

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Are Miracles Possible Because They Violate Natural Laws?

(June 2, 2023)

Frank:

Ladies and gentlemen, in order to conclude that Christianity is indeed true, you have to establish two facts. One fact is that God exists. And the second fact is that Jesus rose from the dead. If you can establish that God exists and that he rose Jesus from the dead, then I think you can show beyond a reasonable doubt that Christianity is true.

And of course, we unpack this in great detail in the book *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. The problem is, today's modern mind does not believe miracles are possible. So, to try and establish that Jesus rose from the dead, you're going to have people claim, well, that's a violation of the laws of nature.

You can't have somebody rise from the dead. That would go against science, that would go against the laws of nature. And by the way, we don't see miracles. I mean, think about this, ladies and gentlemen. Have you ever seen someone who you knew was dead for at least 36 hours rise from the dead?

Whenever I ask live audiences that question, nobody raises their hand. Why? Because it doesn't happen, that's why. Yet if you're a Christian, you have to believe something none of us have ever seen. How rational is that? So, what do we say to people who say, well, a miracle doesn't happen because it's a violation of the laws of nature?

In fact, this is what many people seem to say today in the academic world. Recently, there was a debate on Justin Brierley's "Unbelievable" program over there in the U. K., between Dr. Bart Ehrman and Dr. Justin Bass. And the topic had to do with Christianity and the resurrection of Jesus. And at one point, they began to talk about this idea of Jesus rising from the dead.

And I want to play you about a minute and a half clip from this interaction. When we play this clip, you're going to hear...The first voice you will hear is Dr. Bart Ehrman from UNC Chapel Hill. And the second voice you hear will be Dr. Justin Bass, who for many years taught over in Jordan, in the country of Jordan at a seminary there. He's now back in the United States.

And you may hear a little bit in the background, Justin Brierley. There's a little bit of laughter going on. And what they're going to talk about here is the possibility that Jesus rose from the dead. And again, the first voice you'll hear is Dr. Bart Ehrman. Here he is.

Bart:

Why don't I think a person got raised from the dead?

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Justin:

Yes.

Bart:

Oh.

Justin:

Why don't you think Jesus got raised from the dead?

Bart:

I don't think anybody...

Justin:

Not anybody?

Bart:

Because it violates the laws of nature.

Justin:

Okay, so you have the kind of a materialist fundamentalist view of...?

Bart:

Well, let me ask this. I mean, you think God raised Jesus from the dead, right? Do you think God can break the laws of mathematics? Can God...

Justin:

God can't contradict himself.

Bart:

No.

Justin:

No, because he is...

Bart:

Exactly.

Justin:

Mathematics is his language.

Bart:

That's right. The other language he uses is physics. Can he break the laws of physics?

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Justin:

I think we're getting off.

Bart:

No, we are not. This is precisely...You asked me why I don't believe it. And the reason I don't believe it is because it violates the law of physics.

Justin:

He can feed things into his system, for sure.

Bart:

I don't think God can break the law of physics any more than He can break the law of mathematics.

Justin:

Feeding things into his system to bring a dead person to life, is not the same thing as making two plus two five. That's completely different things.

Bart:

They are both laws that have never been broken in history.

Justin:

Except in the case of Jesus, right?

Bart:

So, here's the question. This is a very big...It's a very big question because what you're arguing is that the most probable event that happens with Jesus because Paul and Peter said it happened, the most probable thing is the violation of a law of physics that has never been violated in 13.8 billion years. Never. Except in this one instance. Now, if you're a historian, historians don't argue that something that happened only once in all of history is the most probable occurrence because somebody said it happened.

Justin:

Unless there's incredible evidence.

Frank:

All right. That was Dr. Bart Ehrman and Dr. Justin Bass on Justin Brierley's "Unbelievable: Big Conversation" program. You can see the entire debate on YouTube. But what do we make of this idea that Dr. Ehrman is saying that miracles violate the laws of nature?

Well, actually, that is a direct quote, pretty much from David Hume, the Scottish Enlightenment philosopher, who probably was the only true atheist of the Enlightenment. He said, "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature." He went on to say, "It is a miracle that a dead man should

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come to life because that has never been observed in any age or country. There must therefore be a uniform experience against every miraculous event."

Hume is saying you ought not believe it because we've never seen it. There's a uniform experience against every miraculous event. Now, it's not just Bart Ehrman who has said this. Dr. James Tabor, who teaches also in the UNC system, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, basically says you must assume that miracles do not occur if you're a historian. Dr. Tabor is obviously not a Christian.

