

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

5 Easy Biblical Issues the Culture Gets Wrong with Greg Koukl

(August 16, 2024)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, there are five easy issues, and here are the five: salvation, abortion, gender, marriage, and sex. Easy? Frank, are you crazy? We argue over all those issues. How can they be easy?

Well, my guest today will tell you why they are easy, and we will dive into each one of those issues. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio network. My guest is the one and only Greg Koukl, ladies and gentlemen. Yes, the author of 'Tactics', a book I recommend everywhere, and the new book, 'Street Smarts.' If you don't have those books, you need to get them.

Greg is the president of Stand to Reason, and he has been on our faculty at the CrossExamined Instructor Academy ever since the beginning. This is our 17th year. We're sitting in Charlotte, North Carolina right now, and we are conducting our 17th annual CIA. It's always great to have Greg on the program. Greg, how are you?

GREG:

I'm doing pretty good. I'm a little tired. You run me ragged here.

FRANK:

I'm tired too, man. This is like the fourth podcast we've done today, and you just did a session. Here's the title of the session. '5 Easy Issues: Salvation, Abortion, Gender, Marriage, and Sex.' How can they be easy? What do you mean?

GREG:

That's actually not the original title of the piece. As I'm doing my own radio shows, taking calls and questions, and I'm working with Amy Hall on STR Ask, #STRASK. Same thing. I'm experiencing frustration because I'm getting questions on things that Christians ought to know better on.

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No, I'm glad to answer the questions. I'm not mad at them. But I get this increasing sense that there's confusion in the body of Christ on issues, and they're the five issues that I just discussed or that you just rather listed. And I got so frustrated, Frank, that at one point I said, this is not difficult. These are easy. Then I came out with a sentence, faithfulness.

In other words, being faithful to God on theological issues, cultural issues, is not theologically complicated. And so, I grabbed a Post-it, and I wrote it down on a Post-it. I put it in my Bible. It's still there, you know, and that was the origination of this talk.

Of course, faithfulness is not theologically complicated. It's not really a handy title for a talk. So, I changed it, I think two CIA's ago into this one, '5 Easy Issues' to talk about these issues. But the trend has been, though, and this has been painful for me to see, Frank. That especially among young people, you have a lot of people that are faltering on issues the Bible is really clear on, but they're getting a lot of pressure from the culture regarding salvation, religious pluralism, is Jesus the only way or not?

Well, He's my way. I mean, I'm a Christian. I follow Him. But other people have different ways. Whatever. You hear this from people who are Christians, okay? And they're comfortable with that. When it comes to abortion, many of these folks turn to be Pro-choice, you know? And part of it is because of the environment that they live in.

Like I said, oftentimes, younger people, you know? And then you have this issue of sexuality. It's just stunning to me how sexually active many young Christians are, single Christians. Like fornication, I mean, that kind of thing, that doesn't even show up. But because they're so sexually active and they have such a cavalier attitude about that, that extends to other things, like homosexuality.

And then, of course, that extends to gender, okay? And then, of course, that extends to the marriage question. So, they seem to be in favor of, what's the big deal? Same-sex marriage, people love each other, whatever. And they just don't get it. They don't see how things are all put together in a Christian worldview.

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And one point that I try to make a lot with the audiences I speak to, and I did just with the group we had, is that it isn't like Christianity is a set of these do's and don'ts, that kind of a killjoy stuff, whatever. When my daughter asked me why, when she was very young. She was only about eight years old. She said, why do we believe Christianity is true? And the thought that came to me and I offered it to her was because it's the best explanation for the way things are.

FRANK:

All right, let's unpack that for a second. Christianity is the best explanation for the way things are. You know, a friend of mine wrote a book, and he always asked me to ask this question. What do you mean by that?

GREG:

What I mean by it is that when you look at the world, think of a worldview or think of a religion, or a philosophy about life or whatever. Those things are meant to make sense of the world we live in. And so, people are trying to put it all together in one way or another, to make it livable, and then be able to make decisions that are appropriate to reality, if you will. And the world is a certain way.

The world is structured a certain way. Okay? And when I made that comment to my daughter, what I was saying is that the Christian characterization of reality actually fits reality. It has explanatory power. For example, when people, say, well, capital punishment is wrong, let's just take that as an example. Why? Because you shouldn't be playing God. You shouldn't be deciding who lives or dies.

Well, notice that when people make a statement like that, they are assuming some things about moral obligations about human beings. But in order for those moral obligations to be valid, even be considered as valid, the world has to be a place where morality makes sense. Well, it turns out atheism doesn't provide us with a worldview like that. We're just molecules in motion.

Now, I'm not saying that all atheists are immoral. I'm saying that the word morality can't mean much if atheists are right about the nature of the world. They can do the same actions that

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Christians could do, you or I can do. But what makes it moral is something else. It's that it conforms to a standard of right or wrong that's transcendent.

