

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

## The #1 Surprising Rule of Life | with J. Warner Wallace

(May 14, 2024)

### FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, what does it mean to love as God loves? You might be surprised that the answer to that question can be found, at least in one way, by investigating murders. Because my friend J. Warner Wallace has discovered a key insight and several other insights about important topics, and he's put them in the brand-new book, 'The Truth in True Crime: What Investigating Death Teaches Us About the Meaning of Life.' And we had Jim on the show, on the main podcast we do on the American Family Radio network.

We're going to continue our discussion here, but before I do, I do want to mention that this weekend we're going to be out near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, myself, Alisa Childers, Natasha Crain for the Unshaken conference. Go to [Unshakenconference.com](http://Unshakenconference.com). Then Monday night, the 20th, we'll be on our 21st lesson in Digging up the Bible. We've been going through the top archaeological discoveries in the Bible, from Genesis all the way to Revelation. We'll be getting into the book of Acts and the epistles this coming week.

It's livestreamed at 7:30 p.m. Eastern time at our website, at our YouTube channel, the Cross Examined YouTube channel, two words in the channel, Cross Examined. And it is only up for about a week. So, you've got to see it if you want to see it in the first week. That's May 20. We'll have our final program on June 3.

Also want to mention CIA, the CrossExamined Instructor Academy. That is August 1st - 3rd at Central Church of God in Charlotte. You've got to apply by the end of June. And if you want to be a part of that, definitely go to [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). Click on Events. You'll see CIA there. Myself, Greg Koukl, Natasha Crain, Alisa Childers, Allen Parr, Jorge Gil, Bobby Conway, Brett Kunkel, and others will be your instructors. So, check all that out.

Now, let me go to the man of the hour, the great J. Warner Wallace. His new book forward by Alisa Childers, 'The Truth in True Crime.' Jim, in the last podcast, and ladies and gentlemen, you've got to go listen to the last podcast because we're just going to pick up our discussion as

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if we left it off right there. We were talking about a key insight that people in the secular world wouldn't have imagined is the key insight to becoming a success in life until they did the research. And that key insight was that if you want to be a person that is going to be successful, you have to have this quality. What is it, Jim?

**JIM:**

It's humility. And I can tell you that. Let me just, so there's another chapter in this book on marriage, and it's one of those things that, you know how important this is to me. And I think it's hard to live out whatever views you hold about the primacy of marriage as an institution established by God for humans on planet Earth, if you really believe that's true. And it's hard to live it out. And one of the ways, and we do a lot of counseling with police officers who have been involved, critically injured, and how they come, and their marriages are struggling.

We did this work with uniformed military personnel before. They were critically injured on the line of duty overseas often. And then they come back, and they struggle with their identity. They also struggle with their marriage, though. And one of the reasons why they struggle is because the two most important aspects about marriage are so deeply grounded in humility, and they haven't mastered the humility side of it yet. It turns out that repentance and forgiveness are direct outcomes of humility.

And if you're struggling to either repent from stuff you keep on doing that's driving your spouse crazy or struggling to forgive a spouse who's struggling with this, it's usually because those two things are grounded in humility. Humble people are, they get it. They are quick to say, well, I was wrong. And so, repentance is not hard for people who hold humility at a high value or just by when they were raised, maybe they just happened to be more humble.

Also, people who are humble get the fact that I can forgive, because forgiveness is kind of grounded in your sense of how much you need forgiveness. I think that passage where Simon invites Jesus over for dinner, and Jesus comes, and there's a woman there, right? The woman from the city who is anointing Jesus. And Simon's like, if this guy had any idea who this woman is, he wouldn't even let her near Him.

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And Jesus, of course, knowing what he's thinking, says to him a parable about being in debt. A man owes \$50, and a man owes \$5,000, and the debt is forgiven of both men. Who do you think is more grateful? The guy who owed 5000 is more grateful. Here's the whole point of the story. Simon cannot forgive. Simon doesn't think he needs any forgiveness. The people who forgive best are the people who understand their own need for forgiveness.

When you understand your debt, your gratitude goes way up. And humility helps you take the first step toward understanding your debt. That's the problem I think I see in my own life. Whenever I've struggled in my marriage, for example, it's been because of my pride. There's been something that I have not surrendered because I still think I'm too important to surrender it. Humility is the key. It turns out it's one of those dominoes that ends up tipping over a lot of other dominoes we don't typically think about.

