

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Why Aren't Christians Better People? + Politics Q&A

(August 27, 2024)

Ladies and gentlemen, you're probably wondering what happened to the intro we've had for more than ten years here on the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast. Well, we're trying it without it to give us 30 more seconds of content. We're going to dive into some questions here that you have emailed into Hello@crossexamined.org.

If you have a question you want to send it in, send it to hello@crossexamined.org. We try and get to as many as we can. We can't get to them all. But I have a couple of great questions that have been sent in over the past week or two. Let me start with the first one. This comes from Andrew.

He says, I've listened to much of Dr. Turek's work and greatly appreciate the knowledge he shares. I'm currently struggling with my wife having deconstructed her faith and walking away from the church. We have had many discussions, and I think one of the main things we always fall back on, or always fall back to is the discussion of hypocrisy of Christians. I've seen many of Dr. Turek's responses to this question and I appreciate the guidance. However, there is one step further in this that I have trouble answering when the question is brought up.

Before I get to the one step further, let me point out, as Dr. John Dixon has said, that whenever somebody plays Beethoven poorly, who do you blame? You don't blame Beethoven. So, when somebody plays Jesus poorly, you don't blame Jesus. Look, just because I'm not true and beautiful doesn't mean Jesus isn't true and beautiful. We're all fallen. We all need a savior. In fact, if I was perfect, if you were perfect, you wouldn't need Jesus. You wouldn't need a savior.

So, we are all to a certain extent hypocrites because we can't live up to the standard Christ has provided for us, just like a normal piano player can't live up to the standard of, say, Beethoven. But that doesn't mean Beethoven is at fault. The piano player is at fault. That doesn't mean Jesus is at fault. We're at fault because we don't live up to the pure words of Christ. And there are other responses. In fact, we have a video up on our YouTube channel right now that deals with the hypocrite question. I won't go into it any further here.

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Let me get back to Andrew's point. He said, I understand and agree that Christians are hypocrites too, and that the Church is a place for sinners, not saints. And what he means by that is, behaviorally. Theologically, we are saints if we're believers, because when Jesus sees us, or when the Father sees us, He sees Jesus in our place.

And so, when you become a Christian, you're not only forgiven, but you're given the righteousness of Christ. Anyway, Andrew goes on to say, but I'm often asked the following. Okay, but doesn't the Bible say that when you become a Christian, your life should be transformed by Christ? If that's the case, then why do the vast majority of Christians I look at not appear to be any different from the world?

In fact, a lot of Christians do many bad things that are unloving people. And yet I see plenty of other loving people in the world who hold better to Christian values than many Christians I see. If Christianity were true, I would see the transformation in the life of believers. But I see no transformation among Christians as a whole. That must disprove the fact that Christians are transformed by Christ. Please help me understand how I can better answer this version of the hypocrisy argument as it relates to Christian transformation through Christ. I can't seem to give great answers on the topic. Thanks, Andrew.

This is a brilliant question, Andrew. I think your wife is right to bring it up. But you know what? I think a lot of people who are deconstructing from Christianity bring up issues and they think nobody in 2000 years of Christianity has addressed them. I remember when, who was it? John Steingart of a Christian rock group became an agnostic at least, or left his Christian faith. And there was another guy, Marty Sampson, I think from Hill Song. They came up with objections to Christianity that Christians have been answering for 2000 years as if nobody has ever addressed this before.

Like suddenly they, here in the 21st century, recognize, well, how can there be a good God with all this evil in the world? Or how can I believe that there's a true Holy Spirit if all Christians aren't transformed into the likeness of Christ and suddenly, they lose their faith? At least that's the reason they give. Now, I'm not blaming anyone here for this. I'm just pointing out that nearly, if not all of the objections that you hear to Christianity have been answered by some brilliant mind somewhere in the 2000 years of the history of the church, if not in the Bible itself.

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And in this case, C.S. Lewis has a lot to say on this question. Why aren't Christians more transformed by Christ? And what I'm going to read is a relatively long section of 'Mere Christianity' on this. I can't read it all because it would take too long. But I'm going to pick some parts out of 'Mere Christianity.' Here's what Lewis says. He says, there is a way of demanding results in which the outer world may be quite illogical, meaning this objection can be quite illogical from the outer world, from non-Christians.