But he is a bit of a biblical archaeologist. And he said this, "The assumption of the historian is that all human beings have a biological mother and father, and Jesus was no exception. That leaves two possibilities. Either Joseph or some other unnamed man was the father of Jesus."

Because miracles don't occur, basically. That's the assumption, he's saying. Also, Stephen Hawking, in the last book he wrote called *The Grand Design* said this, "A scientific law is not a scientific law if it holds only when some supernatural being decides not to intervene." So, it's a law. It can't be broken. What do we say about this?

Well, for the rest of the program we're going to answer that question. And the first thing we're going to start with... And we'll come back to what Ehrman said later. But the first thing we're going to start with is miracles themselves. From a biblical perspective, what is the purpose of a miracle?

Why do miracles occur, if in fact they do? According to the Bible, why do they occur? Well, you remember when Jesus was talking to Nicodemus? Jesus started talking about signs, that signs, miracles authenticate who Jesus is. In fact, he said that when also John the Baptist, who was imprisoned for basically calling out Herod for his illicit marriage.

John the Baptist is in prison and he's getting a little bit worried and doubtful as to whether or not Jesus is the Messiah. So, he sends an emissary over to Jesus. And the emissary says, hey, John asked me basically to ask you this question, Jesus. Are you the Messiah or should we wait for somebody else? And what does Jesus say?

He doesn't say, you just tell John to have faith and stop asking questions. No, what does he say? He says basically look at the signs. The deaf here, the blind sea, the dead are raised. In other words, Jesus is an evidentialist. He's saying that miracles confirm that he is indeed the Messiah. That is the purpose of miracles in the Bible.

The miracle confirms the message. The sign confirms the sermon. Most of the miracles in the Bible, when God is doing miracles through people, he's doing it to confirm that the person saying whatever he or she is saying, he's most of the time obviously, are actually being authenticated by the miracle. The miracle confirms the message. Why should people believe Moses, or Jesus, or Elijah?

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Because these people can do miracles, that's why. Why should people believe the sermon that somebody's given? Because the sign accompanies the sermon. And if you look at the Bible, most biblical miracles, when they're done through people, are in three periods of time: Moses, Elijah and Elisha, and Jesus and the apostles. Why? Because these people have new evidence, or I should say, a new sign, or new sermon that needs a new sign. A new message that needs a new miracle.

Why should people believe Moses? Because Moses can do miracles. Why should people believe Elijah and Elisha? Because they can do miracles. Why should people believe Jesus and the apostles? Because they can do miracles. God is authenticating them as being from him. And we'll pick this up right on the other side of the break. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist on the American Family Radio network. With me, Frank Turek. We're back in two minutes.

We're talking about miracles today on the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist radio show and podcast because some people say, many academics say that a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and you can't violate the laws of nature. That's what Dr. Bart Ehrman said in his recent debate with Dr. Justin Bass. We're going to come back specifically to what they said a little bit later. But right now, we're talking about miracles in general.

And the purpose of a miracle in the Bible usually is to confirm a messenger or a message as coming from God. To confirm a new sermon that needs a new sign, to confirm a new message that needs a new miracle. So, people can say, well, Moses is really speaking for God because he can do miracles. Or Elijah and Elisha are really speaking for God because they can do miracles.

Or Jesus and the apostles must really come from God because they can do miracles. In fact, if you look through the Bible, there's about 250 miracles throughout the Bible, depending upon how you count them. Some of them are bunched up. But generally, about 250 miracles. And if you spread those miracles, say from Abraham to Jesus, just to keep the math easy, that's about 2000 years. You get one miracle about every eight years.

I mean, we think miracles are occurring in the Bible all the time. No, they're not. One miracle every eight years does not sound like a lot, does it? But do they occur every eight years? No, they occur in bunches. They occur around these people that I just mentioned: Moses, Elijah and Elisha, and Jesus and the apostles, because they have a new message that needs a new miracle. They need to be confirmed. They need to be authenticated, in other words.

So, we're not seeing miracles throughout the Bible like people think we are. We're seeing them at specific time periods for a specific purpose. Now, unfortunately, today many people think miracles are impossible. They're violations of the laws of nature. We can't believe these things anymore. We don't tend to see them. How do we respond?

