50 of them.

But the reason they were so popular is because the idea was, here's a man who'd been raised by the animals out in nature. And so, he had retained that inner wildness. At the end of the story, even though he's learned European customs and languages, he says to Jane, I am still a wild beast at heart.

And so, this was a message of evolution according to Darwinists themselves. And actually, there was a more serious form of literature, too. It was called literary naturalism. Which was, again, trying to communicate a Darwinian worldview through fiction. And the best one, the one who's best known, is Jack London.

So, he wrote about dogs. But they were supposed to be metaphors for humans. Jack London, when he was a young man, read literature on Darwinism and experienced what one historian calls a conversion experience to radical materialism. And so, that was what drove all of his books.

High schoolers read it, and they don't know this. But his point was that he wanted to fictionalize the message that we are just products of evolution, of natural selection, genes, and environment, and we have no real free will. We're products of the struggle for survival.

So, in other words, instead of Christianity which urged men to live up to the image of God in them, Darwinism was essentially telling them they needed to live down to the beast within, to their animal nature. And they used to put it this way. They say, well, there's a thin veneer of civilization. That was one of their favorite phrases.

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But it's always male characters, always threatening to break out and become wild and savage again. And to some degree, if they were Darwinist, they thought this was a good thing. So, a lot of our notions of masculinity that are more toxic actually came from Darwinism. And by the way, Darwin himself said that women are intellectually inferior to men.

Frank:

As are some other races. The subtitle of the *Origin of Species* talks about the favored races. Isn't it ironic, Nancy, that in our modern culture today, the people that are thought to be toxic are the Christian men? When in fact the research shows that's not the case.

And Darwinism or Atheism are the ones that would naturally produce the logical outworking of what it really is to be toxic in terms of masculinity and to be domineering, to not care about others, to try and put yourself first. That's what true...

I guess they would complain toxic masculinity is. Or you had mentioned earlier that some of the men, when they were asked, what does it mean to man up, one of the things they said was to get laid. Right?

Okay. Well, isn't that exactly what modern feminism on one hand is trying to say? Yeah, the MeToo movement is supposed to say, you can't do that. You can't come after me, and grope at me, and make suggestive comments to me. That's wrong. Yet it's the Christian men who are saying it's wrong to do that as well.

And it's the naturalists. It's the atheists who are saying, hey, that's just your base nature. You're just an overgrown ape.

Nancy:

Oh, yeah. Let me quote you from Herbert Spencer. He was the Darwinist who was the most successful at popularizing Darwinism here in America. And he made the argument very explicitly that men are brutal, and savage, and predatory. And so, you ask him, well, how did women put up with such brutal men?

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And he said, they had to develop the ability to please. And it would also be helpful if they learned to hide their resentment at such ill treatment. So that was the message of Darwinism. Men are brutal. Women have to comply. And then Darwin adding to that, that they're intellectually inferior anyway. So, you're right.

The toxic notions of masculinity are coming out of a secular worldview, not out of the Christian worldview. And if feminists want a good target, they should be thinking through what the secular view has done in terms of encouraging men to be more toxic.

Frank:

Yes. And then why, Nancy, do we see as people complain about toxic masculinity, do we see feminists trying to become more, say, non-monogamous? Because it seems to me, modern feminism basically tells modern women to act like modern men. Whereas Christianity tells modern men to act more like women in terms of their monogamy.

The Christian worldview is trying to say, man, you need to reel in your base desires. You need to control your sinful nature. Whereas it seems and maybe I'm just missing this, but it does seem like feminism wants women to actually act more like men who don't control themselves. Am I missing something here?

Nancy:

Oh, no. You're practically quoting the literature of the early 20th century. In the early 20th century, the key symbol would be the flappers. Do you remember the flappers of the 1920s?

Frank:

No, I don't. Tell me. I don't recall that term. Go.

Nancy:

The flappers. In other words, in the 19th century, it began to be accepted that men, like you said, were just given to their baser desires. That men were beasts at heart, and that civilization was constraining. That any moral system was restrictive.

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Sort of the Rousseau idea, you need to get totally unrestricted. All morality is oppressive. And so, that became more common for men. But women were still expected to be moral. They were expected to keep the lid on of these wild men.

And that's where we kind of get the double standard that lasted for about a century, where women were seen as more moral and more spiritually sensitive. And they were supposed to reform and refine their husbands when they came home at night from that dog eat dog, cutthroat world of industrial capitalism.

Then women were supposed to refine and reform them. What happened, though, is that women got tired of that job. Here's how one historian puts it. He said, essentially, when American culture accepted lower moral expectations for men, which is part of the secularization process...

He says they were letting men off the hook. He used that word several times. American culture was letting men off the hook because it was saying, well, yeah, you're just naturally more prone to sin and vice. That's who you are. And we hear it today from the evolutionary psychologist.

By the way, Steven Pinker at Harvard had an article on men are just naturally promiscuous. That's just nature. So that view is still very much with us today. But women were supposed to be the ones to hold them in check, hold them morally accountable. Women got tired of that, because men resented that. Everyone resents somebody who tries to act as your conscience.