So, if you find yourself struggling with forgiveness or struggling with repentance, look first to the core problem that kind of is that standing on it. It probably is this thing called pride. Which, by the way, that's one chapter in the book. But we also have a chapter on the, I call every kind of stupid, the cure for every kind of stupid, the solution for every kind of stupid. And we see a lot of stupid in the world, right?

We see political stupid, and we see cultural stupid. We see marriage stupid in marriage counseling, for sure. And we all do stupid things for sure. I think every case I've ever worked was another example, a fine example of someone doing something stupid. But how do we fix all that? Well, of course, because stupid is driven by prideful sin. And sin, it could be easily described as simply my thinking that I am God and that I don't need a God.

I will not bend my knee to a God because I pridefully think that I. This is why Satan tempts Eve with, did He really say that? He doesn't want you to know what He knows. You're actually good enough. You actually know what He knows. You could know what He knows. It's our sense that we pridefully could replace God in some way.

**FRANK:**

You know, that's interesting, that the focus of our Unshaken conference, the one I do with Alisa and Natasha. And Natasha pointed this out, that really sort of the ground of the conference is,

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who is the authority? Are you the authority, or is God the authority? Is it the authority of self, or is it the authority of the Creator, whose nature is good? And we are obligated to obey His good nature, not just because He's God, but also because we are valuable, because we're made in His image. And when we follow His nature, we flourish and others flourish.

**JIM:**

Well, look at it this way. When you look at the idea of pride and how it's defined, compare secular definitions and dictionaries of pride to biblical definitions and biblical dictionaries of pride.

**FRANK:**

How do they differ?

**JIM:**

They differ because there's two aspects of pride. One aspect is simply taking pride in something you've created. In other words, seeing the value and wanting to do a good job. The other aspect of pride is that you think too highly of yourself, because these two competing views, both definitions, you'll see in the secular view. The first side of wanting to do well and then saying, well, this is, I want to take pride in my achievement in a positive way. That's always mentioned first.

If you even get the second, the dangers of pride, it's mentioned far down the definition. I've looked at all of them to see if that was true. You look at biblical definitions, and, of course, the danger of pride is always magnified and listed first. And that's because the secular world says, it's you. There's positives in being focused on you. There's positives in being prideful. The biblical world says, well, no. There's dangers in being prideful. Well, why do we have this tension? Well, that is because this is the definition of sin, really.

And because sin is so deeply connected to self-service, she says the self. So, it turns out, because sin and pride is at the core of every evil thing that's ever been done, I challenge you to find an evil thing that has ever been done that wasn't of someone being so self-focused at what he wanted, or she wanted. It's so selfly instead of otherly, that the solution then has simply to

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be, what is the solution for pride? It's humility. The solution for sin is the Gospel. So, the Gospel does really fix every kind of stupid.

**FRANK:**

Because you've investigated so many crimes in your career. Many of them are cold-case crimes. And I remember you saying there's only three reasons for people committing a murder or any sin. When out of all the crimes that you've investigated, what has been the biggest motivator for the crime? Is it sex? Is it money? Is it power?

**JIM:**

So, if you had an Olympics of stupid, the podium that the award ceremony would be held on would be the podium that's built on pride. It's just pride. But the pride has a gold, a silver, and a bronze. So, the silver and the bronze, you can debate whether they are money and sex. It depends on the kinds of crimes. But the gold medalist on the Olympic platform of stupid is pride, is power, the pursuit of power.

**FRANK:**

Give us an example of a crime you investigated and solved that was motivated almost primarily by power, by pride, by wanting to be on top.

**JIM:**

So, the pursuit of power is so nuanced. That's why it's the gold medalist. It encompasses about 70% of all stupid behavior. Because anytime you're disrespected, when you walk into a room and kill 30 people who are a different color, what is causing that? What is that about? Well, I think my color, my race is more important. It's a pride issue. It's a power, it's an authority, a respect issue. When I've been disrespected as a gangster and I go across town and do a drive-by to pay you back for that, why am I shooting you? For being disrespected.

I had a case, for example. It's in the book. It's in the chapter on worship where this guy was homeless. He was just a recycler, and he would mind his own business. He was a very, very happy guy, widely admired, liked, never bothered anybody. He had a white beard, looked like Santa Claus. They called him Santa Claus. And this dude gets killed. And you know that all murders are driven by this metal of, you know, the gold, silver, the bronze.