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Well, first of all, I always ask people, what is the greatest miracle in the Bible? And some people will say, well, it's the resurrection, or it's Jonah. How can you believe in Jonah? Is that a whale of a tail or a tail of a whale? Or maybe it's Noah and the ark, that seems outlandish. How can you believe such a thing? What is the greatest miracle in the Bible?

The greatest miracle in the Bible, ladies and gentlemen, is the first verse. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. If that verse is true, every other verse is at least possible. Because if it's true that God can create the universe out of nothing, can he do whatever he wants that's not logically impossible inside the universe? Of course he can. Of course he can raise Jesus from the dead if he can create the whole universe out of nothing.

Of course he can part the Red Sea. Of course he can do the Jonah miracle. Of course he can do the Noah miracle. He can do any of those things. It's easy for a God who can create the universe out of nothing to do whatever he wants inside the universe if he can create the whole universe out of nothing. And the interesting fact, ladies and gentlemen, is that even atheists now are admitting the evidence for Genesis 1:1.

For example, Stephen Hawking, who was probably the top physicist in the world until he died about six years ago, said this, "Almost everyone now believes that the universe and time itself had a beginning at the Big Bang." And it's not just Hawking who said this. There's many other atheistic scientists who will admit that the universe had a beginning. Well, of course they don't think it's God. But what else could it be, ladies and gentlemen?

If space, time, and matter had a beginning out of nothing, what could have caused space, time and matter to come into existence out of nothing? Not more space, time and matter, because space, time, and matter didn't exist. It must not be a natural cause, because all of nature had a beginning. You can't find a natural cause for all of nature. There must be something outside of nature that brought it into existence. And it would seem to me that therefore it must be a spaceless, timeless, immaterial, powerful...

Had to be a powerful cause, because to create the entire universe out of nothing, you obviously had to be powerful. The cause would also have to be personal in order to make a choice to create the universe. Because impersonal forces don't make choices. Only persons make choices. And they go from a state of nothingness to a state of creation. Someone had to make a choice.

Also, the being would have to be intelligent to have a mind to make a choice. So, ladies and gentlemen, when you think about a spaceless, timeless, immaterial, powerful, personal, intelligent cause, who do you think of? Obviously, a being like God. You say, well, how do you know it's the Christian God, Frank? We don't, yet. We haven't done enough research at this point. I mean, this could be Allah at this point, from this one argument, which is known as the cosmological argument.

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But if you keep doing research and you realize that Jesus really did rise from the dead, then I think you can conclude with confidence, that the same being that walked out of the tomb 1,990 years ago is the same being in whose divine nature created the universe out of nothing. You don't establish that from just one argument. But you can establish that by the arguments that we give, for example, in the book "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" and the book "Stealing from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case."

We can show that the cumulative case shows that the God that created the universe is the same God that rose Jesus from the dead, if in fact he did rise from the dead. And we're getting to that here in just a minute. So, if Genesis 1:1 is true, every other verse is at least possible. In other words, if God exists, miracles are possible. C.S. Lewis put it this way, "If we admit God, must we admit miracles? Indeed. You have no security against it. That is the bargain."

Because if God exists, miracles are possible. You just can't rule them out a priori. You just can't say, well, they can't occur. Why can't they occur if God exists? If he can create the whole universe out of nothing, he can, of course, intervene in the universe. In fact, a number of years ago, there was a philosopher and seminary professor by the name of Ron Nash. Brilliant guy. He's since passed on. But he said one day he was invited to go to Russia, actually, and present to a bunch of Russian scientists, who for 70 years...

This is, I guess, right after the Iron Curtain fell, right after the Soviet Union broke up. He said for 70 years, the Russian people were taught there is no God. All that exists is nature. And the scientist he was speaking to had an idea that miracles can't occur, that this is a closed system, that the universe is all there is. There's nothing outside that can intervene in this universe.

And so, what Nash did is he gave him a simple illustration. He said, here's the world you believe in, or the reality you believe in. And he had a closed box on the table. And he said, you believe that the box is closed, that the universe is closed, and there can't be anything from outside the universe that intervenes in the box, that intervenes in the universe. He said, here's what I believe, and I think it's true. The box is open, and God created the box. And he can intervene in the box, just like I can intervene by sticking my hand in this box and putting something into it or pulling something out of it.