They may demand, not merely that each man's life should improve if he becomes a Christian. They may also demand, before they believe in Christianity, that they should see the whole world neatly divided into two camps, Christian and non-Christian, and that all the people in the first camp, the Christian camp, at any given moment, should obviously be nicer than all the people in the second. This is unreasonable on several grounds. And here's one reason Lewis gives.

He says, in the first place, the situation in the actual world is much more complicated than that. The world does not consist of 100% Christians and 100% non-Christians. There are people, a great many of them, who are slowly ceasing to be Christians, but who still call themselves by that name. Some of them are clergymen. Now, let me stop right here. Let's leave aside the question of once saved, always saved. Let's not even get into this at this point, because this holds regardless of whether it's once saved, always saved, or not. Okay? I believe once saved, always saved.

But even if that's true, there may be people who say they're Christians who never really were saved. But let's leave that aside. So, Lewis is saying here some non-Christians are becoming Christians. They're in the process. And there are some so-called Christians that are moving away from Christ, and they may even be in the church. They may even be clergymen. Lewis goes on.

There are other people who are slowly becoming Christians, though they do not yet call themselves so. There are people who do not accept the full Christian doctrine about Christ, but who are strongly attracted by Him, that they are his in a much deeper sense than they understand. Now, let me stop right here.

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When Lewis says the world does not consist of 100% Christians and 100% non-Christians, we need to make some distinctions here. Somebody may be a Christian in terms of justification, and in that case, the world is divided between 100% Christians and 100% non-Christians. If somebody's justified, that's the second you become a Christian, you are saved. You are justified, but you haven't been sanctified.

So, while the world does consist of 100% justified and 100% non-justified, the world does not consist of 100% sanctified and 100% non-sanctified. And that's where the question comes in. The question comes in is, why aren't these people behaving better? Well, all people are in a process of sanctification. Some are moving toward Christ quicker than others. Some may even be Christians who are moving away from Christ right now. They're backslidden.

So, the world is a lot more complicated than here are the Christians and here are the non-Christians when it comes to sanctification. Of course, God knows who really is a Christian and who isn't, but we don't. He also knows who is moving toward Christ and who is moving away from Christ. It's not always so obvious to us.

So, this is a messier situation than simply saying, well, you know, all these people who claim to be Christians ought to be behaving better than people who are claiming not to be Christians. Because the people who are claiming to be Christians might not really be. Secondly, they might also, if they are, be in a lower state of sanctification than others. And the people who say they're not Christians maybe moving toward Christianity and behaving better. And there's another reason they may be behaving better that Lewis is going to point out here in a minute.

Now, let me interject something that Lewis didn't know in his day, and that is George Barna. George Barna, the great Christian pollster, recently came out and said while most Americans, most meaning 68%, so let's say two thirds of Americans still consider themselves to be Christians. Among those self-identified Christians, only 6% have a biblical worldview. Which means that among all people in America, only 4% have a biblical worldview.

He goes on to say this. Less than half of the self-identified Christians can be classified as born again. So, now you're talking about, say, 30, 33%, maybe 34% claim to be born again. And he says that's defined as believing that they go to heaven after they die, but only because they

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haven't confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. Now, check this out. Barna says this, within the born again population, just 30% or 33% of the adult population is shockingly. Oh, hang on a second.

Within the born again population, a shockingly small proportion, 33%, hold a biblical worldview. Right? So, let's unpack that further. Thirty-three percent of the adult population in America claim to be born again, but only 13% hold a biblical worldview. And among all people in America, only 4% hold a biblical worldview.

So, despite the fact that 68% claim to be Christians, only 4% hold a biblical worldview and only 40% of pastors have a biblical worldview. So, this feeds into Lewis's point. When people claim to be Christians and don't behave that way, it could be that they're not really Christians. They don't have a biblical worldview. Now, Lewis goes on to say this. Of course, there are a great many people who are just confused in mind and have a lot of inconsistent beliefs all jumbled up together. As Barna just pointed out. Right?

People claiming to be Christians but don't really have a Christian worldview. They have a, what we might say is a cafeteria approach to their worldview. They'll just take whatever they like and plop them in there. And they might say, look. I'm a Christian because I know I'm not a Muslim and I believe in God. Anyway, Lewis goes on to say this. Consequently, it is not much use trying to make judgments about Christians and non-Christians in the mass, which is what Andrew asked. Maybe his wife asked this. When Andrew, you said that...

Let's see back to your question. He said, as I look at the world, the vast majority of Christians I look at do not appear to be any different from the world. So, he's looking at a mass of people here. Anyway, here's what Lewis goes on to say. He says, when comparing Christians in general...