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It's a pursuit of power, money, or sex. But I'm trying to figure out at the time, what does this guy have in terms of power that someone's trying to...? This guy has nothing. He's living on the street. He was sleeping the night he was killed in a porta potty at a construction site. The dude who killed him shook the porta potty. He stumbled out of it, and he got stabbed to death. He doesn't have any money, and it wasn't for sex. So, what is the motive here?

Well, it turns out, if you don't worship the Creator of all good things, you start to worship the things that could be good. But you pervert them under your worship. And God creates sex, money, and power so they can be leveraged for something good. But if we worship them instead of the Creator of them, we end up perverting them and turning them into something terrible. And that's what idolatry does.

And so, this guy was killed by somebody because he had slipped into this guy's region to dig in the trash. He was digging out of a couple of dumpsters that this guy thought were his dumpsters because he was digging out of those for weeks. And when he confronted this guy at the recycling center, Santa Claus was like, are you kidding me? And he kind of blew him off. And he felt disrespected in front of the local community of people.

**FRANK:**

Who is Santa Claus? What do you mean?

**JIM:**

This is the victim. The victim, we called him Santa Claus because he looked like Santa Clause.

**FRANK:**

Oh, he did. Ok. All right?

**JIM:**

So, he felt like he had been disrespected by Santa Claus. So, over those two things, in that one moment, Santa Claus had accidentally triggered two of the three motives. He disrespected me. And you've been making like \$3.40 in my region, okay? You might think, well, that's not a lot, and that's not a lot of disrespect.

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But when you start to idolize, instead of the Maker of sex, money, and power, you idolize the sex, money, and power, then it doesn't take very much to make you crazy. Remember, whatever it is you worship, like identity, it becomes your identity, and it becomes your master. And you've got to be careful about who your master is. If it's not God, it'll be something that God has created, and now it masters you.

So, now the minute you just nick it, you just dent it ever so slightly because it is your master, you are willing to do something crazy for it. And so, he went over that night and stabbed him to death. And this is not a guy who was a killer. He was just a guy who was willing to kill. And by the way, that's another chapter in the book, 'The Enigma of Man.' Is that just a unique thing about humans? This one guy is just nuts, or is that every one of us put in the right circumstance that we can do something terrible? It really is every one of us.

And that's something we need to know because it'll help you navigate the world around you. It'll also help you, I think, parent your teenage daughters when they're bringing guys over to the house. [Laughter] So, I think there's some things that are. And one of the things we want to talk about here in this podcast is this idea about, you know, how do we love well? I mean, you know how important marriage is to me, and it really is. It's my idol. It's the thing I know I have to be careful about.

**FRANK:**

Before we go there, Jim, people need to know something. You, in the past year or two, have pulled back quite a bit from traveling because now you have a grandchild and you're spending more time with your wife. But you're also doing something in the summer that, through the Billy Graham organization and Samaritan's Purse, is helping people who have been through trauma in their marriages, particularly police officers and even military.

**JIM:**

Right.

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**FRANK:**

You're helping them put their marriages back together. So, you go up to Alaska several times in the summer. Just give people an overview of that and also mention where people can learn more about that before we get on to the big question, what does it mean to love as God loves?

**JIM:**

Well, okay. I'm glad you mentioned it. I should always mention this more about Billy Graham Association. No one does a better job than Samaritan's Purse in serving the military community at Operation Heal Our Patriots. That's how we kind of first got volunteering and getting involved in this, because we thought it was a really noble cause. And marriage is important to Susie and I, so we wanted to be able to get involved in that.

Now they've started a program called their Law Enforcement Appreciation Program, and they've got a Marriage Resiliency Retreat. You can find it at the bgea.com website. Just type in L-E-A-P, LEAP as Law Enforcement Appreciation Program. And you'll see that these trips to Alaska, we're getting ready to go in about three weeks. We do six weeks in Alaska, which you might think, oh, this is six weeks in Alaska. Oh, my gosh. It is so grueling that I need a break.

So, we do two weeks. Come home for two. Do two weeks. Come home for two. Do two weeks. Come home for two. Because I just feel like it is the most exhausting thing. Because the minute you land on that property and everyone gets there, the couples are there, you now are up to your neck in everything those couples are up to their neck in. I think I told you, or I was talking to somebody about this.

We have two couples. We couldn't even get the, of the four couples coming in the first week, two have already called and said they're getting a divorce. They're not coming up. That's how desperately on the edge of divorce these couples are. And I feel like, okay, so how do we? I wanted to write a chapter on marriage, which I did in this book. But I know when it comes to idolatry that this can be the thing that becomes my idol. And it's only because, Frank, before I ever knew God, marriage was the thing that I thought was bigger.