And Nash said, for some reason, this was a profound illustration to the Russian scientists. They never thought of it that way, that God created the box. God created the universe. God created reality. And if he wants to intervene in it, he can. Just like we can intervene in this box that's sitting on the desk right here. We can put stuff in or take stuff out. And to say that the laws of nature are somehow inviolable, that you can't in any way contradict the laws of nature, as Dr. Bart Ehrman was saying earlier in our clip, is to misunderstand how nature works, and to misunderstand what laws are.

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The laws of nature don't tell us how nature always works. But they tell us how nature works when left alone. Look, we're not violating laws of nature when we overpower them. In fact, we overpower the laws of nature every day. When you go up in an airplane, you're overpowering the law of gravity. When you dunk a basketball, you're overpowering the law of gravity. If we can overpower the laws of nature, can't the being that created and sustains the laws of nature overpower them? Of course. We're not violating them. We're overpowering them.

And by the way, this is a philosophical assumption that laws can't be violated. How do you know they can't be violated? If you want to say it's a violation. You're not violating them, you're overpowering them. In fact, some of the miracles in the Bible are actually described this way. For example, the parting of the Red Sea. What it says in the book of Exodus is that God brought a strong east wind to part the Red Sea, and that divided the waters.

Now, obviously, it's very improbable that this would happen by chance without any sort of intelligence. That this very directed east wind at the right time would hit the Red Sea and part it just when the Israelites wanted to go through, and of course stopped blowing when the Egyptian army was in the Red Sea. So, it is actually caused by God. But he doesn't overpower any natural law or violate any natural law.

He actually uses a natural law or a natural process anyway, wind, in order to do the miracle. And we, of course, can overpower natural laws. We do it every day and God can. In fact, C.S. Lewis has this illustration with regard to math. And Dr. Ehrman in his claim tried to say that the laws of math and the laws of physics are the same thing. Well, they're not. That's actually a category mistake. The laws of math could not be different. Two plus two equals four in every reality. But the laws of physics could be different.

I mean, that's one of the reasons the fine-tuning argument is so persuasive to people. We know that the laws of physics could be different, that the law of gravity could have a different value or a different force to it. That the four natural forces we know about the gravitational force, the electromagnetic force, the strong and weak nuclear forces, they could be different.

That's why the fine-tuning argument is so persuasive. Even for some atheists are going, man, this is a hard one to answer. We don't know. That's why they're trying to invent multiple universes, to try and prevent the obvious conclusion that this universe is designed. They're trying to multiply their chances that this universe could exist without any sort of designer, by saying, well, there's an infinite number of universes out there.

Obviously, there can't be an infinite number. There can only be a finite number of finite things. But that's another whole question. Let's just say they're saying there's trillions of them. Ours just happens to be the one that looks designed, they're trying to say. There's no evidence for this. As Dr. Paul Davies, who's not a believer but an astronomer, I think, at Arizona State said, the multiverse is a dodge. "Nobody would be talking about other universes if the evidence for design wasn't so overwhelming."

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In any event, I digress. The laws of mathematics are set. They're based on God's nature. The laws of physics are not set. They can be different. So, Dr. Ehrman is drawing a false analogy here. And C.S. Lewis had an illustration, as well, when he talked about the laws of math. He said, suppose that I put...

And I'll use American money here. He used pounds, but I'll use American money. Suppose in your hotel room you put two 20's in a drawer in your hotel room and then you leave, and you come back the next day, or you leave, and the maid comes in and cleans your room. I'll pick this up on the other side of the break. We're running out of time.

You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me and Frank Turek on the American Family Radio network. Our website CrossExamined.org. Check it out. We're back in just two minutes, so don't go anywhere.

Ladies and gentlemen, C.S. Lewis had a great illustration about breaking the laws of nature or the laws of mathematics. I'll get to it in just a minute. I want to say, though, this week I'm going to be Tuesday, June 6, here in Charlotte at a TPUSA event at Freedom House Church at 7:00 p.m. All the details on our website. The next night, June 7th, I'll be starting a four Wednesday night series at Central Church of God right here in Charlotte, North Carolina. And that's going to be every Wednesday night, 7:00 p.m. We're going to go through I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, the evidence for Christianity, and take your questions. So that begins June 7th.

Then this weekend, June 10th and 11th, I'll be at Cascade Hills Church in Columbus, Georgia. Saturday night service, Sunday morning services, and Sunday night. Sunday night will be also taking your questions. So, I hope to see you there if you're anywhere near Columbus, Georgia. Also want to mention, we're branching out here at CrossExamined.org. We don't just do this in English. In fact, we're about to translate a bunch of our content into the top seven languages that are spoken in Africa.

