

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

The Top 3 Reasons Why Christians Should Be Involved in Politics | with Tony Perkins

(May 17, 2024)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, in what area of your life do you not follow Jesus? In other words, in what area of your life are you able to say, I don't care what God's will is? I want to do things my way. Now, if you're a true Christian, you know there's no area of your life that Jesus should not reign over. Jesus should reign over what you do, obviously, at your church, what you do at home, what you do at work, what you do with your relationships in your neighborhood, in your community. And yes, what you do in the voting booth. However, this is very controversial, apparently, for some Christians.

Some Christians think, oh, yeah, we ought not even get involved in that realm of politics. We ought not be engaged in the world. That's worldly. We've just got to go out there and preach the gospel. Is that really true? Well, we're going to delve into it with a longtime friend of mine who has worked in Washington for at least a couple of decades. He's a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, Semper Phi, and he also served about a decade in the Louisiana State House.

For about the past couple of decades, he's been the head of the Family Research Council in Washington, DC, and he's had a great impact up there. We're going to talk a little bit about it. He's my friend, Tony Perkins. And Tony, you may have been on the program a long time ago, but it's long overdue to have you back on. How are you?

TONY:

Frank, great to be on your program, always great to be with you. And I just appreciate the work that you do in really supplying the intellectual ammunition that people need to defend the faith. It's so critical in this hour.

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FRANK:

Well, thanks, brother. And you and I were together a couple of months ago when I was down in Louisiana. I had dinner with you and the family. It was a great time. And you've done so much in Washington that I'd like our audience here to get sort of an inside view of Washington through your eyes because you've been there so long. And I don't know how many people know this, but you actually live in Baton Rouge, but you spend a lot of time in Washington. Several days a week you go up to Washington, DC. And I guess my first question is, why did you want to go to Washington and get involved in politics?

TONY:

Well, Frank, yeah, it's a really good question because I really never wanted to be involved in politics. I really don't like politics. I was a police officer after coming out of the Marine Corps in Baton Rouge. And this is kind of, my story is when this goes back to the early 90's when Operation Rescue was taking place. I was a police officer in the city of Baton Rouge, and there was a protest. In fact, it was the summer of purpose. I remember it very well.

It was July of 1992, and I wasn't working, but I was monitoring. I was just kind of watching the abortion clinic and the standoff between the police and the pro-lifers. I mean, literally thousands of pro-lifers from across the country came to Louisiana. I was concerned by what I heard from some of my fellow officers about, there was just this animosity and something I'd not seen before. And long story short, there was use of excessive force. I spoke out about it and was removed from the police department.

So, my law enforcement career ended. The Lord opened other doors. It wasn't my plan, but I then stepped into the media for a while. And then just a couple years later I ran for the legislature and successfully defeated an incumbent and began. So, my journey into politics, Frank, and this is relevant, I think, for the conversation we're going to have. My journey into the political realm was because of the life issue. It was because of the conflict between my understanding of biblical truth and public policy in the culture. And I felt compelled.

And so, that's really what we describe today at the Family Research Council. We've been doing this research for a number of years with George Barna - SAGECON, Spiritually Active Governance Engaged Conservatives. They're involved politically, not because they like politics,

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but they're compelled to be salt and light and to be engaged in the culture. So, I don't come to the political arena because I like that all the machinations and all the stuff that happens there. But I come because I know that it's important, because it is a shaping influence for our culture.

And so, we bring that Christian faith, we bring that biblical truth into that arena. For 40 years the Family Research Council has been doing it. For over half that time, I've been doing it in terms of bringing biblical solutions, and we're unapologetically Christian. We don't apologize that we believe the Bible, and we believe that that truth is relevant to today. We bring it right into the halls of government, both at the federal level and at the state level.

FRANK:

Now, for those of you who may be a little bit skeptical, are listening, going, oh, he's going to impose the Bible. We'll deal with that objection a little bit later. But I want to touch on something you said there, Tony. You said salt and light. We need to be salt and light. And politics is really just about people in a community coming together and deciding how they're going to govern themselves through the law.

And for some reason Christians, some Christians, and certainly people who are not Christians, think Christians ought not be involved in that process. Why would you think a Christian would say Christians ought not be involved in that process? And where do they go wrong when they say that?

