

## **Pastor Responds to Blowback from His “Vote Like Jesus” Sermon with Pastor Josh Howerton**

(November 15, 2024)

### **FRANK:**

Ladies and gentlemen, why do Christians tend to compartmentalize their faith? A lot of Christians think faith is just for Sunday, or just for home, or just at church. But when they get out in the world, they get out in the culture, they get out in the voting booth, they go, well, that's not really necessary. I don't need to really lean on my Christian faith at all. I have my own ideas, and that really doesn't apply to that world. Why do we think that way?

Well, during the last couple of weeks of the election, I saw a podcast from Allie Beth Stuckey. We had Allie on just a few weeks ago for her great book, 'Toxic Empathy'. And she was really praising a sermon by Pastor Josh Howerton at a church down in Dallas called Lakepointe Church.

So, I looked it up, I watched this 44 minute sermon, and I said, man, you can't do better than that in 44 minutes. This guy covered the gambit, and he did it so clearly. Well, here he is. He's with us right now. Josh Howerton.

### **JOSH:**

Oh, man. Thank you, thank you.

### **FRANK:**

That was one of the best political sermons I've ever heard, if you want to call it a political sermon, Josh.

### **JOSH:**

Thank you.



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**FRANK:**

Tell people about... I mean, you're a third generation pastor, your grandfather's a pastor, your father was a pastor. Tell us a little bit before we get into what we're going to talk about today, how you got to where you are.

**JOSH:**

Well, you just nailed it. So, first of all, thank you. That's the best introduction I may have ever been given. And I would say responses to this sermon is either five star reviews or one star reviews and nothing in between. Nothing in between.

Yeah, man. I, like you said, third generation pastor. My papaw Jerry. Every time I preach, I'm like, the stage is going to cave in because there's three guys standing there, not one. My papaw Jerry, my father Rick, who is on staff with me here.

**FRANK:**

Wow.

**JOSH:**

And then me. And so, I grew up watching papaw Pastor. And then my dad was a pastor my whole life. My dad planted a church before it was cool in the Nashville area, and I watched him do that. And God just captured my heart with a vision for the church and never looked back.

**FRANK:**

Now, where'd you grow up?

**JOSH:**

Bowling Green, Kentucky around the Nashville area from the time I was seven all the way on.

**FRANK:**

Is that why you went to Southern Seminary?

**JOSH:**

I went both geography and theological alignment.

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**FRANK:**

Okay, all right. So, you went there and then you, I understand that you pastored as a youth pastor for about 10 years in Kentucky. Is that right?

**JOSH:**

So, I was a youth pastor for three and a half years at First Baptist Church, Mount Washington, Kentucky.

**FRANK:**

All right.

**JOSH:**

Right outside of Louisville during seminary. Then, long story short, my dad passed the church he planted to me when it was a, you know, there was a core team of 120 folks there in a school. And then I was there for 10 years before coming to Lakepointe.

**FRANK:**

And then how did it turn out that you went to Lakepointe? Lakepointe was an established church when you got there?

**JOSH:**

Yeah. So, I'll condense a whole lot.

**FRANK:**

All right.

**JOSH:**

The name of my church in Nashville is called the Bridge that my dad planted. The Lord did a very unique work there. And when the bridge really started taking off, there was an organization called Leadership Network that they would take young pastors of rapidly growing churches, stick them in a little cohort, and then stick them with mentor pastors from churches a few steps ahead to just give some younger guys some wisdom.

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So, Pastor Steve Stroop, the founding pastor of Lakepointe Church, was my mentor pastor in that cohort and he extended a gracious invitation. Hey, Josh, just kind of, you know, love how you think and believe in you. Would it be okay if I coached you for free? I was like, of course. And that was his covert way of doing a two year job interview.

And so, he eventually asked me to come. The Holy Spirit did some, like, Acts level things, no exaggeration, to show us that this is where we ought to be. And we came.

**FRANK:**

And that was six years ago.

**JOSH:**

Coming up on six years. Yes.

**FRANK:**

Okay, now fast forward to just last month. You actually do a sermon called 'How to Vote Like Jesus.' That's not too provocative, is it?

**JOSH:**

Yeah.

**FRANK:**

And I know some people are probably going, oh, we're still talking about the election. Well, hold on, folks. We're going to talk about a lot more than that. But this was a very concise presentation that you gave, a very precise sermon.

What's the essence of the sermon? We're going to put it in the show notes, ladies and gentlemen, so you can watch the whole thing. It's also at a website that we put up called [VoteYourFaith.net](http://VoteYourFaith.net). But what, what did you really want to accomplish with this sermon, Josh?

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**JOSH:**

I wanted to teach people how to vote like Jesus. So really, and just for any listeners or viewers, I think, in fact what Frank just said is part of the problem that I think some people like, oh, the election's over. We're done now. And actually, we may get into this later if you want to.