I'm sorry, I lost my place. Here it is. Consequently, it is not much use to make judgments about Christians and non-Christians in the mass. It is some use comparing cats and dogs or even men and women in the mass because there, one knows definitely which is which. Forget the transgender movement for a second. We do know the difference between a man and a woman, anyway. He says also an animal does not turn either slowly or suddenly from a dog into a cat.

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When we are comparing Christians in general with non-Christians in general, we are usually not thinking about real people who we know at all, but only about two vague ideas which we have got from novels, and newspapers, and today we might say the internet or social media. If you want to compare the bad Christian and the good atheist, you must think about two real specimens whom you have actually met. Unless we come down to brass tacks in that way, we shall only be wasting time.

So, you've got to think about real people, not just in the mass, because you don't know what the mass really believes. But you know the real people you know. You can ask them, what do you really believe? Lewis goes on to say, here's the second reason. Suppose we have come down to brass tacks and are now, talking about, not about imaginary Christian and imaginary non-Christian, but about two real people in your own neighborhood. Even then, we must be careful to ask the right question.

If Christianity is true, then it ought to follow A), that any Christian will be nicer than the same person would be if he were not a Christian. And B), that any man who becomes a Christian will be nicer than he was before. Now, this is a critical point. Follow Lewis on this, ladies and gentlemen. This is critical. In other words, Lewis is about to say, you don't compare a Christian to a non-Christian. You compare a Christian to how he was before he became a Christian. That's what Lewis's point is going to be. And he uses a couple of fictional characters.

He says Christian, Miss Bates, may have an unkindler tongue than unbelieving Dick Firkin. That by itself does not tell us whether Christianity works. The question is what Miss Bates tongue would be if she were not a Christian and what Dick's would be if he became one. Miss Bates and Dick, as the result of natural causes and early upbringing, have certain temperaments. Christianity professes to put both temperaments under new management if they will allow it to be so.

You have to, or you have a right to ask. Or what you have a right to ask is whether that management, if allowed to take over, improves the concern. Everyone knows that what is being managed in Dick Firkin's case, it's much nicer. He puts it in, quote. It's much nicer than what is being managed in Miss Bates's case. In other words, he's talking about, we start with certain raw materials.

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And you can't judge two people that start in different places, maybe due to their own constitution, their own upbringing or whatever, and say that since they are both, one is a Christian and one's a non-Christian, the Christian should always be ahead of the non-Christian in terms of nice behavior. In fact, let's use an analogy here. Michael Jordan and I were both born in about the same year. We're about the same age.

But let's go back, say, 30-35 years. And I wanted to play NBA basketball, and I had a great coach to help me. Well, my natural ability on a scale of one to ten to play NBA basketball is maybe a 1.5, if that. Maybe a one, right? I've got like no skill to play NBA basketball. Michael Jordan, however, was born with an amount of amazing talent that would allow him to play. And if he got coaching, he could get even better.

So, let's say Michael started out as an eight and I started out as a one. Well, let's say I had a great coach, and he could get me to a three and Michael had no coach. He's already starting at an eight. If you look at both of us, you might say, look Turek has a coach, and he stinks. Look at Jordan over here. He's amazing. Coaches don't matter. No, you would never say that if you know where we started from.

You would say, Turek just doesn't have the natural ability, the natural gifts from God to do this. Michael Jordan does. He's starting out way ahead of Turek. It doesn't matter what Turek does with the coach. He's never going to make it to Jordan's position. And so, the way you evaluate whether the Holy Spirit has done any work in somebody is not whether or not they're better than somebody else. The way you evaluate it is, are they better than where they started from?

And I think if you're honest, most people who, and by the way, it's the sanctification issue again. It's not a justification. You could be justified and not have any sanctification yet, and you're still in as bad a position behaviorally as if you were never saved. So, we're talking sanctification now. And if somebody is justified from a one to a three, I should say sanctified from a one to a three, that's the sign of a good coach. And in behavior it might be the sign of the Holy Spirit.

But Jordan, if he gets a coach, he goes to a nine or a ten, right? But comparing Jordan and Turek makes no sense. Comparing Jordan to Jordan and Turek to Turek after they both get coaches is

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how you see whether the coach made any difference. Now, here's what Lewis says. Now, don't misunderstand me. Of course, God regards a nasty nature as a bad and deplorable thing. And of course He regards a nice nature as a good thing. Good like bread, or sunshine, or water. But these are good things which He gives, and we receive.