TONY:

Well, this idea that somehow, you know, we just need to step back from it. Jesus said, we're in the world, but not of the world. There's a reason He didn't take us out. He told us, He said, look, I'm praying the Father, he's not going to take you out. I'm just praying that He'll keep you from the evil one, that we're not to be tainted by the evil. We're not to be a part of or from the world. We don't come from the world, but we're in the world to be a witness to the truth. And how do you do that when you consider that government is a large portion of our existence?

I mean, it determines so much more than it should, frankly, according to biblical guidelines. It's far exceeded its lane of authority. So, what we need to be doing in that realm, I believe, is shrinking it back so that the family can operate within its lane of authority, the Church can

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operate within its lane of authority, and that individuals are challenged to exercise self-government, which is the foundation for all. No one else is going to do that. And Frank, to those who would say, well, Christians just don't need to bring their values and this biblical stuff to government. That's a worldview. I mean, you focus on this.

You work on this issue of worldview. One of two worldviews is going to dominate. Either it's going to be a humanist worldview or it's going to be a biblical worldview. The humanist being looking at the world through the lenses of what man can do, the other being looking at the world through the lens of what God has done, and can do, and will do. So, our viewpoint is just as relevant as anyone else's when it comes to the process in our republic of shaping public policy.

FRANK:

And some of that public policy affects, actually, how we can preach and live the gospel. And we'll get into that a little bit later in the program. People always forget that. They think, oh, I'm just going to go out and preach the gospel. Well, you can't preach the gospel in North Korea. Not legally, ladies and gentlemen. Why? Because politically, they've ruled it out. And that is beginning to happen in America.

But we'll get into that a little bit later. But I must say, Tony, some of the people out there who do warn about Christians get involved in politics, they do get some things right because sometimes Christians can go overboard in that area. Have you seen that? Have you seen people almost make politics an idol?

TONY:

Yeah, absolutely. And I agree with that. That's why I say I don't really, I don't like politics. And it's a ministry. You know? In Romans chapter 13, God talks about civil leaders as being ministers, literally the same word as servant, as deacons, as servants for God. And they're called and put in those positions. Now, that doesn't mean that every one of them is a believer and recognizes God. But it is an acknowledgement that they operate under the authority that has been granted to them in that position.

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And so, when you look at government, it has a defined role and it's important, but it's not the only thing. I think we have elevated the role of civil government in our time because it has encroached upon the authority of the other institutions of government that God has created: the family, the Church in particular, self-government. None of this works, as John Adams said. He said, our Constitution is for a moral and a religious people that is wholly inadequate for the government of any other. We've got to have stealth government to make this experiment work.

FRANK:

Yeah. We're going to talk a lot more with Tony Perkins right after the break. Tony is the president of the Family Research Council in Washington. We'll tell you more about that in a minute. 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.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you're listening to this on Friday, May 17, I, along with Alisa Childers and Natasha Crain, will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, just outside of Pittsburgh this weekend doing the Unshaken conference. All the details are at our website, CrossExamined.org, or Unshaken conference. You can check it out there where we're going to try and give you principles, how you can remain Unshaken in a culture that, frankly, has just gone nuts, ladies and gentlemen.

And that's one of the reasons I'm having Tony Perkins on today, because he's a voice of sanity in Washington in a crazy, crazy capital. And Tony, before the break, we had just started to talk a little bit about the, the need for Christians to be involved in politics, but not to make it an idol. But in your views, what would you say are the top three reasons Christians should try and influence law in America?

TONY:

Because we've been called to. We've been called to be a, as we mentioned earlier, salt and light. That means that every realm of society is to be influenced by our presence or the presence of the Holy Spirit within us. We are not to surrender any, not a single inch of territory to the enemy. Because when we withdraw, there is a vacuum that's created, and something will fill that. And we're seeing that today. We're seeing that now. When you look back over the last, Frank, basically our lifetime.

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When we were born, the year before I was born, the Bible was kicked out of school. The next year was prayer. And so, we've seen that for the last 60 years, ten commandments, one by one, these things have been removed from probably what was the essence of public life, which has been our public schools. And as a result, something else has filled that void. And now we see we're at a point where our schools are teaching children that they can declare their own gender identity and hiding it from parents.