By the way, ladies and gentlemen, how many people you think live in Africa, the continent of Africa? I was shocked when I discovered this, but it's 1.4 billion. Did you hear that? Billion. It's more than four times the population of the United States that live in Africa. And we want to reach those people because Jesus said, go therefore, make disciples of all nations. So, we're going to do that. And I'll be telling you more about that as we move forward, because it's going to take quite an investment on our part, maybe an investment you can help us with.

But we're already ahead of the game with regard to Español. In fact, the great Jorge Gil is going to chime in right now and tell us what we're doing with regard to Spanish. So, you could tell your Spanish speaking friends. Hey, Jorge, what are we doing in Spanish right now?

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Jorge:

Hey, Frank. We actually have a brand new website. You can go to ES.Crossexamined.org, and we have blogs. We're going to have podcasts, livestreaming shows so we can interact with our audience. We're going to have curated videos. Not only subtitle videos, but native Spanish videos.

We're going to have online courses and we're going to be doing also a development and launching an app with all of these resources already preloaded over there. So, we are actually expanding. And this is going to be a weekly thing where we're going to be putting tons of free apologetics and theological content on ES.Crossexamined.org.

Frank:

Excellent. All right. That's Jorge. The great Jorge Gil. He and his team are going to be putting out all that content very shortly. You can also go to the website already and you'll see a bunch of it up there. So, friends, we're trying to reach every language we can because the time is short, and we are here to try and make disciples. We're here to do what we can to build God's kingdom. We're not here to build our own kingdom. We're here to build God's kingdom. A lot of people think that God is our assistant.

No, God is not our assistant. We assist him. He is not trying to assist us to build our kingdom. We're trying to assist Him to build his. Why? Because he gives us the dignity of causality. He gives us the privilege of affecting not only time, but an eternity. Does he need us? No, he doesn't need us, but he uses us. He gives us the ability and the opportunity to actually affect people for time and eternity.

So, it's a great privilege to do that and to do that with you guys, because you guys support this ministry. This is a completely listener supported ministry. I rarely talk about donations here, but without your donations, we could do none of this. We could do none of the stuff that we do on college campuses. We could do none of the podcasts. We could do none of the TV shows, none of the YouTube channel stuff, none of the videos, none of the app. All the stuff that we do, you actually make possible.

So, if you want to donate to what we're doing, you go to Crossexamined.org, click on Donate. One hundred percent of what you give goes to ministry. Zero percent to buildings. We don't have buildings. We're completely virtual. We come to you; you don't come to us. So, it's a very frugal ministry. We do a lot with a little. So, if you want to help us out, go to Crossexamined.org, click on Donate. You'll see it there.

Okay, let me go back to this issue of miracles and C.S. Lewis. C.S. Lewis had this illustration where he would say that if I put say, \$40, two 20's in my hotel room, and I leave for the day, and the maid comes in and cleans the room, and then I come back the next night or later that night, and I see that there's only one 20 in the drawer...

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He says, the laws of mathematics have not been violated, but maybe the laws of North Carolina have. If I'm in a North Carolina hotel, right? Because someone came in and took one of those 20's out. In other words, someone hasn't broken the laws of arithmetic. They've actually just did something in that hotel room that allowed me to detect that they were there because of the laws of arithmetic.

And that's why we need, or that's one of the benefits of having natural laws is, the only way you could identify someone from the outside interfering or, let's say, feeding something into this spacetime continuum is against the backdrop of natural laws, which do the same thing over and over again. In other words, you couldn't detect a miracle if natural laws didn't do the same thing over and over again.

You wouldn't be able to say, for example, that a resurrection is a miracle if people rose from the dead all the time. No, the reason that you can detect a resurrection being a miracle is because it doesn't happen all the time. Because most of the people that die stay dead. And a lot of people say, well, I can't believe in miracles because I've never seen one. Well, you believe in a lot of things you've never seen. You believe in your mind. Have you ever seen it? No.

But you believe in it. You believe in the laws of logic and the laws of mathematics. Have you ever seen those? No, but in fact, you're using them right now, but you believe in them. You believe in justice. Have you ever seen justice? Oh, you may have seen people treated justly or unjustly. But you've never seen justice in itself, because it's an immaterial virtue grounded in the nature of God.