Now, the way that fits into these five different issues is when we talk about a lot of these controversial issues, people think these, well, these are just Christian dogma or something like that. It's hard to do, but what we want people to see is that this is part of the, this is the way the world is. The world is this way for a very particular reason. God made it this way.

And when He made it this way, it was all working together really well until we messed it up. And now we're battling around trying to figure out what to do, and we are not thinking about the way God made things or intended things to be. And even younger Christians especially, but all Christians fall into this.

We, make bad decisions in life because we are not trusting the way God says the world is and the best way to live in this world. Okay? And I think when the culture comes down really hard on our, especially our young people now, and the rest of us on these kinds of issues, it's really easy to start giving in.

And in this case, there are two things going on here, Frank, that I think makes them vulnerable. For one, they are not heeding Paul's exhortation in Colossians chapter two, where he says, do not be taken captive by philosophy and empty deception according to the traditions of men of the elementary principles of the world, instead of according to Christ.

And so, he's saying, look, there are two ways to look at the world. There's Jesus way and everybody else's way. And insofar as other people disagree with Jesus, Jesus gets it right. But these other ways, they're going to be really appealing, and therefore, you could be taken captive to them.

And so, be careful. Okay? Well, they're not careful, so many. Because I think a lot of Christians are just theologically untutored. And I don't mean they don't have degrees in theology from some kind of seminary. I'm saying they just don't know the basics. Which is why I wrote another book that you failed to mention, was 'The Story of Reality', to provide that foundation, basic

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foundation, so people could see the way the world was structured and then see how these other issues then fit in a very precise and clean way into that worldview.

FRANK:

And when people ask me, how do I know that God exists? I say, I know God by His effects. If there's a creation, that's the effect. I'm reasoning back to a cause, a creator. Design. That's the effect. I'm reasoning back to a cause, a designer. There's a moral law written on the heart. That's the effect. I'm reasoning back to, a cause, a moral lawgiver.

If there is the ability to know things through a mind, I'm reasoning back to a cause, an ultimate mind. If there's evidence a man predicting and accomplished His own resurrection from the dead, that's the effect. I'm reasoning back to a cause. Who could have risen someone from the dead?

This is explained, of course, in the book 'The Story of Reality', as Greg just mentioned, among other books. And we're going to talk much more with Greg Koukl about these five easy issues and how can we communicate them clearly? So, don't go anywhere. We're back 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. That's our intent, anyway. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, on the American Family Radio network.

My guest is the great Greg Koukl, author of 'Tactics', 'Street Smarts', 'The Story of Reality.' He also, as you know, is the president of Stand to Reason, does a couple of podcasts every week. The regular Stand to Reason podcast, and what's the other one? STR Ask.

GREG:

#STRAsk.

FRANK:

A great podcast. I listen to just most of those because they're all Q&A podcasts. Before we get back to Greg, though, I want to mention that I will be, Lord willing, at the University of Texas at

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Dallas on September 5. The next night I'll be with my friend Charlie Kirk at the Calvary Chapel in Tucson, Arizona, along with Pastor Robert Furrow.

Then on September 9, which is a Monday night, we'll be at Arizona State University in Phoenix. All the details on our website. Go to CrossExamined.org. Click on Events. You will see them there. Greg, we're talking about five easy issues that we all ought to be able to explain, and we all ought to be able to get Christians who know their theology to agree with. Where do we start?

GREG:

Well, clarification on the easy word, okay? Because I can see people are going, wait a minute, just like you did the introduction, you know. These aren't so easy. Well, they're culturally controversial. There's no question about that. But my point is that they are theologically easy. That is, these are not gray areas in Scripture.

If we are faithful to God through scripture, these are things we are going to stand for because they're clear. It isn't like there's ambiguity about these issues. Okay, let's just take the first one. Religious pluralism. Trust in Jesus is the only way to avoid the wrath that God has towards us for breaking His law, is arguably the most controversial element of the Christian message.

Now, I chose my words carefully there, because if we just say faith in Jesus and He's the only way, it's like, okay. What's that mean? It's just religious lingo. Okay? What it means is that we're in trouble and bad trouble. And in fact, this is the biggest message that we see to outsiders in the New Testament book of Acts, and in the Gospels, is the trouble we're in. You know? And there's a rescue for that. But that rescue is through Jesus. All right? Now, this is wildly politically incorrect, right?

FRANK:

But it's philosophically airtight. If there is an infinite standard of justice out there, we deserve punishment.

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GREG:

Oh, that's true. And I think we know that. That's why we all experience guilt. And part of what I say to people is, I've said, look, why do you feel guilty? I said, maybe you feel guilty because you are guilty. We all feel guilty. It's because we realize we have done things worthy of punishment.