He created Dick, sound nerves and good digestion, and there's plenty more where they came from. We must therefore not be surprised if we find among the Christians some people who are still nasty. He says, there is even, when you come to think it over, a reason why nasty people might be expected to turn to Christ in greater numbers than nice ones. Here's another key point, ladies and gentlemen, from Lewis.

He says, that was what people objected to about Christ during His life on earth. He seemed to attract such awful people. That is what people still object to and always will. Do you not see why Christ said, blessed are the poor and how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom? And no doubt, He primarily meant the economically rich and the economically poor. But do not His words also apply to another kind of riches and poverty?

One of the dangers of having a lot of money is that you may be quite satisfied with the kinds of happiness money can give and so fail to realize your need for God. If everything seems to come simply by signing checks, you may forget that you are at every moment totally dependent on God. Now, quite plainly, natural gifts carry with them a similar danger. If you have sound nerves, and intelligence, and health, and popularity, and good upbringing, you are likely to be quite satisfied with your character as it is. Why drag God into it, you may ask.

A certain level of good conduct comes fairly easily to you. You are not one of these wretched creatures who are always being tripped up by sex, alcohol, or nervousness, or bad temper. Everyone says you are a nice chap, and between ourselves you agree with them, and you are quite likely to believe all this niceness is your own doing, and you may easily not feel the need for any better kind of goodness.

Often people have all these natural kinds of goodness. They cannot be brought to recognize their need for Christ at all. One day the natural goodness lets them down and their self-satisfaction is shattered. In other words, it's hard for those who are rich in this sense to enter

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the kingdom. It is very different for the nasty people, the little, low, timid, warped, thin blooded, lonely people who are the passionate, sensual, unbalanced people. It's very difficult for them, says Lewis. You see where he's going with this? I think this is brilliant. I think he's spot on.

He goes on to say, I hate when I hit my cursor, and I lose my place. But I'm reading from C.S. Lewis's 'Mere Christianity', who is pointing out that people who may start at a better level will appear nicer people than Christians who start at a lower level, behaviorally, from a nature point of view, from a nurture point of view, and that doesn't disprove that there's no Holy Spirit out there working on them, he says.

Lewis says if these people who are unbalanced, these people who need Christ, if they make any attempt at goodness at all, they learn in double quick time that they need help. It is Christ or nothing for them. It is taking up the cross and following, or else to spare. They are lost sheep. He came especially to find them. They are, in one very real and terrible sense, the poor. He blessed them. They are the awful set He goes about with. And of course, the Pharisees will say, as they said from the first, if there were anything in Christianity, those people would not be Christians.

Lewis says, there is either a warning or an encouragement here for every one of us. If you are not a nice person, if virtue comes easily to you, beware. Much is expected from those to whom much is given. That's a reference to Luke, chapter 12 at the Judgment Day. For whom much is given, much will be required. Lewis says, if you mistake your own merits, what are really God's gifts to you through nature, and if you are contented with simply being nice, you are still a rebel. And all those gifts will only make your fall more terrible, your corruption more complicated, your bad example more disastrous.

The devil was an archangel once. His natural gifts were as far above yours as yours are above the chimpanzee. But if you are a poor creature poisoned by a wretched upbringing in some house full of vulgar jealousies and senseless quarrels, saddled by no choice of your own with some loathsome sexual perversion, nag day in and day out by an inferiority complex that makes you snap at your best friends, do not despair. He knows all about that. You are one of the poor whom He blessed. He knows what a wretched machine you are trying to drive. Keep on.

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Do what you can. One day, perhaps in another world, but perhaps far sooner than that, he will fling it on the scrapheap and give you a new one. And then you may astonish us all, not least yourself. For you have learned you're driving in a hard school. Some of the last will be first, and some of the first will be last. Niceness, wholesome, integrated personality, is an excellent thing. We must try, by every medical, educational, economic, and political means in our power, to produce a world whereas many people as possible grow up nice, just as we try to produce a world where all have plenty to eat.

But we must not suppose that even if we succeed in making everyone nice, we should have saved their souls. A world of nice people, content in their own niceness, looking no further, turned away from God, would be just as desperately in need of salvation as a miserable world and might even be more difficult to save. Let me stop right here. I know what Lewis is saying here with regard to niceness, but I need to say this. Jesus wasn't always nice.