You don't see it directly. You see its effects. You've never seen love, and everyone believes in love, right? Oh, you may have been in love, you may have loved someone. But you've never seen love in itself, because it's not something physically, you see, but you know it exists. You've never seen gravity. Oh, Frank, I see gravity all the time. Leaves fall from the trees; apples fall from the trees.

I jump off a little ledge, and I hit the...I see gravity all the time. No, you're not seeing gravity. What are you seeing? You're seeing the effects of gravity. We really don't even know what gravity is. Did you know that? But you're not seeing it directly, you're seeing its effects. And by the way, that's how we know that God exists. We know God by his effects. We see a creation. That's the effect. We reason back to a cause, a creator.

We see design. That's the effect. We reason back to a cause, a designer. We have a moral law written on our hearts. That's the effect. We reason back to a cause, a moral law giver. We have the ability to know truths outside of our skull. We have these laws of logic, these laws of reason. We have an ability to reason. We have these senses that can tell us what's outside of our skull.

These are effects. We reason back to a cause, a great mind. If we have evidence that a man predicted and accomplished his own resurrection from the dead, that's the effect. We reason

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back to a cause. Who could have caused someone to rise from the dead? God. That's the point. You're always reasoning from effect to cause. In fact, if you think that you've had some sort of spiritual experience, some sort of personal experience with God, you're doing the same thing.

You're reasoning from effect back to cause. You're saying the effect is this spiritual experience I've had. The cause is God. You're always reasoning from effect to cause. So, you believe in a lot of things you've never seen. You've never seen George Washington, yet you believe he existed. Why? Because he's left effects behind that are best explained by a cause known as George Washington.

You've never seen Jesus in the flesh, but you believe he existed. Why? Because he's left effects behind that are best explained by Jesus of Nazareth. Now, the Christian agrees with the atheist that there is a stable, regular background of these natural laws. But again, we wouldn't be able to identify miracles if there wasn't a stable, regular background. Miracles must be rare if they're going to get our attention. If miracles occurred all the time, then we wouldn't say they're special acts from God.

I mean, imagine if resurrections occurred routinely. What would the resurrection of Christ mean? Nothing. You go to somebody, and you go, Jesus rose from the dead for your sins. And the guy goes, so what? Uncle Leroy just rose from the dead two weeks ago. Now I've got to give the inheritance back. No, it's got to be a rare event if it's going to get our attention.

Now think about this, ladies and gentlemen. For atheism to be true, all miracle and spiritual claims in the history of the world must be false, must be mistaken. Is that possible? Sure, it's possible. Is it reasonable to believe? I don't think so. You're saying everybody in the history of the world who had any kind of spiritual experience or any kind of miracle claim, had any kind of miracle experience, whether it's from the good side or the evil side, even demonic things.

You're saying that all those in the history of the world are all mistaken? They're all false? Possible, yes. Reasonable to believe? I don't think so, no. If just one spiritual experience in the history of the world is true, you have evidence for God. And by the way, you don't even need miracles to show that God exists. As we've already pointed out, you can know that God exists by design. You can know God exists by creation.

Which, of course, is a miracle. Not in a technical sense, because normally we say a miracle is something that happens inside the natural world. The creation of the universe is technically not a miracle, but it is an act of God. And if that act of God can occur, then smaller acts of God, which we call miracles inside the universe, can also occur. In fact, if you're going to say that everything must happen by natural laws, if that's what Dr. Ehrman's going to say...

Well, Dr. Ehrman's very ability to think can't be explained completely by natural laws. Because if every thought he has was

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driven completely by the laws of physics, why should we believe anything he says, including what he says about miracles? You shouldn't. He shouldn't believe anything he thinks. But he does believe things he thinks. Why? Because he's not driven completely by the laws of physics. He doesn't just have a brain, he has a mind. He doesn't just have a body; he has a soul.

He's not just a molecular machine. He's not just a moist robot. He can follow the evidence where it leads. So, he already has evidence that things beyond nature exist. And when people say, look, I just can't believe Jesus rose from the dead. Okay, well, what is your explanation for the evidence? Your explanation for what is possible is worldview dependent. Sure, if there's no God, miracles don't occur.

But if you can establish that God exists before you look at the evidence for the resurrection, now you have the possibility that the resurrection actually did occur. But for Bart Ehrman to say right off the bat that miracles don't occur because there's a uniform experience against it, because it's never happened, he's begging the question. How do you know it's never happened?