Now, maybe we gussie it up a little bit, we make ourselves look better than we are. I'm no Hitler. Well, that's good. One was enough. But they're no Jesus Christ either, and they're probably more like Hitler than they are like Jesus. But the point of the New Testament is to declare that there is a solution. There is a rescuer, and He's the only one that can rescue in the way that we need rescue.

FRANK:

Why is He the only one?

GREG:

Because, simply put, because he's the only one who solved the problem. The problem is the guilt that we have before God for breaking His law. Remember at the very end, the Great White Throne Judgment, the books are opened. And what does it say there? It says each man is judged by what? His own deeds. And every person so judged, if their name is not in the book of life, every person so judged is cast in the lake of fire. The means for the judgment is our behavior. Okay?

So, we're in trouble if every single... This is our rap sheet there in those books. Like, certificate of debt, Paul calls it in Colossians. And it's, you know, we're not going to get away from it with anything. Jesus said, every idle word a man speaks He will give an account of in the day of judgment.

And so, that's the problem. Okay? Now what? Well, I'll try to be better. You're already supposed to be better. I'll do more good deeds. You all owe that to God. You can't do good deeds to cancel out bad deeds. That doesn't work in any law.

FRANK:

It doesn't even work in our system.

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GREG:

No. I mean, you're not good for like a couple of five years or something, and the DA sends you a letter and says, hey, you haven't committed any laws. Go out and knock off a few gas stations on us. You have credit in your account. You know, that's not the way it works. So, we're in trouble.

And Jesus is the only one that solved that problem. And the way He solved it, if you want to use kind of monetary terminology, the debt that we owe to God, Jesus pays the debt. If Jesus pays the debt, then we don't owe the punishment that is due us. If Jesus takes the punishment for us, then we don't take the punishment. So, the simple calculus is, either Jesus pays, or we pay. That's it. And that's why He's the only way. Nobody ever did that.

FRANK:

Yeah. Ladies and gentlemen, think about this. There's only two things you're going to get in the afterlife. You're either going to get justice or you're going to get grace. Do any of you really want justice? I mean, think about it.

Do you really want justice? You don't want justice. I don't want justice. I mean, here we are pounding the table saying we want justice here in this world--

GREG:

Regarding some other person.

FRANK:

That's right. But we don't want justice done to us in the sense that we don't want to be punished for the sins that we've committed. We want grace. Well, the only way to get grace is to have a substitute take the punishment for us, who's innocent Himself. And the only one who's done that is Jesus.

Now, of course, this raises questions about, well, is God unfair? And, you know, what about those that have never heard? We don't have time to get into that now. You and I have both written on that. We've got videos on it. But it presupposes a moral standard, doesn't it?

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GREG:

That's right.

FRANK:

Oh, God is somehow unjust. By what standard are you calling God unjust? He is the standard. Right?

GREG:

The key here for me with the clarity in the Scripture, easy issue is because this, from top to bottom, from beginning to end in the New Testament, is all over the place. And in fact, if Jesus is not the only way of salvation, nothing in the New Testament makes sense.

You might find little aphorisms here and there, nice ways to live and be kind to each other and all that other stuff, and love your neighbor, and have the good Samaritan. Okay, find what you want out of those. But those are there as embedded in a much bigger story. And if you take the substitutionary death of Jesus out of the story, which a lot of people do, that's the stumbling block. Right? Then nothing else makes sense. The story falls apart.

FRANK:

Why send Jesus to teach us just morality, when morality really isn't our problem? Sin is our problem.

GREG:

That's right.

FRANK:

I mean, we haven't lived up to the moral laws that we knew before Jesus came.

GREG:

Well, all the prophets did that, too. I mean, all of that came before. There's plenty of that.

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FRANK:

Right.

GREG:

Yeah. So, this is one point, the first point, the Christians were not called Christians. They didn't call themselves Christians. Other people did, kind of making fun of them. You know, in Antioch is where that term originated. But they called themselves The Way. And the reason they called themselves The Way is that's the way Jesus referred to Himself. I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father, but through me.

And by the way, He said that in his last major discourse, the upper room discourse, just before He died. His first major discourse, He's singing the same tune. The gate is wide that leads to destruction, and many are those who find it. The way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

You cannot read Jesus in a fair way or all of those He trained to take the same message after Him without affirming, at least, you might think He's wrong. But at least affirming that this is His message, that He is the only way of salvation. He who believes is saved. He who does not believe, the wrath of God abides on Him. That's Jesus, John, chapter three.

FRANK:

Paul says in Galatians, chapter two, if righteousness could be attained by the law, then Christ died in vain.

GREG:

Right.

FRANK:

Why send Jesus if you can get to heaven, "by being good". We can't get to heaven by being good.

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GREG:

The key here. This must be defended. This is a thing that we do. But just be clear on what the claim is that Jesus made and what is the core of the Gospel message.