I mean, if you would have said that 20 years ago, 25 years ago, people would have thought you were insane that we would be at this point. So, the presence, our presence in shaping policy has a preserving effect. You said something at the very beginning of the program. It's not about imposing these views on anyone. It is about bringing a legitimate viewpoint, the very viewpoint that this nation was founded upon as a viewpoint to guide this nation by today. And as we have seen historically, as we see biblically, but also in secular history, the world benefits, all of society benefits when we follow God's design for society.

Whether you acknowledge it or not, whether you follow it, you benefit from it. Western civilization is evidence of that. And so, I think, number one, we need to be involved because God has called us to it. Number two is that this is, we stand at a moment where the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ is at stake. Now, people, I hear this all the time, people saying, well, you know, the Church advances under persecution.

Well, are you going to volunteer to go over to North Korea and live and start a church over there? If God's calling you to that, that's great. I would rather see the Church prosper by obedience to God rather than oppression by the enemy. And so, I think that's a part of it, is living out these values. Not imposing them on someone else but living them out in such a way that it's an example, a billboard for truth.

It was one of the reasons, one of the first pieces of legislation that I passed when I was in the legislature back in the late 90's was the nation's first covenant marriage law, which was the first time in over 200 years that we saw a move back in marriage law toward a biblical concept of marriage. Arkansas ended up passing and Arizona followed suit. And it was not designed. It was a choice. Nobody had to.

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It wasn't imposed on anybody, but they could choose it because we wanted to model what marriage should look like, a lifelong monogamous relationship where the couples are equipped to enter into it and be successful. So, I think that's one of the reasons we should be involved in public policy. And then secondly, our third, Frank, is that the future depends upon it. We've seen what happens when we take our hands off. And if you're concerned about your children, your grandchildren, and subsequent generations, which you should be, then you will be involved.

FRANK:

Yes. And if you go to some countries that don't have religious freedom, as you mentioned, well, in North Korea, you know, there's no First Baptist Church of Tehran, ladies and gentlemen. There's no Calvary Chapel of Beijing. There's no, you know, United Methodist Church of, well, there shouldn't be United Methodist Church anymore anyway. [Laughter] There's no United Methodist Church in Riyadh. They don't allow these things, ladies and gentlemen, politically.

TONY:

And Frank, I've seen that up close in person. I chaired the US Commission on international religious freedom during the Trump Administration. So, I went to all these places, went to Sudan, went to Turkey, went to the Middle East. And I've met with, and spoken with, and broken bread with those who are being persecuted for their faith. And they look to America, quite frankly, Frank They look to America as a source of hope and inspiration, hoping that America will stay strong so that someday they might enjoy the freedoms that we have.

FRANK:

Yeah. You know, politics is not our first duty. Worshiping God, and preaching, and living the gospel, and making disciples is. But politics affects our ability to do our number one duty. And so, that's one reason we have to be involved. And if we're going to love our neighbors, of course, we have to make sure that laws are put into place that protect them from evil. Go ahead, Tony. You want to jump in?

TONY:

Because, you know, I've been wrestling with this for I don't know, I guess I've been in this arena 30 years. And my, you know, when I first was elected, I had a lot of pastor friends, and, you

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know, I'm an ordained minister. I thought, man, they're going to be all lined up to help me. And it was crickets. They disappeared. I couldn't find them, and it took a while. I challenged them and they began to pray. And of course, Louisiana has been transformed, and I've been thankful to play a small role in that over the last 25 years.

But here's one thing, Frank, that we all need to understand, and it's Paul's analogy of the body of Christ, one body, many members. So, we're not all, we're not all the same part. We're not all hands. We're not all the feet. Some of us are parts that need to be covered up more readily than others. So, not everyone is called to be directly in politics. Now, I do believe that we're all called to vote, and to be engaged to a certain level, but we need to respect the other parts of the body because of our work in public policy directly.

And for Christians running for office, like my good friend, longtime associate Mike Johnson, who's the Speaker of the House, because we have men and women like that in positions, those who do stand behind the pulpit and preach have the ability to do so because another part of the body is looking out for them. And so, that part of the body that might not be directly engaged should respect, and encourage, and support that other part of the body.