All of us worship, whether you're religious, spiritual or not. Everyone thinks there's something of primary importance worth giving their life to, worth saying, you know what? I have to go do

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this this week because this is important to me. There's something in your life that is your master. And that is your idol. If it's not God, it's an idol. And for me, before I became a Christian, that was marriage, because my parents divorced when I was three. I hated it.

I hated being raised by a single mom in the 60's. It was not comfortable, and I just was committed to not let that happen to my own kids or to correct that, to start a generation of committed marriages, because I didn't have any to look at. It wasn't just my mom. It was her parents. It was, you know, okay, enough. I needed to change it. So, this became the thing that was bigger than us. I always tell people at weddings, you've got to love your marriage more than you love your spouse, because that was the bigger, transcendent thing.

Well, that can also be an idol. It turns out good things that God has given us for good purpose are often the things that we pervert into idols. And by the way, no one's ever going to teach you that's the case if you're not humble. Because people who are prideful can't be taught anything, including what's an idol. So, I know where my weak points are on this. But I wanted to at least do a chapter on it because so much of our work is now with people who are married. And that's why so much of our work is about teaching these two core issues.

Who are you? What is your identity? How do you identify yourself? And two, is humility ruining your opportunity to repent and forgive? Because good forgivers are happily married, or they're good spouses. And it's often been said that good marriages are just the married unity of two excellent forgivers. And so, I think in the end, that that's something that we have to become really good at. And how I look at it is this way.

As I get older, if you said to me, ten years from now, 15 years from now, 20 years from now, Jim, would you like to have another day with Susie? I would say, yeah. Well, it's going to cost you. Okay, what's it going to cost? I'll pay anything for it. If she's not with me, I won't pay anything for that. Well, and I'll even do better than that, Jim. I won't give you the last day she was with you, I'll give you a day like you had in 2024. Would you pay for that? Oh my gosh, of course I would. Well, I have that day right now, so I just want to be able to leverage it.

So, a lot of it for me is figuring out, okay, well, where does this really fit into the larger arch of what we learn in working murders? Because so many murders are related to marriages and

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how people have not made this a priority, have not invested in this, do not feel this way about their spouse. They don't see it as they may have made an effort in the beginning. And they don't realize that marriage is a constant daily effort.

You're chasing your spouse the way you were the first day. I still try to chase her that way now. That's why I've had to pull back. I felt like if I can't tell Susie, I'll see you tomorrow, I shouldn't go. Well, that means it's got to be a direct flight from the small airport I fly out of. Well, that means a lot of things I can't do anymore. But I can keep on saying that marriage is important, or I can start to live like it's important. And I just felt like it was time for me to live like it was important. Okay, now we've rabbit trailed off into the corner here. [Laughter]

**FRANK:**

No, that's fine.

**JIM:**

But let's talk a little bit about this idea that I think is important because I was recently asked to do a Christian school in Houston, direct flight. I said, okay, I can do that. So, I fly to Houston. I'm at this school, and one of the sessions was just with teachers. And I thought, okay, these are all teachers teaching high schoolers, a bunch, like 40 in the room. So, I thought, okay. I got a whiteboard. I said, I just want a whiteboard. I said, let me ask you, what does it mean to love? Can you define it for me?

And we wrote down probably 50 words. I mean, it took for a while to write them all down. It was very interesting. Several of the words that came up were the ones you would expect. Adoration, kindness, caring, acceptance was one of them. So, we get all those words written down, and none of them really incorporated the way that God loves. None of them did. I mean, none of them were complete enough. Here's what I mean.

So, I wrote on the whiteboard. I said, okay, so we know that according to Scripture, New Testament, that God is not just the author of love. God is love. You could write an equation, God equals love. God is love. Okay. We also know from Scripture that God, according to the Old Testament, is the perfect fullness of where justice and mercy kiss. The idea of justice and mercy, truth and grace in God's nature, all cited in the chapter on this, all the verses.

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So, if you could also write, God equals the fullness of truth and grace, or the fullness of justice and mercy. Truth and justice, grace and mercy. Then John says that Jesus, (why would he say this?) comes to us in the fullness of truth and grace in the first chapter of his Gospel, where the whole chapter is a claim to the deity of Christ. Why would he say it that way? Because he knows there's only one being anywhere that is the fullness of truth and grace. That's God. This is a claim to deity. We are not. Every line of Scripture is really an encouragement for us to pull it up on one side or the other.