In fact, that's pretty much what got Him killed. He didn't go around saying, love your neighbor all the time. He spoke truth to the powerful people, including Caiaphas, including the Pharisees, including the politicians of his day who were the Pharisees, and they wanted Him dead. Just read Matthew, chapter 23. In fact, we're going to get into this in a future program. Jesus wasn't always nice. Niceness is not the test of Christianity.

Sometimes you have to be firm. Sometimes you have to shake people up. Sometimes you've got to turn over tables in the temple. Sometimes you got to say your father is the devil, as Jesus said in John, chapter eight to the Pharisees. Sometimes you have to say, you brood of vipers, you hypocrites. You strain out a gnat and swallow a camel. Sometimes you need to do that. Now, you have to be advised on when that happens. But Jesus wasn't always nice. Anyway, Lewis goes on to say this. But perhaps we have already spent too long on this question.

If what you want is an argument against Christianity, and Andrew, the gentleman that asked this question regarding his wife leaving Christianity, if you think this is an argument against Christianity, that Christians aren't as nice as some non-Christians, it's not going to work. That's what Lewis is saying here. If what you want is an argument against Christianity, and I will remember how eagerly I looked for such arguments when I began to be afraid it was true.

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You can easily find some stupid and unsatisfactory Christian and say, so there's your boasted new man. Give me the old kind. But if once you have begun to see that Christianity is on other grounds, probable, you will know in your heart that this is only evading the issue. What are other grounds? Well, Lewis doesn't go into it, but I mean, we can talk about the cosmological argument, the teleological argument, the fine-tuning and the design in life. We can talk about the moral argument.

We can, of course, talk about the evidence from the resurrection and many other reasons to believe that Christianity is indeed true. Hypocrisy in the church does not defeat those arguments in other words. Now Lewis really drops the hammer. Look what he does here. Again, from 'Mere Christianity.' He says, what can you ever really know of other people's souls, of their temptations, their opportunities, their struggles? One soul in the whole creation you do know, and it is the only one whose fate is placed in your hands. It's yours.

If there is a God, you are, in a sense, alone with Him. You cannot put Him off with speculations about your next door neighbors or memories of what you may have read in books. What will all that chatter and hearsay count? Will you even be able to remember it when the anesthetic fog, which we call nature or the real world, fades away and the presence with a capital P, the presence in which you have always stood, becomes palpable, immediate and unavoidable.

In other words, ladies and gentlemen, you can complain about all the evil your Christian neighbors have done, but you're going to stand alone before God. What are you going to say then? Well, look how bad he was, and he claimed to be a Christian. Not going to work. Although you may be nice by the world standards, all the evil you've done throughout your life will be revealed on Judgment Day, and you are going to be judged alone.

Now, if you have Christ at your side, He will take all of the punishment you deserve. That's why He's the only way, because nobody else could take your punishment on themselves than an innocent substitute who died in your place. And the only one who's done that is Jesus. Now, let's summarize all this, and these are not excuses for poor behavior among Christians, but explanations as to why we may not see the kind of behavior we might expect.

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First of all, let's talk about Lewis's first point, just briefly to summarize. You don't really know who's a Christian and who's not a Christian. And you're maybe confusing justification and sanctification. All Christians, if they're true Christians, have been justified, but they haven't all been sanctified. They're in process. Okay, that's point number one. Point number two is in addition to people being in process, they may have a jumble of beliefs. As we said, only 4% of people in America have a Christian worldview.

How effective is the Holy Spirit going to be able to work on only 4% of the population? Maybe the Holy Spirit will work on 4% of the population, but the other 96%, and a good portion of them claim to be Christians, might not allow the Holy Spirit to do the work that the Holy Spirit wants to do in them. I love what DL Moody once said. He said, how did he put it? I think he said that I have all of the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit doesn't have all of me because I won't let Him. I think that's the way he put it.

So, very few people in America have a true Christian worldview. Third point, after how you don't really know who's really a Christian anyway, and people are in process, and they have a jumble of beliefs. The third point is that Christianity tends to attract people who don't often have it all together. They know they need a savior. They're often not upstanding citizens, Pharisees, we might say, and they're not too good to think they don't have a need for a savior.

They know they need a savior, they're desperate for a savior. But the people who have been born into good circumstances and have a good nature to them, generally, they may be upstanding, good citizens. And because of that, many Christians start from a lower point on the scale of niceness than to put together non-Christian.