We're all connected. What's been disappointing over the years, Frank, and it's changing, though, because of necessity, are those who have been dismissive of those called into the political arena as if somehow, they're tainted, and we can't deal with them. Like, you know, unclean, unclean. And the Church and pastors now, I think, are seeing some of them a little too late, how we must have a presence in this arena.

Even if, you know, if we're looking at sending missionaries overseas, we ought to be considering those we send into the political realm as missionaries of the Church, even into our public schools today. Teachers are missionaries of the truth, going into a very dark place. It's time to reevaluate the way we look at culture and how we address it as the Church.

FRANK:

You know, I know a lot of conservatives probably listening right now are going, well, I know Mike Johnson is an evangelical Christian, but, man, he's caving on everything. But there's something they don't understand about his position right now and that's his razor thin majority.

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What would you say to the people right now, Tony, who are going, yeah, I know Mike's supposed to be evangelical, but, man, he's just given the Democrats who are not following basically the biblical commands to do good. You know, how do you explain Mike Johnson at this point?

TONY:

Well, great. Well, let me just, let me explain the relationship a little bit. I go back to when he was in law school, and I was in office. And he likes to tell the story. He used to carry my briefcase. He went, I used to. I still do. I teach a course, God and Government. I've been teaching it for about 25 years. It was a product of my experience at Liberty University when I was in business as a business major. And the Lord began to move in my heart in this area. Anyway, he was one of the first ones to go through that course, and he ended up teaching that course. He knows it. He understands it. I talk to him on a regular basis.

As you pointed out, he's got basically a two seat margin in which to pass legislation. In one chamber, the Senate completely gone under the control of the dictator, Chuck Schumer. You've got the White House. He's outnumbered in every situation. And so, what he's trying to do is navigate a very difficult course, one that is historic in terms of the margin that he has, plus the challenges that he faces. And here's what I would say. And again, I talk to him, and there's been a couple of things, you know, I would have done differently. But I don't have the knowledge that he has based on the position that he holds. But here's what I do. I pray for it.

I pray that God would give him the wisdom to know what to do for the benefit of all. And then when he makes a decision, the only question I ask him is Mike, did you pray about it? Are you confident this is where the Lord is leading you? And he says, yes. And then I have to trust that my prayers are being answered that he is hearing from the Lord, because I know he is one who does. And so, here's what I would say to believers. We have probably since the first Speaker of the House, Speaker Muhlenberg, we have a man who knows the Lord, walks with the Lord, has a history and a track record of that. Let's pray for him.

But we can't be praying and trusting that God is speaking to him and then every time he makes a decision, we disagree with, you know, challenging him. Because then we're literally

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challenging whether or not God is speaking to him. And I can tell you that He is. So, I would say he is doing the very best he can with what he has.

FRANK:

Yeah. It's a very small margin. And politics, somebody said this to me recently, it was a politician who said politics is 90% relationships. Do you agree with that?

TONY:

I do. And this is where, Mike, I've been a little disturbed, frankly, by what I've seen manifested in the last couple of months where if you're caught talking to a Democrat, it's like you need to be sent to Siberia.

FRANK:

If you're a conservative, you look at that, you go, oh, okay. And probably the other way around too, right?

TONY:

It is. I mean, literally now that they're Democrats that do not want to be seen talking to a conservative. And I've experienced this myself over the 20 year evolution that I've watched this. I used to have dinner with a number of conservative blue dog Democrats who are no longer in existence. But Frank, the only way things get done is in relationship and having conversation with people. You know?

FRANK:

Hang on, Tony. We're coming to the hard break. What should Christians do when they got candidates that appear crazy? We'll be back in two minutes. Ladies and gentlemen, where is the real Mount Sinai? I am coming to the conclusion it's in northwest Saudi Arabia after looking at so much of the evidence, and we're going there this December. We're going to take a trip to Egypt and Saudi Arabia from the 2nd of December to the 15th.

You're not only going to see the most amazing sights in Egypt, you're going to go to what probably is the mountain where Moses got the Ten Commandments. You'll see the split rock and all that. Go to our website, CrossExamined.org. Click on Events. You will see the Egypt Saudi

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Arabia tour. It's going to fill up fast. It's this December. Go there, check it out, and I hope to see you on that tour.