FRANK:

Okay, so salvation is easy. And by the way, salvation is easy because it's just accepting a free gift. Okay? It's not like you've got to jump through a whole bunch of hoops.

GREG:

No. It's all the other stuff that follows that's hard.

FRANK:

That's right. [Laughter]

GREG:

Sanctification. Then it gets tough, right?

FRANK:

That's right. Okay. Okay. Salvation is one issue. What's another issue that is somehow unclear to people, but it's really clear in the Scriptures?

GREG:

Abortion.

FRANK:

All right, let's talk about that.

GREG:

Now, abortion isn't directly addressed in Scripture, but in my view, and I'll give you the reasons for it. It falls under another command. And that's the 6th commandment, thou shalt not murder. Okay? You can't take an individual life without an innocent human life without proper justification.

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Now, that principle, that commandment is based on another principle. And that goes all the way back to the beginning, Genesis, chapter nine. Right after the flood, here's what the text says. God is telling Noah. He said, if man sheds man's blood, by man, his blood shall be shed. For, and He gives the reason, in the image of God, God created man. Okay, that's first chapter. All right?

So, the point He's making is human beings are very special. And to be just, the appropriate penalty for destroying an image bearer is to sacrifice your own life as a punishment. Okay? This is a punishment that's commensurate with the crime, okay?

Now notice, though, that the locus of value that makes murder a capital crime is that human beings are unique being made in the image of God. All right? So, now here's the question. Our pre-born human beings, because there's no question that they're human, are they made in the image of God in the same sense that those afterbirth are made in the image of God?

Are they the very same individuals in God's eyes? And this is the question, how does God view it? Okay? Are they, another way of putting it is are they their very same selves before they are born as they are after they're born? Now, by the way, that would make sense when you think of it. All they'll do is moving location.

There's nothing magical about coming down the birth canal, and then waving the wand, and putting the pixie dust, and all of a sudden, this blob of tissue becomes a valuable human being. That's the same individual on either side of the birth canal. So, the answer to that question, are they very same, Comes in a very unique place that a lot of people overlook.

Look, it's not the Old Testament. Some people will make a case against abortion from the Old Testament, and they go to Psalms and whatever. That's not the best choice. The best choice is the birth narratives in Luke chapter one. Because there in Luke chapter one, if you recall, there's a visitation that Mary has from the angel and that she's going to bear the Messiah.

But the angel also tells her that her cousin Elizabeth is with child in her 6th month, and nothing shall be impossible without God. So, both births are in view of pregnancies. So, what does Mary do? She jets out to see Elizabeth right afterwards.

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Next verse, basically. And when she comes to Elizabeth, Elizabeth hears her voice. And the text says, when Elizabeth heard the voice of Mary, of greeting, the baby in her... Now, this is the mother of John the Baptist. Okay? Leapt with joy and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. Of course, this is what was prophesied by the father Zechariah, that the baby would be filled with joy. And then she says this. How is it that the mother of my Lord would come to me? In other words, Mary is the mother of the Lord. John the Baptist is jumping in the presence of Jesus the Messiah.

FRANK:

That's a real human being in the womb, ladies and gentlemen. We'll unpack that further, right after the break. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. My guest, Greg Koukl. We're talking about five easy issues, even though the culture makes them difficult. Don't go anywhere. We'll unpack a few more right after the break. See you in two minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, what would it be like to take a VIP trip to Egypt and Saudi Arabia to see the evidence for the Exodus right in Egypt, including all of the other amazing sites in Egypt, and then go to the real Mount Sinai in Saudi Arabia? That's where we think it is, and actually climb Mount Sinai.

You can do so if you come with me to Egypt and Saudi Arabia this December. Go to Crossexamined.org. Click on events. You will see it there. We're taking a small group. It is going to be amazing. Hope to see you in Egypt and on the real Mount Sinai this December.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. My guest today is the great Greg Koukl, author of the book 'Tactics', which I recommend almost everywhere I go. His other books are great as well, 'Street Smarts'. That's the newer kind of advanced version of 'Tactics'.

And of course, also 'The Story of Reality.' Today, we're talking about five easy issues that we really ought to be much clearer on with the people that call themselves Christians. They are salvation, abortion, gender, marriage, and sex, because the Bible is clear about those. But so many people try and make them unclear. Greg let's close the loop on the abortion discussion.

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GREG:

Yeah, the point I'm making is some people think, well, the Bible doesn't address it. Not explicitly, because it wasn't quite the issue then that it is now. But it does implicitly. In other words, it gives us the tools or understanding of the nature of what it means to be human, and who is human, and who isn't a human being made in the image of God, etcetera.