As we said before, when using the Michael Jordan illustration, I mentioned before, if you put someone who's a two on the behavior scale and that person becomes a Christian and becomes a five after accepting Christ, we're still going to judge him as worse than the atheist who has always been a seven because the atheist was born in better circumstances.

So, we always need to keep that in mind. Again, Lewis's point here is you don't compare a Christian to a non-Christian necessarily. You compare a Christian to how he was before he became a Christian. Then you can see the difference in the Holy Spirit's ability, given the

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permission of the Christian, to turn that person, transform that person more into the image of Jesus. Number five is that God's common grace affects even non-Christians. As we just mentioned, there are people out there who just are naturally gifted in a way that makes them say better citizens, whether they're Christians or not. That's common grace.

Rain falls on the just and the unjust. Another point we need to bring up, point six is that the Bible doesn't say you're going to become perfect when you become a Christian. In fact, just read Romans chapter seven. Paul is already a Christian and he's still struggling with sanctification. What I want to do, I don't do, what I don't want to do, I do. Who's going to save me from this body of death? Only Jesus Christ, our Lord.

So, we should expect Christians to struggle just like everybody else. And in this culture where more people are disciplined by the iPhone than the Bible, you're going to see a lot of struggle. And by the way, Christians, if you're not struggling somewhere with sin, you're probably not really serious about struggling with sin. You're probably allowing it to take over. There should be a continual struggle in some area of your life with sin because we live in a fallen world, we still have a sin nature.

Now, let's take one last point on this issue and let's go up to 30,000 ft. Here's a seventh reason that this objection doesn't work. We do see the transformative power of Christ when we back up and look at the big picture of western civilization. The greatest moral advances in history were made by Christians, whether it's charity, helping the poor, orphanages, hospitals, universities, eradicating slavery, eradicating child sacrifice, and gladiatorial death games, eradicating child brides, women as property, child prostitution, abortion in some areas.

In fact, this is why even non-Christians are now saying, I like Christian culture. That's why people like Richard Dawkins, and Tom Holland, and Douglas Murray, who do not claim to be Christians, quite obviously are saying, you know, I'd much rather have a Christian culture than a secular culture or an Islamic culture. If the transformative power of Christ on the west was not so evident, they would never say that.

So, it's a great question, Andrew. But I think it's misplaced. I think for those seven reasons at least you can point back to your wife and say that the argument doesn't work to disprove

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Christianity. I might also add that the charge of hypocrisy presupposes a moral standard. And if your wife is now an atheist, she has no moral standard by which to judge anything as right or wrong. There's nothing wrong with hypocrisy. In fact, claiming that hypocrisy is wrong is actually evidence for God, because something can't be wrong unless there's a standard of right. And there can't be a standard of right unless God exists. But great question.

And go to C.S. Lewis, 'Mere Christianity.' I want to say this is chapter eight, but I forgot where I took it from. I don't have it in front of me, but you'll find it. It's in the second half of 'Mere Christianity' because he's talking about Christian behavior. I think it might be chapter eight, if I'm not mistaken, but I could be wrong about that. All right, let me go to one more question, and this comes in from Joy, who is trying to set up a voter registration table in churches of this group that she's leading and I voter guides. And she wants to know, how do we respond to some of the objections to doing this? And here is one of the objections.

If we allow you to set up a table that will open the door, or if we allow you to set up a table that will open the door for others to request setting up a table for whatever they're wanting to do or show. Okay, this is a cop out. Why? Because the pastor and the elders have to make decisions on what is appropriate and what isn't for a table. And they can make that decision. I mean, to use an analogy, if you let one person come into your house, does that mean you have to let everyone come into your house? No, of course not. You get to make those decisions.

And a Christian's duty as a citizen is to vote biblically. And you're not being partisan when you're setting up a voter registration table to say, hey, you ought to be, you ought to use the opportunity you have to influence the culture to protect innocent people from evil, to protect our ability to preach and live the Gospel. And so, here is how you get registered to vote, and here is where the candidates stand on all these issues.

In fact, we're going to do a series of programs on this as the election gets closer to help people navigate this. And one place you can go is ivoter.com. I think that's the website. In fact, it's put out by our friends at the American Family association, ivoter.com. Let me check it right now myself. Is it ivoterguide.com? Might be ivoterguide.com. Yeah, it is. Let's see. I thought it was ivoterguide.com or ivoter.com. My Internet is really slow right now. I'll figure it out here in a minute.