Let me go back to my guest, the great Tony Perkins from the Family Research Council. Just before the break, Tony, you were talking about how some conservatives can't be seen talking to liberals and some liberals can't be seen talking to conservatives. It's so divided now in Washington, and we have a presidential election coming up where, can we just be honest here? Both of the guys at the top of the ticket have some personal moral failings. All right? There's no way you can sugarcoat this. And we're going to talk about what Christians should do about that here a little bit later.

But Tony, I do want to ask you, because some Christians will say, you know, it really doesn't matter. Politics is fought between the 40 yard lines, as Charles Krauthammer used to say. I don't think that's true anymore. But what policies have you seen in recent years that have negatively affected Christians here in the United States, that have somehow prevented them from living out their faith?

TONY:

You know, it's really good because I do believe that there was a time not too long ago that what happened is the jerseys changed, but the plays were the same. And there really wasn't a big difference between the two parties. That really has changed in terms of, you see, the one party that is committed to this radical idea that a child is a choice, even up to the moment of birth, funded by taxpayers. That's what the Democratic Party stands for.

The Republican party, obviously, over about a four decade period, brought us to that point by being focused on the sanctity of human life, a life created in the image of God that we saw the overturn of Roe. Now we're in this new era where it's really for the pro-life movements going back to a very same playbook that we've been using for years. It is changing hearts and minds, by having conversations with people. The battle is not over. We still have to advance.

But when you look at, and that's one of the areas of policy that I would start with is that we under this administration, we're seeing pro-life doctors, pro-life nurses who in some settings are being either forced to participate in abortions or lose their positions because the rights of

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conscience are not being acknowledged as they should. We're seeing, in fact, I have a young man that works for me, a very similar background. He was a police officer in Georgia, conservative red state. But he posted on his Facebook page the definition of marriage. And this was post Obergefell. And he said, you know, marriage, as Paul said, is between a man and a woman. Anything else is an abomination. And he was essentially removed from the police department.

He was told he was suspended and said he could come back if he promised never to say anything else on his private spaces that contradicted with public policy. That's a freedom of speech. That is, we're told, whatever you do, do all for the glory of God. If eating and drinking is to be done for the glory of God, as the word, as Corinthians says, how we live our lives in the words that we speak, in the views that we express, should be in alignment with God's Word. So, what we're seeing, Frank, and that's just one example.

There's several of those that would work in a public position are having to choose between hiding their faith in having that position or publicly expressing their faith and having to choose another career. We're seeing parents who are having their children indoctrinated and snatched literally away from them because they've been indoctrinated with this radical gender ideology. We've seen courts literally, we've seen courts take custody away from parents for not using the proper pronouns and not supporting gender reassignment or gender treatments for minor children. That's the outcome of policy, Frank, if we're not involved.

FRANK:

It matters who you vote for, ladies and gentlemen. There was a time when maybe it didn't matter as much. It does matter now. But as I mentioned, Tony, we've got two people at the top of the ticket who Christians have to hold their nose personally to vote for. So, what do we do when we have people at the top of the ticket who are morally compromised? I mean, both are. You can't sugarcoat it. What do we do? Do we follow the platform instead? What do we do?

TONY:

Yeah, I think that's why the platform is so important. The parties, both parties have platforms. And people say, well, what difference does that make? Well, actually study over about the last 50 years show that both parties follow their platforms about 75% of the time. I've been a part

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of writing the Republican party platform for the last 20 years. In fact, the last two, the 2016, 2020, essentially the same platform. I played a very significant role in writing that and we'll be working on the platform for 2024.

I think it's very significant. It's a statement of values. It's a statement of priorities. And I do believe that Christians need to look at those contrasts between the two parties and the stated positions of the parties and then hold their elected leaders at every level in accordance with that stated platform of the party.

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, I know that people will bring up objections like separation of church and state and don't impose your religion on me. Let's just blunt those right now. Nobody's imposing a religion. We're not telling people where, when, how, or if to worship. That would be legislating religion. But we can't avoid telling people how they ought to treat one another, and that's legislating morality. And everybody in the public square is trying to do that. Everybody's trying to impose moral point of view.