And I cited the passage in Luke, chapter one, where it's very, very clear that here you've got John the Baptist filled with the Holy Spirit while in his mother's womb, okay? In the 6th month, so second trimester. And he is jumping with joy. That's what the text says. He leaps with joy inside Elizabeth, because he's in the presence of the Lord of Mary, the mother of my Lord, not the one who will be the mother, but the Lord is the Lord Jesus there, who is a zygote at that point.

So, now the question again is, in God's eyes, are the preborn the very same selves after they're born, or the ones after they're born, one born, are the very same cells before they're born? And the answer is, of course. Absolutely. So, an abortion in that situation with Mary and Elizabeth, that wouldn't have taken the life of a potential Jesus, or a possible Jesus, or a future John the Baptist. It would have killed them. And therefore, abortion is, in fact, taking the life of an image bearer and would fall under the 6th Commandment.

FRANK:

Of course, the Hebrews thought that children were a blessing from God. Why would they even countenance abortion? I mean, that would be in their world, abortion would be something they wouldn't even consider. And so, culturally, it wouldn't make any sense for them to even be talking about abortion.

GREG:

Well, this is true in our culture, too. Getting pregnant is a moment of joy for people, because now you're having a baby, the birth is down the line. But, you know, when people talk to each other, pregnant mother and a woman, rather, and her friends, her friends say, how's the baby doing?

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What stage is the baby at, etc. etc.? The only exception to that is when they don't want the baby. Then it's not a baby, it's it, or a blob, or whatever, you know? And they use all these euphemisms to end it. But this is an area that, especially when you consider Luke chapter one, is not a hard issue. It's an easy issue.

FRANK:

I find it interesting, too, that the people out there who complain about God killing the Canaanites in the Old Testament are the same people who think they have a moral right to kill people now through abortion. Right? They're saying, God, you're immoral when you play God, but I get to play God here on earth.

GREG:

Right, right.

FRANK:

So, that inconsistency is quite glaring. Let's just for a second talk about the difference between abortion and capital punishment, if we could.

GREG:

Oh, yeah, sure.

FRANK:

That's not part of these five issues, but I think a lot of people say, well, if you're truly pro-life, Greg, you can't be for capital punishment. How do you respond?

GREG:

Well, pro-life is a term of art that's meant to describe something particular. If we were, like, universally pro-life, we would be Jains. You know that religious sect from India that they wear masks, so they don't kill a microbe, kind of thing. We're not deifying life.

We're saying that human beings, innocent human beings, their lives should not be taken. Or another way of putting it, you don't take a human life, any human life, without proper justification.

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Now, it seems that there are sometimes, it's appropriate to take a human life as a matter of justice. And we talked about the Genesis 9 passage, which says, if a man takes man's life, or sheds man's blood, then by man his blood should be shed. There's a propriety to that because there the punishment is fitting the crime.

So, we are not pro-life in that broad sense. What pro-life means is that it's wrong to kill innocent human beings in the womb because they fall under that category, human beings that are innocent and there's no proper justification for taking their life. In other circumstances, there are proper justifications.

So, the consistently pro-life then is a, that kind of phrase and that way of putting it, is a kind of a red herring. It drags you off the main point. What we mean when we say we're pro- life is not that we're not going to inhale microbes and kill them, and therefore nothing should ever be killed.

No, we're speaking specifically pro-life with regards to the unborn child. Just like people who are pro-choice are not in favor of any choice, of any kind at any time. You know? Both are terms of art, and they're meant to refer to a specific thing.

FRANK:

And of course, the difference between an innocent baby and a guilty murderer is the fact that there's guilt involved with the murderer.

GREG:

Yeah. And this so-called seamless garment argument, which is what you're asking about, it just doesn't go through because it's a kind of a straw man because it really is not representing our view accurately.

FRANK:

It's interesting too that Jesus, when He was confronted or before Pilate, Pilate said, don't you know I have the authority to kill you? And Jesus said, yes, you do. But you get that authority from above, implying that capital punishment...

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GREG:

Yeah, good point.

FRANK:

...is something that God has allowed in certain circumstances. He allowed it in Genesis 9. Of course there's capital crimes in the Old Testament. And He even says that the emperor has the ability to kill--

GREG:

Sure, even Paul says, look. If I have done anything worthy of death, he says that I did not refuse to die. But I haven't done anything worthy of death, is his point.

FRANK:

Only in America can people who murdered 3000 Americans on 9/11 have their sentence commuted by Joe Biden's Justice Department, which just happened a week ago.

GREG:

That's right.

FRANK:

That's a grave injustice. Because those people deserve based on natural law and based on the Scriptures, to get what they do deserve, and that is death. I thought those guys had been killed long ago. I had forgotten about it. What are we at 23 years now?

GREG:

They have gotten away with murder.

FRANK:

Yes. They went to prison at least...

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GREG:

They've gotten away with murder. Well, yes, but in terms of appropriate punishment, they have. Dennis Prager says, we're in a war and only one side is allowed to kill.