Actually, I think we got where we got because Christians and pastors have not developed a theology of politics. I actually, if we want to go here, I think that right now pastors are really, we're kind of struggling because it's been 250 years since North American pastors had to develop a theology of politics.

So, we're trying to exercise muscles we haven't exercised in two centuries. So, I would say that. So, really, I just felt like, man, the job of a shepherd is to lead his sheep. My sheep are walking through an election. That's my job. Do your job.

**FRANK:**

Well, it was very well done. And there's so many great points in it, we can't cover them all here. But you pointed out that there are three kinds of leaders in the Bible, actually kings in the Bible, which I thought was very helpful. Can you unpack that a little bit for us?

**JOSH:**

Yeah. So, here's what happens to a lot of Christians with any election, any political leader choice is Christians think in binary ways, and they'll think, okay, well, there's righteous leaders and unrighteous leaders. They'll see any flawed leader, lump them all into the unrighteous leader category. And then what it does is they accidentally, naively, they equate two things that are not morally symmetrical.

So, the example was, I mean, obviously in this election, I will not mince words. People were going, okay, I'm a Christian, I can't support some of Kamala Harris's policies. But Trump has some of these flaws too. And so, they just flattened the categories and went, okay, two unrighteous leaders. So, it's all the same.

Well, actually, that's really not the case. In the Old Testament you have a taxonomy of three types of leaders. You have, I call them Josiah leaders. And by the way, this taxonomy is not

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original to me. You have Josiah leaders. These are righteous leaders who celebrate and promote righteousness. That was Josiah. Most of us know the story leads a national revival and a nation to repentance. A second type of leader is you would have Ahab and Jezebel leaders. These are leaders that celebrate and promote wickedness.

Obviously, you see that in the Bible. That was Ahab and Jezebel, the most wicked leaders that Israel ever saw. So, they celebrated and promoted perversion. Some of this may sound familiar. They celebrated and promoted perversion. They censored, deplatformed any truth speaking priests. They closed the churches. I'll just let that sit there for a second. They closed the churches. And they led a nation to celebrate and promote wickedness.

Now, a lot of Christians think those are the only two categories. So, like I said, they flatten candidates and lump them all in the unrighteous leader category. But in the Old Testament, you have a third type of leader. I call this a Jehu leader. And Jehu was a king that was, we might even use the phrase anointed but not saved.

Some Bible scholars say that, anointed but not saved. And Jehu was a flawed leader that God used for good purposes. He used Jehu to execute judgment on Ahab and Jezebel's wickedness. He executes judgment on the priests and priestesses of demonic false gods, et cetera, et cetera. But he was a really flawed dude.

So, those three types of leaders are the taxonomy. And here's why that matters. Because everybody wants a Josiah leader. We're Christians, but sometimes Josiah is not on the ballot. And here's what wise Christians have to understand is that voting for a Jehu, a flawed leader used for good, is better than suffering under wicked leaders. And that's the type of thinking that Christians need to be able to develop.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, it was Pastor Calvin Robinson who now is up in Michigan. He used to be over in the UK. About this past election he said this. Jesus is not on the ballot, but Jezebel is.

**JOSH:**

Yeah, yeah, I saw that. We've interacted a little bit and I like that guy.

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**FRANK:**

Yeah, he is solid. I don't know if you saw that speech he gave about same-sex marriage before.

**JOSH:**

He crushed it.

**FRANK:**

Didn't he?

**JOSH:**

He crushed it. Yes. [Laughter]

**FRANK:**

We need to put that in the show notes too. Friends, you need to watch that. That man really had a lot of courage to do what he did. He's standing for the word of God in a very hostile environment. And Christians, we're going to have to do that as the world keeps getting more and more hostile. And when we come back from the break, we're going to get into a lot more with Pastor Josh Howerton.

He has a great church called Lakepointe Church just outside of Dallas, six campuses or inside of Dallas and around Dallas. He also has a great Instagram site. We'll tell you about that right after the break. So, don't go anywhere. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist on the American Family Radio Network. We're back in just two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you're listening to this on Friday, November 14, tomorrow, myself, Alisa Childers, and Natasha Crain will be in Austin, Texas for the Unshaken conference. That's [unshakenconference.com](http://unshakenconference.com). You can check it out. Love to see you down there in Austin. It's an all day Saturday event, so check out the website Unshaken. You can go to [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org) and see it too. That's our last Unshaken this year.

Today we're talking to Pastor Josh Howerton who did an absolutely brilliant job on a sermon called how to Vote Like Jesus. And we're talking about it now because there are so many people

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that don't understand, don't have a good theology of politics. They for some reason think it's crazy that Christians went more for Trump than they went for Harris.

We're going to get into that a little bit and we're also going to talk about, you know, how we can move forward so Christians can be engaged to love their neighbor through the political process. But Josh, tell me a little bit about the pushback you got. What was the breakdown in terms of the feedback on that sermon, which of course is going to bring some feedback. Whenever you talk about politics and religion, people are going to come after you. What happened?