The leftists right now are trying to say that if you don't affirm your kid's gender dysphoria, we're going to take that kid from you. That's a moral position. Where people on the right are saying, no, you don't have that right to come into my home and take my child away from me for that crazy ideology. Those are both moral positions. The only question is, what's the right moral position? And when you look down the party platforms, Tony, on the big issues, in fact, maybe I ought to preface this this way.

Jesus got involved in politics because He went after the Pharisees, who were the politicians of His day. And in Matthew 23:23, Tony, as you know, He says to the Pharisees, you're neglecting the more important matters of the law. What are the more important matters of the law in our country today, and how do the two parties differ on those issues on their platforms?

TONY:

I would start, Frank, number one with the recognition of God. Because religious freedom and the recognition that there is a Creator to whom we are accountable is a starting point. The Republicans recognize that in their platform. They recognize that our rights come from God.

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FRANK:

Just like the Declaration of Independence, ladies and gentlemen.

TONY:

Yeah, radical idea. The Democrats have expunged God from their platform. I think there may have been one reference, and I think it was God given opportunities was the only reference to God in the Democratic party platform. So, that's a big contrast. But that's important because that leads to the recognition of the freedom of religion. Now, let me unpack that for just a moment, Frank, because I know you're very familiar with this.

The Democrats talk about the freedom of worship, and what they mean by that is the ability to choose what church you're going to go to and what you do within the confined spaces of a worship facility. That's not freedom of religion. That's not what the Scripture speaks to. The founders talk about the freedom of religion, which means your life, your entire life, which is why the Pilgrims came to this country. They didn't come just for religious freedom. They could worship however they wanted in private.

They wanted to come here so that they could create community around the values that comes from their faith. They wanted every aspect of life. That's why we have the Puritan work ethic. Our work is an extension of our worship. And so, the Republicans recognize that in their platform that all aspects of our lives are under, for believers, we recognize this, that we're under the sovereignty of God, and that everything we do is an extension of who we are.

And so, therefore, we cannot truncate that and limit it to what church we go to or what building we stand in at a particular time of the week. So, that means that informs our views on life. Another area of strong contrast between the two parties. The Republican party, for the last 40 years, actually going back to really the mid 80's, we began to see the emergence of a very strong plank on life, the calling for a constitutional amendment and also a recognition of the 14th amendment, legislation that would recognize the personhood of the unborn, and then, of course, depending on the cycle and what was happening, other life issues.

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But those two have been consistent going back to the 80's. The Democratic party platform, very clear in its latest iterations that long gone was that language of Bill Clinton, that abortion should be...

FRANK:

Safe, legal, and rare.

TONY:

Right? That's long gone. It's a part of healthcare and it should be funded by taxpayers, and it is available up until the moment of birth. And some would even advocate beyond birth. Clear contrast between the two parties. Human sexuality, another issue we understand that God created. And this will be a battle. I'm going to tell you upfront. And I would ask people to be praying for this as the Republicans meet in July. And I'll be a part of that platform committee.

This is going to be a battle to maintain that plank, recognizing that we're created by God, male and female, and that parents should be involved in every decision, have access to counseling for their children if they have gender dysphoria. Sharp contrast between the two parties on that issue of human sexuality. And then I would throw in one other. There's many, many others. But I would throw in one other that I think is very significant for believers, people of the book. That is Israel.

I believe that Genesis 12 did not have an expiration date. I can't find it in my Bible that it says that it expired. Those who bless Israel, those who bless the Jewish people will be blessed. And I think we've seen that throughout history. Those who cross them, those who ignore them, have paid a significant price. I believe our nation, our future is intertwined with that of Israel. And I believe we have to stand strongly for Israel. And that's where the Republican party has been.

FRANK:

Much more with Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council here on I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with me, Frank Turek on the American Family Radio network. So, don't go anywhere. We will be back with Tony in just two minutes. 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. You will never hear Tony Perkins on NPR. He's far too sensible. He's far too Christian to be on NPR.