FRANK:

Yeah. Interesting.

GREG:

Yeah.

FRANK:

Well, that's another whole topic. Just war. We're not going to get into that today.

GREG:

I was thinking the war in terms of criminals in society. That war.

FRANK:

Yes.

GREG:

And so, when it comes to criminals, criminals are allowed to kill, but we can't kill them is the point.

FRANK:

Right.

GREG:

His point, actually.

FRANK:

All right, so we talked a little bit about salvation, about abortion. Let's talk about gender. Another easy issue biblically, but difficult for the culture.

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GREG:

Yes, it is. I just want to make an observation that there's something that everybody knows, doesn't matter where they live or when they lived. We all know that something's wrong with the world. The world is broken. This, of course, is the problem of evil. But it hasn't always been this way. Okay? And what the book of Genesis does is it tells us what the world was like before it was broken, when everything was really good.

In other words, everything was working just the way it was supposed to work. And in that book, especially the very, very beginning, the first chapter, it says that God made man not only in His image. We've discussed that. But He made human beings male and female. All right?

And then He tells them to be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth. Now, this is not rocket science to know that those two statements are connected. You have to have male and female to multiply and fulfill the earth.

Now, notice that there's no distinction in God's creation. And this is what we're talking about. This is not an apologetic to outsiders regarding all these issues. This is meant to give clarity, biblical clarity, to people who say they believe in the Bible and they follow God regarding the way God wants things to be and the way, in this case, the way He made them to be from the very beginning for a good reason. Okay? And He says male and female.

And notice, there's no distinction between made between, no hint of anything like that, between the way the sex a person is on the outside, their physical bodies, and the way they understand themselves to be on the inside, what we now call gender or gender identity. They were the same. They were virtual synonyms, basically. They went together, and they went together for a reason, because God wants whole people. And indeed, when he first made human beings, he made them whole. Okay?

Now, of course, chapter three, we learn about the problem. There's a rebellion, and that creates a mess. When human beings disobey God. They broke their relationship with God. They broke their relationship with each other. They broke their relationship with the environment.

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They broke the whole world. Now we live in a broken world, okay? And consequently, now there is confusion that people have as a result of the brokenness. All right? But that's an important part of it. It's confusion as a result of the brokenness. It isn't the way it was supposed to be. How are we doing on time?

FRANK:

We're good. Keep going.

GREG:

Okay. And this is what I want Christians to see. This is very controversial nowadays because they've got gazillions of different genders. I just, in Brett Kunkle's presentation today, I just heard, I saw words I couldn't even pronounce that are characterizations of people's gender identity now. But that also shows something important about this.

First of all, I want people to see, hey, what's going on in Scripture, okay? That's what I want to see. This is the way God made the world, which, by the way, has not been questioned since the beginning of time. You don't have to have a Bible to know this.

FRANK:

Natural law.

GREG:

And even natural law sounds highfalutin. It's just open your eyes. You can see it. Right? Okay, so this is easy, but it's very controversial right now, partly because of gender dysphoria, which is a terrible circumstance that some people experience in which their gender identity, male or female, does not match their physical gender or sex, male or female. Notice, by the way, that gender dysphoria presumes binary sexuality. And this also is a clue to something else, that gender is not, how do they say, flexible or...?

FRANK:

Malleable?

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GREG:

Pardon me?

FRANK:

Malleable.

GREG:

Malleable. There's another word they use. But I'll tell you what's flexible is people's imaginations. That's what's flexible. And we know this because I can actually see how a man might believe he's a woman, or a woman might believe she's a man. But I can't imagine why anybody would be tempted to think they're an ampersand, or something like that, or any of these other terms that you see on the list. This is all a fad. That's what all of this is.

And that's not to diminish the genuine struggle that gender dysphoric people have with their circumstances. This is a terrible circumstance that we ought to be, and I think we are characteristically very sensitive to, and we care about. You know, we should sympathize about that. But that doesn't mean we have to say that's a good thing when we know, even though they know it's not a good thing.

The fact that they say I'm a man in a woman's body is their admission that something is terribly wrong. They think the body's wrong and not the mind. It's clearly the body's fine. It's the mind that's confused. And that's the thing. That's the solution. Where we ought to be directing our efforts to help these dear people, but that isn't where the direction is going.

FRANK:

Yeah, you can change your mind. You can't change your biology, ladies and gentlemen. As Greg just said, it's binary, male and female. If there weren't fixed genders, male and female fixed genders, there'd be no way to know that gender dysphoria was something that was real.

How would you know that you should be in a woman's body or you're a man in a woman's body, or vice versa, unless you knew what a man was and what a woman was? We'll get back to that after the break. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with Frank Turek and now Greg Koukl. Don't go anywhere. Back in two minutes.