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

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But it's a place that you can go if you want to see where every candidate stands on the issues and they do a great job. I don't think the presidential stuff will be out for another few weeks. But if you go to that website and you just type in your address, it'll say, here is everybody that you can vote for and here's what they believe.

So, I don't see anything objectionable about that. The second objection is the separation of church and state. Well, you might say to them, what do you mean by that? How is this a violation of the separation of church and state to say that I want to inform people as to where the candidates stand on the issues? That has nothing to do with the separation of church.

First of all, separation church and state is not in the Constitution. And even if it was, informing people on where candidates stand and registering them to vote has nothing to do with the separation of church and state. When Thomas Jefferson, ivoterguide.com, thanks. Jorge just told me. Ivoterguide.com yeah, go to ivoterguide.com you'll see it there. The separation of church and state was a letter or came from a letter that Thomas Jefferson wrote to the Danbury Baptists who were worried that the state was going to interfere with the church.

And he said, no, there's a wall of separation between church and state. And what he meant was he didn't want the state interfering with the church, not that the church couldn't influence the state. Now it turned out that during COVID that was reversed. The state interfered with the church telling the church what to do. We shouldn't fall for that again, ladies and gentlemen. But no, we're supposed to be engaged. And as they say, we'll unpack this further in future programs. I'm running out of time here. But the separation of church and state has nothing to do with it.

In fact, you might want to ask the person, how does the separation of church and state, even if it exists in the Constitution, prevent people who go to church from voting? It doesn't. All right. Third, it will cause division in the church. And Joy, who wrote this, insists, yes, truth has a way of doing this. Well, let me point out that unity, we're supposed to be unified in the truth. We should divide when people have wrong doctrine on essential matters. Okay. And loving your neighbor is an essential matter.

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And one way you love your neighbor is to make sure laws are put into place to prevent them from being hurt, to prevent the government or other people from doing evil to them. That's an essential matter that we ought to be engaged in. And to say that people are going to be divided. If you want to help prevent evil in your society, then so much for the people that don't want to prevent evil in their society. They're not living out the Christian faith.

The fourth objection that these people have, it's going to jeopardize our 501-c3 status. No, it's not. It has nothing to do with it. Again, telling people where the candidates stand and registering them to vote won't jeopardize your tax exempt status. And let me say one other thing, by the way. Are you called to be tax exempt or salt and light? Is it all about tax exemption with you? Well, if that's what your religion's all about, tax exempt status, then I would argue you don't have a right view of Christianity. And there's no church... I think there may be one church in history that ever lost their tax exempt status.

Even the Alliance Defending Freedom for years used to tell pastors to preach overtly political sermons, sermons even where they're endorsing candidates and send them to the IRS because they wanted to test the law. You know, the IRS has never taken that up. Why? Because they want to let sleeping dogs lie. You can even talk about candidates in your church. What will cross the line is for you to say, me as the pastor of this church is telling you you need to vote for this candidate. But you can go...

You could say, me as the pastor of the church, I'm voting for this candidate and here's why. But he can't tell you that you have to do so. But you can certainly point out the issues. And you should be pointing out the issues. Number five, it's going to hurt us financially. Yeah, there it is again. That's the other objection. It's all about money, huh? Yeah. Why don't you get into another line of business?

If Christianity is all about money, then maybe you ought to do something else, pastor. Okay. You're here to be salt and light. You're not here to be tax exempt or to make sure that you have enough money. Now, obviously you need money to do ministry. But you know what actually has been discovered on this issue? In fact, Tony Perkins has done the research on this of the Family Research Council.

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If you start speaking to all the cultural issues out there, whether they're political or not, there's going to be some people that are going to get uncomfortable and leave. It's going to happen. That's true. However, many more people are going to show up and they're going to be fully devoted followers of Christ. You're not there to amuse the goats. You're there to feed and protect the sheep. If there are people that don't like what you're saying and what you're saying is biblical. Hasta la vista, baby. Move on. Okay? Sorry.

We're not here to change our doctrine so you feel more comfortable. That's not what Christianity is about. The sixth thing people bring up is fear. The Lord told us not to fear. Paul told us not to fear. Fear of what? You might want to unpack that a little bit more Joy. Number seven, we don't want to become political. My answer is, why not? Who said? Are only atheists qualified to run the country? By the way, Jesus was involved in politics.