**JOSH:**

Oh, man, I don't know what you're talking about, Frank. Nothing like that ever happens. [Laughter] Man. What I would say is at Lakepointe, I've spent the last, you know, the soil was prepared. So, in general, at Lakepointe, it was received very well. You know, I think pastors and Christians just have got to get their head around the fact that we should expect opposition.

The pattern of the Book of Acts is revival, riot, revival, riot, revival, riot. And if you want revival, you've got to endure some riots. You don't get to pick and choose which parts of the Book of Acts, you experience. So, you know, I mean, I was a little surprised. We had an organization that attempted to, you know, enact government, basically remove our tax exempt status. I think it was like the Freedom From Religion foundation, something like that.

Janet and I's personal insurance got denied. We were surprised by that. I guess the insurance company had seen some of the response to that particular message and we found another carrier. But that caught us off guard. And then, yeah, man, you know, we've experienced our fair share of online mobs here.

**FRANK:**

What is the biggest argument, if it is an argument rather than just an insult that people have against what you said?

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**JOSH:**

Yeah, I think the number one thing that people would say is, man, Josh. And if you listen to the message, I specifically did not endorse a candidate. People may disagree with this. I personally think it is unwise from a pastoral perspective, not even from a political or legislative perspective. I think it's unwise to do so.

But I was very clear on the policies. The largest objection that we got was, man, you showed predominantly things that were wrong with the policies of the left, but not the right. And, you know, I get a lot of flak for this. And Frank, you may disagree with this. Here's my response to that.

If you go right now to both of the party's online, publicly stated policy platforms, while there are immoral leaders and corruption in both parties, right now, there is only one party that is openly advocating for an increase in legislation of national sin.

So, if you go to the RNC, publicly stated platform, listen, I haven't accepted the GOP into my heart. That's not my thing. For me, I'm just like, no I'm the Jesus guy. I'm the Bible guy. And if your party is for the things that we're for, hey, man, I'm in. I'll help you.

But if you're against the things that we're for, our job is to stand up and prophetically say, hey, get back in your lane and repent. And so, right now, I just need to be honest. There's not a moral symmetry between the two parties for that reason.

**FRANK:**

No, I've said the same thing several times. We went through the platforms on this show to point out the differences. And I think when Jesus in Matthew 23:23, when he's talking to the politicians of his day, the Pharisees, the people that were on the lawmaking body known as the Sanhedrin, and He says to them, you're tithing your spices, but you're neglecting the more important matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faithfulness.

He could have been talking to us because we're doing the same thing, right? We're telling people what light bulbs they can and can't use. But we won't say, don't murder your children.

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You know, Kamala Harris wanted to ban plastic straws, but she didn't want to ban child mutilation or castration.

She wanted to do that. She's neglecting the more important matters of the law. And I've said this too, to folks. I said, look, I'm not a Republican or a Democrat. I'm a Christian. If 20 years from now, the Democrats have a better platform, I'll be voting for them. Right. A more biblical platform. I don't care what the label is, but that's just where we are now.

And I think the reason we're so bifurcated, Josh, and you can disagree with this, but I think you would agree is the Church hasn't been the Church in terms of cultural influence over the past 200 years. Or let's say at least the past 100 years, like it should be.

**JOSH:**

Yes. That's right. I'd say a few things here. And Christians, like I said, I think we've got to exercise some muscles we haven't had to in a couple centuries. You know, number one, obviously we're called to be the salt of the earth. Salt is a preservative whose job is to slow decay.

The job of the Church is to slow societal decay. And yes, that includes through the political process. The other thing I would say is the Bible, the New Testament says the church is supposed to be, "the pillar and buttress of the truth in the world and in society."

So, this is really important. One of my favorite Bible teachers that I learned from, he used the analogy that the Church's role in society is to be the immune system of society. So, this is a great analogy. I love this. He said in the same way, hey, nobody has ever died of HIV or AIDS. Nobody has ever died of that.

What HIV and AIDS do is they take out the immune system and once the immune system is gone, the body can die of anything. When the Church goes silent on the issues that are pressing in politics, culture, society, that society now has AIDS. The immune system is down.

And now, that society is susceptible to die of any destructive ideology. So, I do think for a variety of reasons that, you know, we don't have to get into this unless you want to. For a

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variety of well-meaning but naïve reasons, the Church just kind of went, ah. Whereas the New Testament says we destroy arguments. The Church kind of went, we avoid arguments.

**FRANK:**

That's right, that's true. We avoid arguments. We tend to, we have to have unity. No, Jesus said, I came to bring a sword. It's going to divide mother and daughter, father and son. We want unity in the truth, but we're not going to have unity with the world, friends. Jesus didn't come to bring unity with the world.

Now, why do you think, Josh, that some people are mystified as to why a majority of Christians voted Republican and a majority of atheists voted Democrat? Why would there be a surprise given the platforms?