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Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Ladies and gentlemen, We've been talking about a lot of topics here with the great Greg Koukl. Some of them are unpacked in so many online courses that we have at crossexamined.org. Go to crossexamined.org. Click on online courses. You will see them there. We have courses on LGBTQ issues. We have 'Jesus Versus the Culture.' We have Progressive Christianity, Another Gospel with Alisa Childers.

We have many other courses that go much deeper than what we can do even here on this program. But we are going through these five easy issues biblically, but difficult issues culturally with Greg Koukl. So far, we've covered three of these issues. Let's move on to what's next. What's next, Greg?

GREG:

The next one is marriage, and it's tied to the gender issue. By the way, you mentioned the other books that are good. I do take a deeper dive in almost all of these issues in 'Street Smarts' because it's necessary to be able to deal with these issues on the street, as it were. And so, I do that there. But the next one is marriage. And of course, gender and marriage are connected biblically. All right?

And when Jesus was asked about marriage and divorce in Matthew 19, He was asked a question about divorce. But it's interesting how He answers. He goes back to the very beginning. He goes back to the first chapter in Genesis. And He also expresses a little bit surprise of the Pharisees. He asked them a question. He says, have you not read? It's like, where have you been, guys, don't you see this? Don't you get this? From the beginning, He made them male and female.

So, there's Jesus affirming binary gender. It's not just in the text, as it were. We have Jesus actually affirming that binary gender. He said from the beginning, male and female. And for this cause, a man shall leave. Now he's in chapter two of Genesis. He shall leave his mother and his father, binary gender again, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. And what man has joined together, let no man separate.

So, now He finally answers the question of the Pharisees about divorce, but only after laying a foundation of what God intended from the beginning. And notice when He says one flesh, now

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He's talking about sex there. It's not all that's entailed there, but it is minimally that, because that's what seals a marriage. The consummation of the marriage doesn't happen at the altar. It happens in the bedroom on the honeymoon night. And that's what seals the marriage.

And so, that's the two become one flesh. Jesus, of course, is talking about sex, and that is the place where sexuality is to be experienced. Okay, we'll get to sex in a few moments. But notice just the whole concept of marriage. I like to put it this way. It's very, very simple how Jesus sums up marriage, how we can sum up Jesus' ethic on marriage from Matthew 19. And here's what he said.

One man, with one woman, becoming one flesh, for one lifetime. One man, one woman, one flesh, one lifetime. And that's Jesus' view. Now, some people say, well, Jesus never said anything about this, that, or the other thing. Yes. Well, He kind of, in one fell swoop, covered a whole bunch of bases. And therefore, the concept of same-sex marriage biblically is an oxymoron. I mean, this is a phrase that has no meaning because it's a contradiction of terms.

FRANK:

Biblically.

GREG:

Biblically. Yes, biblically. And, of course, that's what we're talking about here.

FRANK:

In a natural law perspective, it makes no sense.

GREG:

Yeah. And by the way, good point. Meaning, as evidenced by, even the cultures never had a Bible. For thousands of years, they got this right. And I remember during the Obergefell discussions with the Supreme Court in 2015 and before, the one Supreme Court Justice said, maybe we ought to be moving a little more slowly on this issue because same-sex marriage isn't even as old as the cell phone, the concept of it. Okay?

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Everybody else got it right for millennium. Why? Because it's obvious. Okay? So, this gives us a good steppingstone into the sexual questions right now. Because when Jesus said one man, with one woman, becoming one flesh for one lifetime, he identified the appropriate place for sexual behavior to be experienced inside of a long-term committed relationship of marriage.

And in one fell swoop, He eliminated everything that the Bible already explicitly condemns. That is fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and bestiality. Notice that all of those are some kind of sexual activity with someone other than your spouse. Okay? And your opposite sex spouse. I mean, now you've got to kind of qualify with these kinds of terms.

And so, inside the marriage, there's a tremendous amount of freedom. Outside of the marriage, no sex. Now, there are reasons for this, too, why this is a good thing, because there's protection. Look, it is these kinds of long term, monogamous, heterosexual unions that by nature and as a group, and as a rule, produce the next generation, okay? And incidentally, if that were not the case, as characteristically of these relationships, the law wouldn't be concerned about it.

They don't care about those. They care about this because families are the foundation of civilization. Okay? And since God cares about the stability of family, He has ordained a certain structure to family that provides safety for those long term relationships and especially safety for the children. Okay? Now, this is controversial in some areas, okay? Nobody talks about fornication anymore. I mean, it's like, that's not even on the map. It's like that's a done deal. That's gone.

FRANK:

Yeah, but your point is, it's not controversial biblically. It's clear biblically.

GREG:

No. It's clear and uncontroversial about the moral quality of it. But it's ironically, and this is sadly, it's not even controversial in Christian circles in practice as to whether it's okay or not because there's all kinds of this going on. And when I speak to groups about this and I make mention of this, I see all these heads nodding because they, in their own experience, they know that there's a lot of sexuality going on.