Number one, you are accepting all kinds of heretics in your midst. You're not discerning enough. Or number two, you are really critical and judgmental. You're not merciful and loving enough. You're either one or the other. You're out of balance. So, why are we being called to the fullness? Because that's what it is to love like God. Because here's the equation.

If you know that God equals love, but truth and fullness, the fullness of truth and grace equals God, well, you can take God out of the equation now. And now you know that what love equals is the fullness of truth and grace. Here's what I didn't see on the whiteboard. Not a single word depicting justice or truth. Every word on the whiteboard was simply a word describing some aspect of grace, mercy, as though that is love. That's just half of love.

The fullness of love is the fullness of truth and grace, justice and mercy, law and love. How do you balance those two things in fullness? So, that means that if you said, you know, I have this group, this couple in my church that is really sideways on this issue. Oh, they're just really. I don't know how they can even call themselves Christians. Before you just name whatever the issue is that you think they're sideways on.

And so, we've been having them over for dinner. We just embraced them. They've been at our church now for two years. Okay, what are we doing here? We're so out of balance. We're. We're saying that we're just going to completely love on them. Love on them. Love, grace, mercy, love, grace, mercy. There's no truth, justice, law. That's just gone. We don't even want to approach that because we know if we mention any of that, they'll probably stop coming over for dinner.

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Well, there's the problem. I get it. It's almost impossible to love humans, especially when pride dictates how we respond. That's why if these folks have humility, well, then you can tell them the truth. But if they don't, you can't. And this is what we end up doing. We end up thinking in the church that if we want to love like God, we just tolerate all kinds of nonsense, and we never say anything about it because we want to love.

**FRANK:**

And that's not the God of the Bible, tolerating all types of nonsense.

**JIM:**

Because it's not the fullness of truth and grace. It's just all grace. So, I think in the end, what I want to do is to love like God loves. But I have to understand how He loves. Now, this is in the chapter we wrote in the book, was really a story about a mom. And I'll never forget the case because this mom called me. As a matter of fact, she must have asked him because, you know, everyone gets a phone call in jail.

So, he called her. I remember he called her in jail. He talked to his mom. And then I get a call that's routed from the station to my desk as I'm doing the paperwork for this booking, you know. I was getting ready. I've got to file the cases that I arrested in those days. So, I'm doing the paperwork and I get a phone call at my desk, and it's the mom.

**FRANK:**

Of the guy that you just put in jail?

**JIM:**

Of the guy we just arrested. And she said, is this Officer Wallace? And I said, yes. And she said, she just started bearing her soul to me. Church going, super sweet on the phone, cried through most of the conversation, described her situation with her son.

**FRANK:**

Are you a believer at this point?

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**JIM:**

I don't remember. And a lot of these stories I tell in the book are stories before I was a believer and then stories after I was a believer. And here's the problem, Frank, is when I write a story like this, I never tell the complete truth about it. It's called 'The Truth in True Crime', but I always change the stories because I'm trying to protect even one of these cases that I have in the book. You know, these things get appealed in the 9th circuit here in California.

I'm trying to protect families. I don't think this mom would much appreciate if I was telling her story without asking her first. And I have no contact with her right now. So, I changed her name, and I changed, you know, where it falls in the story. But I do remember that, and this is what I wanted to make the bigger point in this. And I, by the way, say that in the very first preface of the book that I always do that.

Now, you might read my books and go, oh, I know that case because that's been on TV. Well, I hope you don't. But if you do, I've changed some details, trying to make sure that you don't recognize the cases the way you would on a Dateline, because I just don't think it's right to do that to victims' families or to even to the suspects. Like, why should I lay them out? But this case, this was pretty clear. She wanted my advice, and I had very young children.

I think it was right as I was becoming a Christian, because my kids were probably like, three and five. And I remember saying, I don't really know how to respond to this. I wasn't sure what to say to her because her son, who she was calling about, was a guy who was in his late forties, early fifties. She had babied this guy because she had an older son who she had been all law, all justice on, and she didn't have his father in the household. And she was concerned that without a father, he would go sideways.