**JOSH:**

Well, I mean, I think we do have to be honest. At least some of that is because of the moral foibles of Trump, particularly in the past. I think we just have to be honest about that.

**FRANK:**

Oh, sure, yeah, absolutely.

**JOSH:**

We don't have a Josiah leader in front of us. So, I actually, even though I think it's naïve, I do understand when somebody goes, wait, you voted for that guy? And I'm going, whoa. Well, hey, man, personalities come and go, but policies last a long time, right?

And so, I do think some people struggle with that. The other thing I think just, you know, I hope this is okay. I'm going to channel my inner charismatic for a second. I think that the culture war is downstream of the spirit war.

And that actually, when you get really clear on the culture war, you start exposing what spirit people are operating under. And so, I do think that there's some of that. And then if we go to a human level, obviously we know that Satan is the father of lies.

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It doesn't say that he's the father of weapons. So, when he wants to destroy a nation or a person, he doesn't come with an AR-15, he comes with an ideology. So, you see that really, honestly, I'm going to risk. I don't know how unfiltered I can be on your podcast.

**FRANK:**

Totally unfiltered, man. That's what we are. We're about the truth. We are correct, not politically correct. It's a title of mine, my book. Go. [Laughter]

**JOSH:**

All right, great. Okay, good. I do think 30, 40, 50 years ago, the two parties agreed on the destination, but they disagreed on how to get there. As secular progressivism hijacked the left, that is simply no longer the case. And the two parties are now advocating for completely different moral visions of what the world is and what they want it to be.

So, Romans 13, and I'll shut up and make this a shorter answer. Romans 13 says that the goal of the job of the government is to "reward good and punish evil." And then I think you could also say, based on other texts, that the job of the government is to protect from foreign invasion.

Well, as secular progressivism hijacked the thing, Satan is the father of lies. He calls good evil and evil good. And so, we have a government right now that, at least for the last four years has been calling evil. We've been punishing good, rewarding evil, and facilitating foreign invasion, the exact inverse of what the Bible says the government's supposed to do. So, there's a lot going on right there.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. I think on the surface, people can say, well, why did you vote with Trump and his party, because of Trump's obvious moral faults as a person. The problem is, after you explain why, they still go back and say, well, how could you ever vote? And you go, look, I always give the analogy of a surgeon, right?

If you've got a great surgeon for a delicate operation, but he, you know, he's a bad guy, has a bad bedside manner, yet you might have a bad surgeon that has a great bedside manner. Which one you going to pick for the surgery? You're still going to go with the guy who can do the job.

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Right? And so, it amazes me that people, despite after you explain why you're voting for policy over personality, they still can't seem to get past it. Go ahead.

**JOSH:**

Yeah. No, I always was just say hey, man, I'm voting for a commander in chief, not a friend in chief.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, absolutely. Well, there's not a lot of joy in that there. You need more joy, Josh.

**JOSH:**

I'm a happy guy. [Laughter]

**FRANK:**

Let me ask you about...

You said something really profound. I thought regarding discipleship. You said, and correct the quote, I might not have it right. You said, if you don't disciple your family, Satan will. And you also pointed out that there are three institutions. Institutions, that's the word I'm looking for, institutions God has established. So, apply that to those three, if you would.

**JOSH:**

Yeah. So, I think this is very important people understand, and I do not know the official Frank Turek position on the Abraham Kuyper Sphere Sovereignty concept. And that is for discerning listeners to check out on their own. Abraham Kuyper, Presbyterian theologian and politician, by the way.

He pointed out that in the Bible, God established three institutions by which society is ordered. You have the family, you have the Church, and you have the state. All three of those things in the Bible are, "established by God." Now, what we know is that whatever God creates, Satan tries to corrupt, or he tries to hijack. So, this is very interesting. A lot of people miss this.

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So, for instance, God establishes the first family at the end of Genesis 2. The first thing that happens in Genesis 3 is that's when Satan appears. He doesn't appear until after the family's created. Here's the big idea. You start a family; Satan starts a fight.

So, when men refuse to lead their families, like Adam refused to lead his wife, when men refuse to lead their families, Satan will be happy to. The exact same thing is true of the Church. In Revelation 2 and 3, you get all these letters from Jesus to the Church.

You had passive pastors in Revelation 2 and 3 that led their churches to tolerate sin instead of leading their churches to repent of sin. And as a result, they became, "a synagogue of Satan." So, the exact same thing happened when pastors won't lead their churches, Satan will be happy, too.

Well, the exact same thing happens with governments when Christians who maybe they struggle to have a good theology of politics, they fail to exercise leadership authority by voting. Guess what? Satan will be happy to lead your nation.

**FRANK:**

And when we come back from the break, Pastor Josh is going to explain that we actually get to choose the leaders. We the people do that. And we are neglecting our duties when we don't. A lot more with Pastor Josh Howerton of Lakepointe Church near Dallas. Don't go anywhere. You're listening to I Don't have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Back in two minutes. We're back with Pastor Josh Howerton.