In fact, we're going to unpack this in a future show. Who did He go after the most? The Pharisees. What did He say to the Pharisees? You've neglected the weightier matters of the law, the more important matters of the law. This is Matthew 23:23, by the way. You're tithing your spices, but you're neglecting justice, mercy, and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter without neglecting. You should have practiced the former without neglecting the latter. You blind guides, you strain out a gnat and swallow a camel.

So, as we're going to point out, you have to be involved if you're going to love people. And you have to vote on the more important matters of the law. These are moral issues. Sure, there are many things Christian can disagree over that are political, but there are some things we ought not disagree over, like life, like gender, like sexuality, like religious freedom, like security. And politics affects your ability to preach the Gospel. You don't want to become too political? Go try and start a church in North Korea. See how far you get.

Go try and open a church in Canada and preach the passages that say homosexuality is a sin. See how far you get. You know the Bible is political in Canada. Are you not going to talk about the Bible now because it's political? Just because issues become political, and the culture makes them political doesn't mean Christians have to stop talking about them. Where do we get this idea that we have no right to influence how we come together and govern ourselves? Which is what politics is.

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It's how a group of people come together as a community and decide what laws are going to be put in place so we can govern ourselves appropriately. Why are Christians not going to... shouldn't be a part of that? Where does that come from? You've been deceived if you think you ought not be involved. Are only atheists qualified to run the country? And assuming that number eight is we want to be inclusive and make all feel welcome.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the problem with assuming the church is for unbelievers. It's not. While we want to be welcoming, we should not be sacrificing the truth in the name of being welcoming. Are we attracting these people to Jesus? Are we attracting to them or are we trying to attract them with what they want to hear? No, this shouldn't be a bait and switch. And I know a lot of pastors do that. They're on the attractational model. We can't talk about those issues. Some people will get up and leave. What is it going to be, bait and switch?

You want these people to become Christians and then you say, oh, here's what you really ought to believe. And by the way, you never tend to get to those issues, do you? Because you're always in the attractational mode. You never really preach the truth because there's always somebody in there who might not like it. The church is not for unbelievers. We want unbelievers to come, but we're not going to change the message for them. And this goes to the point of Ephesians 4, where Paul says that the church is there to equip the saints to do ministry.

In other words, the people in the pews are supposed to go out and evangelize. It's not the pastor's job to evangelize all the non-Christians. It's the pastor and the staff's job to equip the people in the pews to go do that. And yet we've totally abrogated that. We said, oh, no, the pastor's got to do it. So, we're just going to bring our non-Christian friends. Well, thanks for bringing your non-Christian friends, but that's not what church is for. Church is for making disciples, not making believers. Remember, Jesus didn't say make believers. He said make disciples.

Now, as I say, we're going to talk much more about this in future programs. But Joy, that's a great question, and I think if you take some of those points and maybe ask some questions of people to see where they're coming from, to unpack their objections a little bit more, I think you can make some headway on that issue. Let me point out, by the way, that much of the thinking that we bring to this program can be taught if you know logic.

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And we've got a couple of logic courses coming up. 'Train Your Brain,' one for adults and one for 6th to 8th graders. It starts September 9. If you're listening to this after September 9, you can still enroll. We're also teaching for high schoolers and college kids. 'Why I Still Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist.' That also starts on September 9. I'll be your instructor for that. In fact, I'll also be involved in the 'Train Your Brain' course as well.

So go to crossexamined.org. Click on online courses. You will see it there. And I want to mention that we've got a lot coming up. We need your prayers, ladies and gentlemen, and your donations because we got a lot coming up this fall. We're not only continuing with the Kingdom AI Project to translate so much of our stuff into these foreign languages, but we're also going to colleges and universities. It starts next week. It starts September 5 in Dallas at UT Dallas. The next night I will be with my friend Charlie Kirk and Robert Furrow at Calvary Chapel, Tucson. That's the 6th of September.

And then on the 9th of September, we'll be at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, for I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Then the following week at Western Carolina University, not far from Asheville, maybe 45 minutes west of Asheville, and then we're going to be at the Unshaken Conference in Buffalo, New York on the 21st. That's myself, Alisa Childers, and Natasha Crain. All that on the website.

So, check all that out. And Lord willing-- Wait a minute, Jorge. You got something else? What? Oh, yeah, we got the Egypt trip coming up too. Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which is happening December 2. Go to the website, check all that out. We're going to climb the real Mount Sinai night. Come with me. It's going to be great. Go to the website, check it all out, and Lord willing, I will see you here next week. God bless.

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