And so, men began to resent women acting as their conscience. And so, women said, I'm not doing this anymore. And it started in the 1920s. The literature of the times said just what you said. They said, it looks like our women, instead of reforming men, are starting to imitate men. They want men's dress and men's manners.

And that's when women started drinking, and smoking, and doing the other things that were up until then considered more masculine vices, so to speak. So, you're absolutely right. The feminist movement is born out of that. That okay, if men can do it, we can do it. If they can throw off the moral restraints and give free rein to their lower nature, why shouldn't we?

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Why should we have to be the schoolmarms who are scolding and saying, don't do that? Of course, like you say, they haven't entirely given that up. Because what's the MeToo movement? The MeToo movement is men, you can't act like this. So, there's still that double standard to some degree.

Frank:

Yeah, men, you can't act like this. But we're going to act like it. But you can't. God has designed us in such a way, Nancy, that the biblical model of a man woman relationship is what actually leads to the flourishing not only of the couple, but the individuals inside that covenant. And I think that's what the stats, the secular stats show. Don't they, Nancy? That women enjoy being in a relationship with a man who is truly following God.

Nancy:

Well, and it's not just Christian, it's universal. The good man versus the real man. There was another study that was done by an anthropologist. And it was first ever study done, cross-cultural study of concepts of masculinity. It was just a couple of years ago.

Frank:

Hold that thought, because right after the break we'll get into it. We only got a few seconds left before the break. We're also going to talk to Nancy about feminization of the Church right after this, and a couple other topics. So, don't go anywhere. We're talking to Nancy Pearcey. The book, *The Toxic War on Masculinity*.

Preorder it now on Amazon. You're going to want to get this. It's going to help you understand what's going on in our culture right now. We're back in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

June 28th, 7PM ladies and gentlemen, Central Church of God in Charlotte, North Carolina. We'll be finishing up our *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* four-part seminar. We'll be talking about, how do we know that Jesus rose from the dead? What evidence do we have the New Testament documents are telling the truth?

And we'll take your questions. That will also be livestreamed on the Central Church of God in Charlotte Facebook page. So, if you're not near Charlotte and you want to see it, you can go

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there. All right, let me go back to my guest, Professor Nancy Pearcey. The new book, *The Toxic War on Masculinity*.

And just before the break, Nancy, I had mentioned it seems that the research verifies what the Bible says that men and women do best in a relationship that follows Jesus. And you were about to give, I guess, a study that suggests the same thing. Go ahead, pick it up right there.

Nancy:

Right. So, this is a recent study by an anthropologist, and it was the first cross-cultural study ever done on concepts of masculinity. And what he found was quite surprising, that no matter how different they might define the masculine character...some more aggressive, maybe some less aggressive.

They all agreed on what this anthropologist called the three P's. That to be a man is to protect, provide, and procreate, meaning build into the next generation.

Frank:

Right.

Nancy:

And he was quite surprised to find such uniformity across all these different cultures. They all agreed on what it means to be a real man. And so, what we can do as Christians, when we're talking about the biblical ethic, we can be very confident that we're not imposing something strange or alien on men's character. We are asking them to live up to their own best understanding of what it means to be a man.

Frank:

And you notice when you look at the Scriptures, Jesus appears to demonstrate what we would consider both masculine and feminine characteristics. On one hand, he's crying at the tomb of Lazarus. On the other hand, he's making a whip. And he's going into the temple and chasing off wrongdoers.

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So, doesn't Jesus...I mean, what are the proper traits of a man according to the Bible? What should we be doing? And what are the traits that truly are toxic? And we ought not be doing as men, Nancy?

Nancy:

Yeah. I do have a section on Jesus and women, and the ways that Jesus modeled how to respond to women, from speaking to the woman at the well. And these things have a lot more impact. If you first set the setting in Jewish culture, you were not supposed to talk to a woman in public.

Frank:

And certainly not a Samaritan woman, right?

Nancy:

And definitely not a Samaritan woman. But notice, though, in the verse itself, it doesn't say they were surprised that he was talking to a Samaritan. It says the disciples. When the disciples come back, they were surprised that he was talking to a woman. So, apparently that was a bigger surprise.

And Mary sitting at Jesus feet, when in Jewish culture, you did not teach women theology. That was forbidden. So, I have a section on that. But one of the things that I bring to the table is maybe things that you might not see even in other Christian literature. For example, there's again a secular, a non-Christian historian who makes the point that Christianity has a completely novel understanding of what it means to be a man.

And here's how he puts it. Your idea of manhood is derived from your idea of God. And so, he looks at different cultures. He starts with polytheistic cultures like the Norse gods, or the Greek gods. And he said, in polytheistic cultures, the gods are constantly fighting, they're warring.

He puts it this way, they're fighting, they're winching, they're looking for military glory. And so, in polytheistic cultures, to be a man is to be a warrior. Well, there's some truth to that. But then he goes on and says, what about monotheistic religions? Well, one kind of monotheism God is so transcendent that he has no relationship with people. So that would be Islam.