So, she tried to act strong and be about what's right and pushed him. And he rebelled, and he ended up getting shot at a party. So, then she's like, okay. The second son, I'm not going to make that mistake again. She switched all the way over. She could not balance. And we call this thing tough love for a reason, because it represents both sides of how God loves. The tough is the truth and justice side. Love is the grace and mercy side.

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And if you don't possess tough love in every data point you find on parenting, on being an employer, on being a coach, anytime you're supervising young people or people who need to be, even in justice reform programs, you'll find that tough love, that combination of holding both of those things in full balance, those results are always better than holding one over the other.

So, that's why it's so important for us to think about the nature. And how do you do that? Well, I talk about that in the book also. But the point is, this is an important skill set that if you'll just realize. And by the way, when I turn back to that whiteboard and I showed the teachers, tell me where the truth and justice stuff is up there. Did anyone in 30 or 40 descriptions of what love is ever mention anything about it? No. Wow. And here we are, Christian teachers in a Christian school who are using words like acceptance.

**FRANK:**

They think love means approval.

**JIM:**

Yeah. It's what they're saying, basically. Now, does it mean approval? No. There's a sense in which acceptance is an important part of God's love. But the truest measurement of this fullness of grace and truth is on the cross, where the justice of God is served in its entirety, in its horrific entirety. Yet the grace of God is offered in its unexpected entirety.

This act on the cross captures the love of God. But we have, as Christians, we often just don't think about it. And then, because we don't think about it, we are out of balance and we think that we have to approve everything, accept everything. And we are afraid to even open our mouth. How about this?

Every time that you find yourself with somebody who you really need to show the love of God to, keep a tally in your head of how many times it's just been a pure act of mercy. Have you ever spoken the truth, to them? Because you know, to say, have you ever told them they're standing on the train tracks and the train is coming fast? Have you ever told them that? Because if you haven't, then you're out of balance.

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*to be an* **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek    **PODCAST**

**FRANK:**

Yeah. I think one question that you can ask people in your life who are going down the wrong road is to simply ask them, hey. If you thought I was going down the wrong road, that would harm me and harm others, would you love me enough to tell me? And I think the other person is going to have to say yes. And then you can say, thank you. Can I do that for you?

**JIM:**

Right. Here's the problem, is that even when we do that, because I know what's happening. If you were to say that to me, Frank, I'm thinking, okay. Here it comes. He's got something.

**FRANK:**

But you've got to say yes, though, Jim. You've got to say, yes.

**JIM:**

Yeah, I would say yes. But I would automatically, in my head say, okay, whatever you're about to say, it's blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Because I don't hold that view. And here's where the humility thing is. Because anytime we're offering advice, the question becomes, are you teachable? Now, this is why this is important. As I was getting ready to write this book and produce all the video material related to it, I discovered the differences generationally in the church.

Because when you write a book like this, you go through so many steps of editorial steps, video creation, you name it. You go through all kinds. It takes a year and a half to get a book like this on a shelf. And you're going to meet a lot of people in the process along the way who are reading the content and reacting to it. And what I discover is a Boomer like me reacts to it one way, a Gen X reacts another way, a Millennial reacts another way.

And if I said to you as a Boomer, probably, especially if you've been married for a while. I said, you know, the data on the benefits of marriage, and especially early marriage, are outstanding. That so much so that you ought to make marriage a trajectory decision. You ought to make it something that you seek, that you actually, because you will benefit in a way, you will flourish in a way that you simply won't flourish if you're single.

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Well, I think as a Boomer, you might say, oh, that's interesting. I've seen that my own life, or I've seen that in the life of my friends. If you're a Millennial, are you single shaming? Are you saying there's something wrong with being single? Don't single shame me. You shouldn't even say such a thing. To say such a thing means you're shaming all people who decide to remain single.

**FRANK:**

By the way, you make a distinction in the book between shame and guilt. Can you unpack that quickly for us? What's the difference between shame and guilt?

**JIM:**

Well, I think they are largely confused, and people don't see the distinction between these two. If you look at definitions online, look at definitions in printed dictionaries, even psychological dictionaries, often they are conflated. But here's the difference. The difference is that you feel guilty about things you've done. You feel shame about who you are. Guilt is actually adaptive. It's actually a good emotion to have because it causes us, when we feel bad about what we've done, to seek reconciliation.

So, it's called an adaptive emotion, whereas shame is feeling bad. So, guilt is where I feel bad that I messed up. Shame is I feel like a mess up. Different. Shame is self-focused. It's that I don't feel like I'm worthy. I'm a mess up. I'm a screw up. I'm the kind of person who can't do anything but mess up, as opposed to, I messed up once in the past. And guilt is adaptive because it causes us to seek reconciliation to improve. Shame is maladaptive. It just eats away at the soul.