My name is Frank Turek. You're listening to I Don't have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Josh, before I forget, tell everybody your Instagram handle. What is it?

**JOSH:**

Well, it's @Josh\_Howerton. Come play. We keep it a little spicy over there. Things get a little interesting. And when I get mobbed, please defend me.

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**FRANK:**

He has quite a following on Instagram. It's a lot of fun, a lot of short little videos, a lot of great insights that you're going to like. So, go over to that Instagram page and check it out. But just before the break, Pastor Josh, we're talking about the third institution, God created government.

And you pointed out before that we actually, as a representative republic, not a democracy, that we choose our leaders, that when we don't, what's going to happen if Christians don't choose the leaders?

**JOSH:**

Yeah. So first of all, I do think that Christians need to begin to understand that we have a spiritual and moral responsibility to vote. And of almost anything I said, that was the thing I got the most pushback on.

**FRANK:**

Why do you think?

**JOSH:**

I think it pricked consciences. I think there were some people who could not get over their emotions and think logically, and biblically, and the emotions tripped them up a smidge. So, here's what I would say on this is. So, for two questions, for two brief questions, can I interview you, Frank?

**FRANK:**

Yeah, go.

**JOSH:**

Okay, so here's my logic on this, why Christians have a spiritual responsibility to vote. Frank, is it morally wrong for a husband to refuse, for parents to refuse to lead their families?

**FRANK:**

Of course.

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**JOSH:**

Is it morally wrong for pastors to refuse to lead their churches?

**FRANK:**

Of course.

**JOSH:**

Is it morally wrong for the leaders of a nation to refuse to lead their nation?

**FRANK:**

Josh, we're out of time. Nice try. [Laughter]

**JOSH:**

Okay, so here's my thing, and I think a lot of American Christians don't understand this, is that you live in a constitutional republic. In a constitutional republic, the elected officials are the representatives of the people.

So, what that means is if you're an American Christian, you have been given this incredible blessing by God. You are at the top of the org chart in America. And in the same way that it's wrong for a husband to lead his family, for a pastor to lead his church, it's actually abdication of a spiritual responsibility for American Christians to refuse to lead their nation.

**FRANK:**

So, if the godly people don't lead the nation, who will?

**JOSH:**

Godless people. If godly people will not lead, godless people are the only ones left. And honestly, that's how we got where we are. Forty million evangelical Bible-believing Christians did not vote in the last presidential election. And that election was decided by 42,000 strategically placed votes.

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**FRANK:**

And this one was decided by a little bit more than that. But still, 44% of Christians did not vote in this election according to George Barna. That just came out two days ago. It'll again be in the show notes. Forty-four percent of Christians did not vote. You know, most of our political problems would be solved if Christians voted and voted biblically, Josh. But they don't.

Why do you think Christians think that their faith is compartmentalized? That, you know, I just, I'm a Christian in my spiritual life, but the rest of my life, and particularly how I deal with the culture and how I deal with voting, that's optional or I get to do what I want there. Why do we think that way?

**JOSH:**

Yeah, man, I think a couple things. I think some Christians just again, they looked at two-flawed candidates in their head and went, ah, they think, honestly, they think that their voting selection is a sacrament. And so, they think, oh, I can't mix any impurity with my vote and there's no totally pure candidates.

So, as a Christian, I need to stay morally pure and not mix my vote with that. But that's not what a vote is. A vote is simply a strategic choice about a preferred future. So, I think that's number one. I think number two, honestly, I think we pastors and I'm with you, it's not, I did it right and everybody else is doing it wrong.

I think we need to get our heads around, we need to disciple our people to understand this. If every Bible-believing Christian voted, the nation would literally every single election get the godliest choice available. I just want to pause and let that sink in. That literally would happen every single election and we would give our children and our grandchildren a much better spiritual and societal inheritance.

So, I don't think they'd maybe given clarity from their spiritual leadership like they need. I also think there's a couple Bible verses that get misunderstood. I think Christians read Jesus saying, my kingdom is not of this world and give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's, and they think that means, ah, it's actually like not very spiritual to participate in the political process. Now, I have responses to that. I don't know if--

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**FRANK:**

Go ahead, go into it. Yeah, let's do it.

**JOSH:**

Okay. So, number one, I'll just do those two Bible verses because those are the ones. Okay. Number one, Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world. Yes. And he also prayed that His kingdom would come on earth as it is in heaven. And he asked us to love our neighbor. Every policy affects people and therefore we love people by voting for godly righteous good policy.

So, I think that's number one. Number two, a lot of people think, well, Jesus' kingdom was spiritual, and He said, give to Caesar what Caesar's and to God was God's. Yeah. But hey, Frank Turek listeners are better Bible interpreters than that.

Because when Jesus said, give to Caesar what Caesar's and to God what's God's, remember, He's pointing at the coin and He's going, hey, whose image and likeness is on that? His point is, you were made in God's image and likeness, so give yourself to Him. And I just want to point this out. Guess who else is made in God's image and likeness?