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I found an Islamic writer who says, Allah would not condescend to have a relationship with mere mortals. The very idea is repugnant to Islam. So, that kind of monotheism leads to a manhood focused on authority and power. And then again, we're going back to this secular historian. Then he goes to Judaism; and he said, Judaism is monotheistic. But it has a very different understanding, because God is in relationship with people. He has a covenant relationship with his people.

And so, to be a man is to practice fatherly love. Very different. And then he says, Christianity arose from within Judaism; and that made everything more complex. He said, Jesus is the first divine, first God who says, I came not to be served, but to serve. So, servant leadership. He said no other religion has a notion of servant leadership on the part of its God.

And so, he says, for the first time, traits that had been thought to be more commonly ascribed to women, were ascribed to Jesus, like gentleness, love, compassion and so on. And he said because of Jesus, these became masculine virtues. And so, men who are Christian can practice the whole range of virtues.

They can be caring and courageous. They can be tough and tender. They can reflect the whole image of God. And it's fascinating to hear even an outsider recognize that this is what's unique, totally unique about Christianity.

Frank:

Yeah, that is a fabulous point. Especially the point about service. Because in ancient cultures, the gods are said to have created human beings in order to serve the gods.

Gods need food. That's why you had to sacrifice food to the gods, right? The gods needed these things. And Jesus comes along and says, no, you're not serving me, I'm serving you. That's amazing when you think about it. That is true, what we would call, sacrificial love.

There's no greater love than for someone to die for his friends. And here's God adding humanity to his deity, coming to Earth, serving us by dying for us, so we can be reconciled to his

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infinitely just nature. He's infinitely just. There's no other way he can reconcile us because we're sinners. The only way he can do it is provide an innocent substitute.

And he's the substitute. He's the servant. So that's a fabulous point, Nancy. And that, again is in the book *The Toxic War on Masculinity: How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes*. Speak to that for a second. The subtitle, *How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes*. What does that mean?

Nancy:

Yeah, we talked a little bit about it earlier when we talked about the sociological literature showing that Christian men test out as the most loving husbands and fathers. But I would like to give us an international perspective as well. Because I have some studies in the book of people who went to non-Christian countries: Latin America, Africa, Asia. And they say that they see the same thing. Wherever evangelicalism goes, it reconciles men to their families.

For example, the first one is a woman who went to Colombia, and she was trained as a Marxist. And she totally expected that evangelical families, the men would be these overbearing patriarchs. And she said, it's exactly the opposite. It's Latino culture with its machismo, that creates men who out in the public sphere are drinking, smoking, gambling, visiting prostitutes.

And when they become an evangelical Christian, they stop spending all their money on these things. They bring their money home to their family. Their family's standard of living improves, and the whole family benefits. And she says, here's how she puts it...Evangelicalism in Colombia can be seen as a strategic women's movement because it reforms gender roles in a way that enhances women's status.

And she's not the only one. I have two more that were much larger. And they both agree that wherever Christianity goes...well, one of them is a sociologist at the University of London. And she too says, evangelical Christianity should be called the best women's movement, because she said, feminist groups have come into these developing countries, and they've never had the same impact.

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This so-called backward, so-called unsophisticated religion, namely evangelicalism, that actually believes the Bible, she says, has had a much greater impact on women and has reattached men to the family. That's how she puts it. And the third one you actually might know because it's a best-selling book by a New York Times columnist.

His name is Nicholas Christoph, and it's called *Half the Sky*. So again, a very secular person, but he too, acknowledges that Christianity...here's how he puts it. The Church helps support women in bringing wayward husbands back in line. And so, he says, the Church addresses questions like alcoholism and adultery, which have caused enormous suffering for women.

He says, in places like Africa, he specifies Africa, but anywhere. I thought this was fascinating, because in my book, I focus mostly in America, just to keep it limited to a single book. But here are studies showing that evangelicalism has the impact contrary to everybody's expectations.

The University of London sociologist calls it the evangelical gender paradox because it's so contrary to what the secular people think...that evangelicalism domesticates men is how she puts it. I don't like that word. But it softens them, it gentles them, and it reattaches them to their family, and makes them care about their wives and kids. And they stop committing the sort of traditional male vices.

So everywhere around the world, sociologists, anthropologists are finding the same thing, that Christianity reconciles the sexes, to use my subtitle of my book.

Frank:

Well, there's so much more to ask you about this book, Nancy. That if it's okay, we'll continue this conversation, and it will be on the midweek podcast. For those of you listening on the American Family Radio Network, if you want to hear the remainder of our discussion this coming Tuesday, go to wherever you get podcasts.

Look up the *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* podcast, and you can hear the second half of this conversation. Because we're going to continue our conversation about this. I also want to talk to Nancy about the feminization of the Church. A lot of men don't like church because it has been, to a certain extent, feminized. What can we do about that?

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We're also going to talk about, is the Bible misogynistic? Because a lot of the secularists will say yes. And as we just pointed out, it actually isn't. It's the opposite. So, we'll talk a lot more. Get the book *The Toxic War on Masculinity: How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes* by my guest, Professor Nancy Pearcey. Go to NancyPearcey.com. Also order the book on Amazon preorder. It comes out in a few days, and we'll see you here on Tuesday. God bless.

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