And I've worked cases where the guys did stuff they should have been ashamed of. They lived a life they should be ashamed of, but they didn't feel any shame at all. And I've worked cases where people who have no reason, they didn't do anything to be ashamed of. They feel shame. You can feel ashamed, by the way, for having done nothing wrong. You can feel shame based on how you look, or how you think you look, or what side of town you came from, or any number of things, how you were raised. Things that are outside of your control, people feel shame for those things.

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Well, it turns out the Gospel has a cure for both. You know, number one, it offers forgiveness for anything you might have done. Forgiveness is the cure for guilt. Identity is the cure for shame, when your identity is in Christ, there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus. So, it turns out that, yes, there's only one worldview that does an excellent job quickly at addressing guilt and shame. But if you don't address these two issues, and by the way, we've got to stop thinking that it's bad to feel guilty. No, it's good to feel guilty because it means that something is happening in your soul that is telling you, I need to change this.

Repentance doesn't even occur unless you feel like you've done something you need to repent for. So, I think it's important for us to see the value. I want my kids to feel guilty when they've done something wrong, but I don't want them to feel shame. But if we are struggling with one of those two things, we need to know there's a solution. And if Christianity isn't true, people try to make reconciliation. What do you do if I can't make reconciliation, or I can't do anything to right the wrong I've done?

Well, then you're stuck with the guilt of it and no way to reconcile the guilt. Unless, of course, you believe in a transcendent worldview that centers your sin. Your misbehavior is not just a crime against the person maybe who you have no access to anymore, or maybe now that person's dead. But you've sinned against the Holy God who is still capable of forgiving. So, it turns out there's a view you could hold that it still allows for the forgiveness that addresses guilt.

And that's why it's so important for us to figure out, like I always said before. If you don't have a proper view of the world, that first trajectory decision you've got to make is worldview. Because if you don't hold a proper worldview, well, then you struggle every time this issue of guilt or shame comes up, because you've got no resources to deal with it under your false worldview.

**FRANK:**

And everybody senses guilt. And the reason you do is because you're guilty. Yeah, that's why. And that's why you need forgiveness. And that's, of course, what Christ gives you. He not only forgives you, but He gives you His righteousness. Now, at the very end of this book, Jim, and, you know, there's only so much we can cover in a couple of podcasts.

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Again, friends, the book is called 'The Truth in True Crime: What Investigating Death Teaches Us About the Meaning of Life.' The postscript says, the Bible describes you the way you really are. And then you list 15 things that secular studies find that humans thrive. And it turns out that the secular studies confirm what the Bible has been teaching for millennia. What does that tell you as a Christian?

**JIM:**

Okay, so you and I, we're both Christian apologists. And so, we often will build a case for the truth of something. And there's two ways to build the case. One is with evidence. We talked about this in 'Person of Interest' that points to a suspect from the beginning. So, you get to the crime scene. There's fingerprints in the crime scene. You say, okay, yeah, this is going to be Joe Show, because this is who the fingerprints belong to. Or the DNA comes back on the database to, you know, Joe Blow. Okay, great.

So, we know who that is before we knock on his door. The other kind of evidence you find is some piece of fabric or something that's in the crime scene that you don't even know it's a button. You don't even know who that belongs to. But then you meet Joe Blow, and it turns out he's got a torn shirt in, which is missing a button. And you go, now, oh. You know, it turns out we can see after the fact that this. Or how about this?

We think it's Joe Blow, and it turns out he's been behaving for the last year like he committed a crime. It turns out that some evidence is simply corroborative, and it's also part of the evidence set. It's not going to be any greater or lesser presented to a jury. It'll be part of the evidence set. If he's the guy, well, his behavior certainly seems consistent with the fact he actually did this. This is the same kind of stuff this is.

If Christianity is true, then its foundational document ought to describe the world the way it really is. And when you find that it does, it corroborates in hindsight what any affirmative case will tell you in advance. So, that's why we would say, okay. I can make a case for the lobby of Scripture. But one of the aspects of that case will be that if it is true, it should make sense of reality. And that's what it does. And that's why I think it's part of an overarching case.

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I mean, look, I've written those kinds of books. In the end, I'm more concerned now after you've learned all the evidence. And we see this all the time, people who are so deeply interested in the evidence, but don't really seem to live like they're flourishing as Christians. Okay.