**FRANK:**

Caesar.

**JOSH:**

Caesar. Yeah. Right. So, the implication of that passage is Caesar belongs to God, therefore we ought to vote in the direction of godliness. Now, not every sin should be a crime. And da da, da, da da. But that's a generalization.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. And friends, as we've talked about a lot in this program, there are no verses in the Bible. There are no verses in the Bible. The chapter and verse divisions were put in 500 years ago to help us navigate the text. You just can't read one verse and pull it out of context.

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You've got to see what's going on in the text to understand what the text means. And that requires more than just pulling one verse out of context. The Bible is not a book of proverbs. It has a book of proverbs, but the whole Bible isn't a book of proverbs. And yet we treat it like it is.

So, you've really got to read around it and see what other passages say in order to get the proper theology. And that's what Pastor Josh is pointing out to us right now. Now, we haven't, as a church, done a really good job of showing people they should be Christians 24/7, 365, everywhere they go. Every decision they make should be filtered through the truth of Christianity.

But for some reason, we haven't been able to get that message through to them. Do you think part of it is because it's really inconvenient to do that and I just want to do what I want to do when I want to do it?

**JOSH:**

Yep, I do. Yeah, I really do. So, I think a couple things. One, we need to help our people understand the cultural moment. So, our job as pastors is text and context, is to take the text, the unchanging text of the Bible, and overlay it on the ever changing context of our culture and our nation. I think, number two, that we have to help our people understand this is really important.

We have to help our people understand. People will hear this and they go, man, Josh, it sounds like you're telling the Church to get political, get more political. Here's what I would say is, in the words of my friend, Pastor Josh McPherson, shout out. Hey, the Church is not getting more political. Politics are getting more spiritual.

When the government move past things like building roads, issuing driver's licenses, and teaching math to things like redefining marriage, erasing gender, reframing infant murder as reproductive rights, and then using the government school system to indoctrinate everybody's kids into believing those things.

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Hey, guys, the Church didn't move. Politics did. So, we have to help our people understand, okay, here's what's happening in our context. And it's the Church's job to kind of dust the bumper of the government and say, get back in your lane, repent, and fall under the, you know, fall under the natural law and the righteousness of God.

And then I think the other thing I would say is...so Frank, if pastors will understand this, but maybe listeners might not as much. People do not get mad at pastors until they make clear applications. You can teach any spiritual thing you want as a pastor. You can do theology up here and no one will ever get mad at you.

They get mad at you when you start making a clear application. So, man, I think some pastors are going to have to cauterize the nerve inside of them that needs to be liked and applauded all the time. That's why a lot of guys go into ministry, because that's what all the church ladies applauded, and they never lost that little thing in them.

And then last thing I'd say is we are going to have to help Christians develop a theology of politics. You cannot read the Bible or church history and come to the conclusion the churches and the pastors should not make political applications. It's very frankly, a little silly to try to do so.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, and to say otherwise would mean America wouldn't exist because all of our Founding Fathers were Christians. And secondly, to say otherwise would be like saying only atheists are qualified to run the country. I mean, where do we come up with this stuff? You know, it doesn't make any sense at all. How much, though, Josh, do you think it is fear from the leadership, whether it's the elders, the pastor, or combination, that if we start talking about these issues, we're going to lose people, lose donations, lose staff?

**JOSH:**

That's a thing. I'll just be honest. That's a thing. And what I would say is I'm going to have probably a little more compassion. As a pastor, I'll have a little more compassion. And some people might say I'm being naive. I think it's usually good hearts, but soft heads. I think it's usually guys who are like, dude, they're trying to be good pastors.

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They want a unified church. And hey, I'm all for that. Here's the two blockers, Frank. I'll pull back the curtain on pastor world. The two blockers are unity and evangelism. I'm going to divide my church, and a good pastor has a unified church. And what I would say to that is the word division. DI - vision. Division is two visions.

If you have two different visions in your church of a moral universe, you don't have unity. You have division under the same roof. And if pastors do not address these things, what they're accidentally going to do is they're going to crock pot a church split.

Someday they're going to wake up. I have examples. Someday they're going to wake up. An apocalyptic moment will come, clarity will be needed, and then they will not have prepared their church to move through in a unified way.

And then the second thing, honestly, it's evangelism. It's guys going, man, I'm in a city where 70% of the people are blue, and if I get seen as partisan, then I'm going to lose my chance to reach those people for Christ.

**FRANK:**

What do you say to him?

**JOSH:**

What I would say is that there are no competing values in the vertically aligned kingdom of God. So, I think it's okay for...

I think different speeds are okay. Hey, I'm moving towards clarity. Different speeds are okay. Jesus said, I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. So, it's okay to wisely go, all right, man. I'm going to say what needs to be said, but I need this nuance.

I need to anticipate this objection. What's not okay is not moving in the direction of clear biblical clarity. And I would say to that, Pastor, you will be surprised how compelling apostolic, brokenhearted boldness is to people, even people who disagree with you. You will be surprised.