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But we're talking today to Tony Perkins, who is the president of the Family Research Council. It's been a force in Washington for good for four decades. Tony's led it for over two. And Tony, before the break, we were talking a little bit about the essential issues that Christians ought not differ over. We all ought to be for pro-life. We all ought to be for traditional, natural marriage. It's not just traditional. It's built into the nature of reality.

We all ought to be for protecting kids from this gender ideology where these kids are being mutilated in the name of an ideology. These are some things that we shouldn't compromise on. But, Tony, we do have to admit that Christians can disagree over some political issues. What are some of those political issues that the Bible or natural law don't really address directly, where Christians are free to disagree over?

TONY:

Right. Right. Let me go back to something you said coming back in about not being on NPR. There was a time when I was on NPR. There was a time when I was on MSNBC, when as a nation, we had conversations. And I just want to say, you know, it's not a good place when we can't talk to our neighbors, even if we disagree. And part of why we can't do that as a whole is that we're not really good at doing that as believers, that we can't. And it leads right into your question.

There are fundamentals. There are essentials that we have to be right on, but we need to extend a little more grace to one another and look at character and look at the wholeness of a situation. First, let me give you an example. We were talking about Mike Johnson earlier. And when Jethro had a conversation with Moses about the type of leaders to get, he said, look, get able men. Number one, those who know what the heck they're doing. Number two, men who fear God. And number three, those who hate covetousness. So, why do you think that was?

Well, I think part of that was, number one, you have confidence when you don't always understand what they're doing, you know where they're coming from. And that's where I think we need to, we need to understand as believers, if we are in relationship with God. Sometimes we might not understand one another, but we should give and extend grace. So, there are essentials. But let's talk about a couple of these issues where we may have disagreements.

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Tax structure. Now, I am a small government guy, and I believe that we have way too much government, cost way too much. But you know what? I'm not going to fight somebody over the marginal tax rates. We've got bigger fish to fry because those are really the product of a, we're adjusting our tax rates to pay for the things that we shouldn't be doing. So, let's go to the things we shouldn't be doing, and we don't have to worry about the tax rates. Also, let's take some foreign policy issues, because this has been a big debate recently, the issue of Ukraine.

Now, I'm skeptical. I'm very skeptical about Ukraine. All right. I don't completely, I just don't get what's going on over there, although I do understand this. Putin is bad. Putin is trying to, he's regained his footing. He's trying to move into Kyiv. And he has made very clear he's not going to stop there. He could roll into one of the NATO countries, which would trigger our treaty, our NATO treaty with our alliance with these NATO countries, which would mean we would have to put boots on the ground in Europe.

And the big threat, I think right now, Frank, is China. And China would be sitting back on the hill just watching us expend our resources, and our manpower, and our military. You, as a veteran, too, you understand, watching our military, that our strength has been depleted in part because of our DEI and all these other crazy things that we've been pursuing, the wokeness, as opposed to readiness, and that would put us in jeopardy. The speaker, other Republicans felt like, look, we've got to get funding to Israel.

Ukraine is a part of that, but also in and of itself, it's important to keep us out of Europe boots on the ground. Of course, Taiwan, where China is rattling the saber over there. You can disagree about that. All right? Those are things you can disagree about based upon the information that you have, based upon your view.

I would consider myself a rational isolationist. I don't want to be involved in everybody's business, but I want to protect our country. And I think some of these steps that are being taken do that. But again, you know, people can disagree based upon the vantage point they come from on issues like that.

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FRANK:

I think they can also disagree over some, say, environmental policy, or they can disagree over some programs for the poor. You know? A lot of those are ends and means discussions I think, Tony. I think that sometimes, I think most people in Washington do want to help the poor, but they disagree on the means to do so. Right.

TONY:

Well, there's a failure to understand the cause.

FRANK:

Right? True. Yeah.

TONY:

That when you look at, in fact, when you look in the New Testament and you look at the, I think there's three Greek words that discuss the poor. There is only one element of the poor that should be the focus of our charitable giving. Those are the ones that do not have the ability to care from themselves. There are others that are poor either because of repression or oppression, which we need to deal with.

So, there is room for government in there. The other portion are those that are poor because of bad choices and because of sinful behavior. And what we're finding increasingly is that is the focus of government trying to mitigate the consequences of choices that people make. I think we can have some really good arguments over that because I don't think that's an area that government should be delving into.