That's the very question we're trying to discover the answer to. You just can't rule it out in advance. What's your explanation for the evidence? Are you trying to say that there's got to be some kind of natural law that brought Jesus back from the dead? No, you're not going to say that. You're going to say, well, he didn't rise from the dead. Well, what happened to his body then? Why did Christianity arise?

What's the best explanation? We'll get into more of 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. Our website Crossexamined.org. Check it out there. Check out our app, too. Two words in the app store. Cross Examined. Back in two.

Friends, summer is unofficially here. We're in June. It's a great time to take online courses, self-paced online courses. You get a break. You want to learn more about the Christian faith, evidence for the Christian faith, philosophy, theology, apologetics. We have more than 20 online courses. Self-paced courses you can take whenever you want, like "Jesus vs. the Culture" or "Return of the God Hypothesis". That's with Stephen Meyer.

Or "The Great Book of Romans", I'm the instructor for that. We've got several courses for kids, including "Let's Get Real" and "Is Hell Real?" We've got a course by Sean McDowell on "Engaging LGBTQ Conversations with Compassion and Clarity." We've got "Stealing from God." We've got "Cold Case Christianity" by J. Warner Wallace. "How to Interpret Your Bible", you would think every church would teach that.

Very few churches teach that. We have a course on it. I'm the instructor on that. We've got "Why Can't You Be Normal Just Like Me?" That's a fun one about personalities. We've got "Reaching and Equipping Gen Z" with Sean McDowell. We've got "Responding to Progressive Christianity" with Alisa Childers. "Why Does God Allow Evil?" With Dr. Clay Jones. "How to Convince People to

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All right, we're now talking again about miracles. Just before the break, I was pointing out that atheists will say, well, it's a violation of the laws of nature. No, it's not a violation of the laws of nature to say a miracle occurred. Someone just overpowered the laws of nature, like God. And if God created the laws of nature, he obviously can overpower them. He can intervene if he wants to.

And they'll say, well, you must have extraordinary evidence for extraordinary claims. Well, first of all, what do you mean by extraordinary evidence? I mean, do I have to have a miracle to show that the resurrection occurred like another miracle? You'd go on an infinite regress of miracles. What kind of extraordinary evidence do you need to say that Jesus rose from the dead? What does that even mean?

And I think the counter explanation, the explanation that Jesus didn't rise from the dead is actually more of an extraordinary hypothesis than God actually rose Jesus from the dead. Given the fact that God exists. Given the fact that we have evidence that God exists, and he created the universe out of nothing, for example. I don't think it's all that extraordinary to say that if God wanted to get our attention. He could rise somebody from the dead, particularly somebody like Jesus, who is unique in all of human history just from what he said, and did, and taught and how he lived.

I think it's much more extraordinary to believe that they all had group hallucinations because that seems to be one of the explanations that atheists or skeptics say explains the data. You mean people had the same hallucination? That's like waking up one day and going to a group of people and saying, hey, that was a great dream we all had last night. Dreams are individual, they're not group. And hallucinations, if they occur at all, are singular. They're not group. There's not people that experience all the same hallucination. Yes, obviously I know hallucinations occur.

But they don't occur in groups. And then to say that this could have occurred in first century Jerusalem where an empty tomb was known, is to stretch credulity that they had group hallucinations and nobody went to the tomb and said oh, here's his body. So, the hallucinations, even if they did have group hallucinations, would have been refuted. No, the empty tomb shows that the hallucination hypothesis couldn't work even if it was group hallucinations, because that all would have been refuted by simply taking Jesus's body out of the tomb and saying you're hallucinating, knock it off.

And of course, the Jews and the Romans, they of course wanted Christianity to be false. They wanted to refute it, and they

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could have if they wanted to. In fact, Matthew says that the Jews' explanation were the disciples came and stole the body while the guards were asleep. That's a bad explanation for a number of reasons. But you say, well, maybe Matthew made that up. Why would he make it up?

That would have refuted his credibility with the very Jews he's trying to reach for Jesus. If that was not their explanation, then he would have lost all credibility by saying it was. It must have been their explanation. In fact, there is an early source, an early Jewish source from the first or second century that says that was their explanation. The disciples came and stole the body while the guards were asleep.

Well, why are they trying to come up with an explanation for an empty tomb if his body was still in there? The tomb really must have been empty. And if it really was empty, that's another piece of evidence that Jesus could have risen from the dead. That might be the best explanation. It's also another piece of evidence that says that the hallucination theory couldn't have survived, whether it's group or single. Because if his body was in the tomb, that would have been refuted.