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Okay, adultery, nobody celebrates that quite yet, but it's just at the doorway. It's crouching at the door. You know this with polyamory and stuff like that. And pedophilia is coming in, and, you know, bestiality can't be far behind. You know, the way these things go. It's just falling dominoes, because the rationale is always going to be is it still fits. It's a logical, slippery slope. If these things are okay for these reasons, the same reasons apply to other things as well.

The thing that's really front and center is the homosexuality issue, okay? And this is where lots and lots and lots of Christians are just falling by the wayside. They're becoming gay affirming theologically, and churches have all over the place. And what I want to point out is the Bible makes it very clear, for reasons of God, purpose for the entire marriage, which I just described, that these relationships are wrong.

And the most explicit example regarding homosexuality comes in Romans, chapter one. And it's very interesting the way, at least in the New American Standard Bible, the way it's translated. And it's very clear in that case. It says that God gave them over, the men, to degrading passions, for they abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another.

Now, the word function there is the Greek word *creesus*, and *creesus* means function. In other words, Paul is talking about plumbing. He's saying God built men and women, different. Men have a sexual desire, and He built women to fit appropriately that exercise of that sexual desire. But men said no to God's provision, and they burned in their desire towards one another.

Okay? So, He's talking about plumbing there, and He's saying, this is not right. The irony is, is that right now, the way many people who are gay-affirming try to get around that is they say, well, this is the cultural distance argument. It's not that kind of homosexuality. We're not practicing that. That's abusive homosexuality. We love each other. You know, it's not slave/master relationship. It's not pedophilia, you know?

Well, yes, and this is the point. And so, just to zero in on the concern here. The Scripture is not condemning a kind of relationship, whether it's loving or not. It's condemning a kind of activity. And this is true with all the sexual behavior. It doesn't say adultery, that's sin. Oh, unless you

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really love each other and you're not abusive to each other, then that's okay. No, it's the activity. It doesn't matter what the feelings are.

FRANK:

Paul calls them indecent acts in Romans 1.

GREG:

Exactly. Exactly. So, these are just ways for people to sanitize immorality. To use Jesus' language in the Sermon on the Mount, these are wolves in sheep's clothing, because in many ways they look like us, sheep's clothing, but they are wolves in that they encourage immorality in the body of Christ. And that's what Jesus was condemning in that passage.

FRANK:

Paul says flee sexual immorality.

GREG:

That's right, he does.

FRANK:

Because it's one of the big three that can really destroy your life. If you fall with regard to sex, money, or power, you can destroy your life and the lives of other people very quickly. So, this is a great warning.

GREG:

All of these issues are very controversial, but they're not biblically confusing. They are very clear biblically, and let the culture be confused. But there is no reason for us to be confused on any of these issues because the Bible speaks clearly. And if we're going to be faithful to Christ in times when faithfulness to Christ really matters, I mean, it's always mattered. But in American History, I mean, this is a time where we are coming under attack like we never have come under before.

And it's becoming easier and easier for Christians just to fall by the wayside because it's costing them something nowadays to be faithful to Christ. And what I'm saying, and what we're saying,

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and what we're all about is, it is worth paying the price. It is worth paying the price. These issues are easy.

FRANK:

Who is the ultimate authority? Is it the culture, yourself, or is it God? Who is the ultimate authority? If we say authority, we don't just mean we're obeying God because He is the authority, although He is. God is infinitely good and the authority, and so we should follow what He says. And what He says is not arbitrary. There are reasons. And we don't have time.

We got a minute left to go on the show, but there are reasons why God gives us these commands, these laws, and it's not hard to decipher in the Scriptures. It's only hard when people kick up a lot of dust to try and obscure what's there because they want to do what they want to do.

GREG:

Exactly right.

FRANK:

Greg, where can people learn more about what you're doing?

GREG:

The best place is just to go to our website for Stand to Reason. STR.org. And of course, the books are available there and also on Amazon, as you know. So, they can go either place.

FRANK:

STR.org, ladies and gentlemen. Two podcasts. I listen to both of them. Greg does the Stand to Reason podcast. He also does the #STRAsk. Great Q&A there. So, check all that.

GREG:

With Amy Hall, the great Amy Hall.

FRANK:

Way smarter than Greg Koukl. And he would admit that, by the way. [Laughter]

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GREG:

Yes, she's amazing.

FRANK:

Don't forget, ladies and gentlemen, at UT Dallas on the 5th of September, with Charlie Kirk at Calvary Chapel, Tucson on the 6th, along with Dr. Robert Furrow, and then at Arizona State on September 9. All the details on our website. Great being with you. Lord willing, we will see you here next week. God bless.

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