FRANK:

Yeah, that's true. And it's also been put this way. Christians, if you're listening to this and you're thinking that Tony and I are Republicans, I think you're missing the point. We're Christians and what we're trying to do is find the people that most agree on the big issues with Christian values. I'm not a Republican. I'm a Christian. If 20 years from now the Democrats line up more with the Bible, I'll be a Democrat.

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TONY:

Put it this way, Frank, if you have to ride the bus because you don't have a car, you want to get the bus that's going the direction that you're headed.

FRANK:

Right.

TONY:

And so, right now the Republican Party is the bus that's headed in that direction. I don't like riding the bus. Quite frankly, I don't like it. I like my space. But that's the only means of transportation right now that we have politically. And so, the Republican bus is headed one direction, and the Democrat bus is headed the other. So, I'm going to hop on that Republican bus as long as it's going where I want to go.

FRANK:

Although, Tony, if the Republican party begins to waver on the big issues, where are Christians going to go?

TONY:

Well, you know, we've seen. Well, here, let me step back for a minute before I answer that, Frank. I actually think we need to continue to influence the Republican party because in our two-party system, we have seen that third parties don't work. All right? Ross Perot tried that in 1992. The only thing he did is he tanked George H.W. Bush. And then, of course, we see this right now with Kennedy trying to make this run. Our system is created for two. And it's structured in such a way that makes it difficult for a third party challenge.

So, I think we need to continue to influence the party that is most aligned with the values that we have. And we have made tremendous gains, really going back to Pat Robertson when he ran for president in 1988 and the influence that he had on the party. So, here would be a challenge I would give to your listeners and viewers, Frank, is that take a look at the 2016, 2020 Republican party platform and just look at it through a biblical lens and you'll see the alignment of those stated party principles with biblical truth. It's probably the strongest platform the party

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has ever had in terms of alignment with biblical truth. And that's where we want to continue to take the party.

FRANK:

Where do people go to read that, Tony? And what resources do you have on your website that people can avail themselves of to get informed on these issues?

TONY:

Well, actually, we have a comparison of the party platforms at our website, FRCAction.org. We've got, if you go at the top of that, there's resources, voter resources. And we have several resources, one being the comparison of the party platform. I don't think we have the entire platform on that website, but you can find it at the RNC website.

They have them all archived at the RNC.com. But you can go to FRCAction.org. Lots of resources there for voters. We have voter guides because we still have elections going on. And you can put in your, there's a link that you can go to. Put in your zip code if you've got an election coming up and it'll give you a voter guide.

FRANK:

Wow, that's very helpful because so many times it's really hard to figure out what somebody stands for, particularly down ballot. You know, where the, you know, the presidents and then maybe the senators and congressmen do. But then your state and local, it's really hard to find sometimes. And so, I also found, I think IVoter.com is another.

TONY:

Yeah, there's a link on our side to IVoter.com.

FRANK:

There is. Okay.

TONY:

Yes. And that's a collective. A lot of groups are a part of I Voter guide. And so, that's a really great resource for people to use. That's where you can get a personalized voter guide. And I

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would just say this, Frank, on that as you make a reference to those local down ballot elections. Increasingly, we're finding that those are extremely important because like we see right now, attorneys general for the states, they're challenging the Biden Administration on a lot of their overreach. Most recently on the Title IX changes for women's sports.

They've got 22, I think about 15 or so states that are suing the Biden Administration. So, these down ballot races. Don't just think it's the president. Those are important. But real policy gains, all right, hear me on this. Real policy gains are actually made at the state level, the local level, where you live. And those races are important. And quite frankly, Frank, folks can get involved and become candidates.

FRANK:

Oh, that's true.

TONY:

They need to consider that.

FRANK:

Hey, Tony, thanks for being on the program. By the way, Tony has a program called Washington Watch. It's on the AFR network, and he's going to join us for the Tuesday podcast. You won't hear it on AFR, ladies and gentlemen. You've got to go to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast and find it. And Tony's going to tell us what we can do when our pastor does not get involved. What can we do about that? You're not going to want to miss that program. We'll see you then. God bless.

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