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**FRANK:**

And our friend Tony Perkins has figured out that if you start preaching on all these issues, yes, you're going to lose some people. They're going to walk out of the church, but at least right now in America anyway, you're going to have a lot more people showing up, and they're going to be fully devoted followers of Christ.

And we've got to do what's right and leave the results to God anyway, ladies and gentlemen. Go ahead, Josh. You were going to say another thing.

**JOSH:**

For everyone you lose, you're going to gain three.

**FRANK:**

That's right. Well, we're back with a final segment with the great Josh Howerton. Don't go anywhere. Back in just two minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, if there is a good God, why is there evil? Why does He allow evil? We covered part one a couple of weeks ago on our Monday night Bible study. Well, this Monday, the 18th of November, streaming live at 7:30 PM on our YouTube channel, the CrossExamined YouTube channel, we'll jump into part two of 'If God, Why Evil?'

I've learned something in studying this topic that has been revolutionary for me. You're not going to want to miss it, so tune in 7:30 PM. We'll be at Freedom House Church, just north of Charlotte, North Carolina, in Lake Norman. But if you can't be there in person, you can tune in at our YouTube channel, the Cross Examined YouTube channel, at 7:30 PM this Monday night. That's Eastern time.

All right, we've got Pastor Josh Howerton for our final segment. Josh, I got a question from the aunt of a person who wrote into me. This girl, young woman, now she's in her 20's, moved off to England to study, but she's very annoyed with Christians in politics. And this girl, who's again, the niece of this woman that wrote me, wanted me to respond to what this young woman said. And here's what this young woman said.

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She said Jesus did not legislate Christianity. So, what makes you think you can? This speaks to something that has really been bothering me about the alignment of American Christians with the Republican Party and the culture wars rhetoric. Anyone who tries to force faith through the government is both un-American and not Christ.

Like, I rarely talk about politics on here, but I'm fed up with the audacity and greed on display in the recent election win. As the man in the video says, quoting the Bible, what does it profit a man to gain the whole world but lose his soul?

All I can say is I'm grateful, truly grateful to have the opportunity to study and live in England now and have time away from the toxicity and insularity of American politics and it's sickening corruption of American evangelicalism. Outside of that, Josh, she's just fine with everything.  
[Laughter]

What would you say if you could sit down with this young woman about her beef here?

**JOSH:**

I think she needs a glass of bourbon and a Bible. That's what I... And maybe two of the first one.  
[Laughter]

So, I think what I'd say is, I think what I'd say is if I was sitting across the table from her, I would literally...

My face would look just like this. I'd go, I love you, but I think that's crazy. That's literally what I would do. And what I would say is, man, if you're a Christian, do you believe that God's commands are good for people, families, and society? And if you're a Christian, the answer is yes. If your answer to that is no, you're not a Christian. That's literally what repentance and lordship means. His commands are not burdensome.

So, either we're not a Christian, or second, wait, so you believe that his commands are good for people, family, and society, but you don't want people's families and societies to have the commands that are good for them? Do you love people? It's pretty simple to me.

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**FRANK:**

Yeah. I think, as Allie Beth Stuckey said, she said that policy affects people's lives. And how do you get policy? Through politics. And if we care about people, we have to be engaged if we're going to love our neighbor.

**JOSH:**

So, that's right. So, I think what, so here's what this person struggled with. I think there's a lot of people that there's a myth of some secular neutrality, that there's a way to have a morally neutral government. And hey y'all, there's actually not. Like moral neutrality is a myth.

And so, I think a lot of Christians struggle with two things. Legislation, you're legislating morality, and they struggle with separation of church and state. We can get into those if you want to.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, sure. I wrote a book on that 25 years ago that all laws legislate morality. We've talked about a lot, a lot on this program. So, I think people understand, if they're listening to this program, they understand that. But talk a little bit also about separation of church and state because that's an issue people struggle over as well.

**JOSH:**

Yeah. So, here's the TLDR. Too long did not read, as my Gen-Z teenager has informed me. Here's the TLDR on this is people are confused about what separation of church and state means. Separation church and state is nowhere in the founding or governing documents of America. It was in a letter from Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptist in I think the 1840's?

**FRANK:**

1803. Yeah.

**JOSH:**

Thank you. And remember, he's coming from England where there was a state church. The state and the church were one thing. So, here's what he's doing. He's reassuring a bunch of Baptists. Hey guys, the government is not going to interfere with the Church.

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So, here's the point is that separation of church and state does not mean a separation of morality and state. That would be evil. And it does not mean a separation of religion and politics. That is impossible as all listeners of Frank Turek's podcast already know.

Separation of church and state means a separation of governments. That the same dude that's the president of the nation shouldn't be the "Pope" of the Church. And its intent was to keep the government from interfering with the Church. Like oh, for example, governments telling churches they had to shut down for two years.