At what point, how do we leverage all of this truth to live the kind of life God is calling us to live? How do we do that? And I think also, a book like this is not just about whether Christianity is true. It's about whether it's good. Because I think that if it is true, it ought to be good. It ought to be good for us. And it turns out that it is.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. In fact, we said before, the two big questions in life are, does God exist? And if He does, what has He said? And it turns out that we can make a case that God exists. You do it in your books, 'Cold-Case Christianity' or 'God's Crime Scene', or even 'Person of Interest.' But that only takes us so far. Same thing with 'I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist.' Okay? God exists. Jesus is God. What now? Right? What now? Well, it turns out that even if you didn't have all the evidence, and for centuries people didn't have access to the evidence we have now, their life experience would tell them, you know what? What the Scriptures say about life is actually true.

And so, what this book, ladies and gentlemen, will do, 'The Truth in True Crime', not only will it, in an entertaining way, introduce you to wisdom the Bible's been talking about for millennia, but it will also help improve your life in the direction it needs to go, because it's not just about knowing that God exists. It's also about what has He said and therefore, how should we live? And so, in fact, that's even more important than knowing He exists.

**JIM:**

Well, I think it was so interesting that you said this is, yeah, this is basically a "what now" kind of book. What do I do now? And I think a lot of that just came out of our work with people who are struggling to know, like, what do I do now? And some of these folks have known God for forever, and some of them have never even entertained God. But isn't it interesting that the one common thing we often have is we just got punched in the face. What now? And I think that's what we're trying to do with these kinds of books. I just got punched in the face, now what? What now?

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**FRANK:**

What now? Yeah. By the way, friends, in the last chapter of the postscript, 'The Truth in True Crime,' Jim tells the story of a man who is witnessing his wife about to be baptized. And this is one of these traumatic events in a traumatic situation where this marriage was on the rocks, say, a week before that. And so, you can see the outcome of applying wisdom to a marriage that is in trouble. That in a week or two, they've gone from being at each other's throats to saying, we're devoting our lives to Jesus, and then, of course, to one another.

So, that's the kind of insight you'll get in story form and also didactic form in the new book, 'The Truth in True Crime.' And Jim, the place to get it, not just the book, but to get a number of other resources that will help them apply the lessons in the book. Where do they go?

**JIM:**

We developed a website that delivers all the free stuff, and it's at [TheTruthInTrueCrime.com](http://TheTruthInTrueCrime.com). Pretty simple. [TheTruthInTrueCrime.com](http://TheTruthInTrueCrime.com).

**FRANK:**

[TheTruthInTrueCrime.com](http://TheTruthInTrueCrime.com). Go there. You'll get not just the book friends, but a lot of great resources that will help you apply what the book is telling you. And also check out Jim's website [ColdCaseChristianity.com](http://ColdCaseChristianity.com), podcast by the same name. His son, Jimmy Wallace, is also an apologist. Is he still in seminary or did he graduate already?

**JIM:**

He graduated, and now he's buried in an LAPD task force. So, he has been out of pocket for a while. I'm like, dang it. Can never get ahold of this kid. That's why I've got his daughter here at our house a lot of the time.

**FRANK:**

Okay. Yeah. You're not complaining about that. [Laughter]

**JIM:**

No, no, I'm not complaining. I'm not complaining at all.

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**FRANK:**

Jimmy is the third Jim Wallace to work in Southern California police. And so, he is following in his dad's footsteps and is quite an apologist himself. In fact, you guys are putting together a graphic novel, aren't you?

**JIM:**

Yes. It comes out a little less than a year now. We're getting close; I think next February.

**FRANK:**

Okay. So, yeah, we'll talk about that when that happens. So, it's always great having you on, Jim.

**JIM:**

Thank you, Frank. I appreciate you.

**FRANK:**

I'm sorry we don't see each other a lot anymore because of the travel situation, but I'll be out at Calvary Chapel Hills in June. Maybe we can.

**JIM:**

Oh, for sure. We've got to get together. Yeah, for sure. All right. Love you, brother. I appreciate you so much.

**FRANK:**

All right, same here. All right, friends. Thanks for being here. And don't forget to check out the calendar. Got a lot of things coming up, Unshaken conference, Digging Up the Bible. Don't forget about CIA. Check all that out on our website, [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). And Lord willing, we'll see you here next week. God bless.

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