And also, when you look at this, you have to ask the question, what is the probability we would have this evidence for the resurrection if Jesus did not rise from the dead? Why would we have... I can't go through all the evidence right now. But why would we have Jews in the first century claiming a man claimed to be God and rose from the dead and then going to their deaths for this? Why would they say that if he hadn't risen from the dead?

Would we even have Jews who thought they were God's chosen people? Would we even have people, these people, these Jews claiming Jesus rose from the dead, and claiming that he claimed to be God if it never happened? Why? To get themselves beaten, tortured, and killed? Why would we have early testimony, eyewitness testimony, embarrassing testimony, excruciating testimony?

In other words, they suffered persecution and died for this. Why would we have the Old Testament prophecies, the expected testimony? Why would we have embedded confirmation? That's undesigned coincidences. Again, I don't have time to get into it all here right now. But this is all evidence that the New Testament writers are telling the truth. Why would we have the explosive growth of the Church out of Jerusalem for an empirical claim that a man rose from the dead if he didn't rise from the dead, if his tomb was still occupied with his own dead body?

Why would we have Jews claiming this happened? People who didn't think a man could claim to be God, that was blasphemy. People who didn't think someone would rise from the dead. Why would we have all this if he didn't rise from the dead? We wouldn't. Look, we have the data. If we're going to be people who are seeking the truth, we have to look at the data and come up with the best explanation for the data.

Christians say because God exists and we have evidence that God exists, and we have all this data that I just mentioned that Jesus rose from the dead. Atheists or skeptics are looking at the

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same data. What's your explanation? You don't have an explanation? You're just saying our explanation is bad because it violates the laws of nature? Meanwhile, you're begging the question. Meanwhile, who said you can't violate the laws of nature?

Or who said you can't overpower the laws of nature? If God exists, you certainly can. And I've already mentioned, we overpower the laws of nature. And by the way, David Hume was wrong. We cover all this in the *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* book. I don't have time to get all the details.

But he's actually circular when he says that we have a uniform experience against miracles. And C.S. Lewis, he refuted this seven decades ago. Why hasn't Bart Ehrman read this? Here's what C.S. Lewis says about Hume saying that we have a uniform experience against miracles, so miracles don't exist.

Lewis says, "Now, of course, we must agree with Hume [or Bart Ehrman], that if there is absolutely uniform experience against miracles... If, in other words, they have never happened, why, then they never have. They never have happened. Unfortunately, we know the experience against them to be uniform only if we know that all the reports of them are false. And we can know all the reports to be false only if we know already that miracles have never occurred. In fact, we are arguing in a circle."

That's what David Hume's doing. That's what Bart Ehrman's doing. He's arguing in a circle. He's begging the question. As G. K. Chesterton said in his book *Orthodoxy*, "The believers in miracles accept them rightly or wrongly because they have evidence for them. The disbelievers in miracles..." like Hume or Bart Ehrman, "...deny them rightly or wrongly because they have a doctrine against them. They have a philosophical presupposition against them." In fact, Richard Lewontin, who was a Darwinist who taught at Harvard University...

I don't know if Dr. Lewontin is still alive. He was probably in his 70's when he said this back 20 or so years ago. He may have passed on, but he said this. "It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world. But on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes. For we cannot allow a divine foot in the door." Can't allow a divine foot in the door.

In other words, we have a philosophical presupposition against the miraculous. We're ruling it out in advance. Well, if you're ruling it out in advance, you're begging the question. And if this is a theistic world, and it appears to be based on the evidence, you're illegitimately ruling out a supernatural intervention in this material world. Now, you may have to assume that there is no God when you're doing certain philosophical or sorry, when you're doing certain experiments. You might assume that off the bat.

Or let me put it this way, you may assume that a natural cause is the cause that brought the certain phenomenon. However, if there is evidence for an intelligent cause, you can't just rule

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that out in advance. Because if this is a supernatural world, and it is, this is a supernatural reality. If God does exist, then he can certainly intervene. Don't have a natural law of the gaps where you assume that everything must be caused by natural laws. In fact, your own thinking isn't completely caused by natural laws.

So, there is evidence for something beyond nature. Your own ability to think is evidence. All right friends, great being with you. Maybe we'll continue this conversation in a future podcast. Great being with you. Check out the midweek podcast at the "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" podcast site. Wherever you get podcasts and I'll see you here next week. God bless.

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