**FRANK:**

That's the real separation of church and state, ladies and gentlemen. Josh is actually spot on with this. I know you might be going, that can't be right. No, it was a one way wall of separation. They didn't want the state to tell the Church what to do. They wanted the Church to influence the state, as you mentioned before. It's sort of the immune system of the nation, the Church. We're supposed to be salt and light.

Well, let's deal with the issue of abortion really quickly, Josh, if we can, because people think there's a morally neutral position out there. And that is, oh, we just leave it up to people to decide. What would you say to that?

**JOSH:**

Yeah, this is another one that's crazy. And I think every thinking person already knows this. You really hear this when it comes...

The objection you hear when it comes to abortion is you're trying to legislate your morality. You're trying to force your morality on people who don't share that. A lot of Christians, they get like, baited and they get scared. They're like, oh, no, no, no, I'm not trying to do that. That's the wrong answer. The right answer to that is, yep, I am. Yep, I am, and so are you.

**FRANK:**

That's right.

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**JOSH:**

So, for instance, whenever somebody that's pro-choice hears me and they're like, you're trying to force your morality on the mother. Yep, that's true. My morality, if legislated, would force itself on the mother. But here's my point. If your pro-choice position gets legislated, your morality is getting legislated and forced on the baby.

So, the question is not whether morality gets legislated. The question is whose morality gets legislated in the words of Doug Wilson. Whose morality gets legislated? So, here's where I'm as a Christian, let's do the morality that doesn't destroy people, kill children, and invite the judgment of God.

**FRANK:**

Exactly. And it's not really my morality or your morality. It's the morality. It's the one Thomas Jefferson said was self-evident. The one the Apostle Paul said, the Gentiles who do not have the law have the law written on their hearts.

I don't want to legislate my morality. I didn't make this stuff up. It's not my morality. It happens to be the morality. But a lot of people don't like the morality, Josh, because then it really, it makes life inconvenient if they can't do what they want to do when they want to do it.

So, we have to be the salt and light and have the courage, enough courage to try and love people enough to say, I'm sorry. If I'm going to love you, I can't allow you to do evil. I'm going to try and prevent you from doing evil. That's what love is. It doesn't just allow people to do evil whenever they want to do evil. So, I think that's absolutely right. Go ahead.

**JOSH:**

Can I say one last thing? Yeah, please do. I do think Christians right now, Christians are usually a little slower to get their heads around a cultural moment. Abortion highlights an issue that I think Christians are going to have to get their head around. If you are particularly my age or older. I'm 41. You may remember a time where, again, the parties generally agreed on destination but disagreed on how to get there. There's really, I don't have time to go into this here.

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There's three types of issues. There's opinion issues, wisdom issues, and obedience issues. Opinion political issues are like, hey, should Taiwan have preferred trading status? That's an opinion. I don't care. I don't know. There's wisdom issues that are like, how do you apply this complex biblical moral? How do you care for the poor?

Some people are for big government and entitlements. Some people are for small government, incentivization of responsibility. That's more of a wisdom issue. I can have a disagreement about that. But there are level one issues that are command and obedience issues. They are thus saith the Lord issues.

Abortion is a thus saith the Lord issue. And I just want to point this out. Increasingly the difference between the two political parties, they're now almost all their tier one issues. There is not room for disagreement on these issues.

**FRANK:**

All right. We've got a couple minutes Josh. Give our listeners and viewers anything else you want to say to encourage them or inform them or help them. Also tell people where they can go to hear more from you. Go ahead.

**JOSH:**

Yeah. Well, first of all, would love to hang out with you, particularly on Instagram. We mix it up on Instagram again @Josh\_Howerton. And when we are mobbed, you can help. So, we're calling reinforcements. It'll be great. Number two, man. Honestly, I just want to say I'm encouraged. I really do. I'm encouraged. I believe that we right now have just been given an undeserved mercy, a mercy that our nation did not deserve.

**FRANK:**

Agreed.

**JOSH:**

We for the last 20 years, we've been treating Romans 1 like a to-do list. And our nation, I think, has literally been under the judgment of God. There are some sins that the sin themselves are

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the judgment of God. We've been doing those. Our nation has been given a window for repentance. And here's my final thing that I would say is my greatest passion. Listen, yes, your vote should get pulled right or left, but my greatest passion is not, I don't want your heart getting right or left.

I want your heart getting pulled up so that the blessing and anointing of the Holy Spirit can come down on your life and you have your heart hidden with Christ on high. That's an old Mark Driscoll analogy. So, go for it. Let's seize the window of repentance in our nation.

Let's say, hey, pastors, let's go, this is our moment. We were chosen for this moment. Let's with boldness, love in our hearts, swords in our mouths, let's go at it. And then all of our fellow Christians come at it with us, and we're going to do this thing together.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, we've got to make disciples, ladies and gentlemen. And if we make disciples and enough people become disciples, politics will take care of itself. That's really our goal, is to make disciples. But it's really hard to do in today's America, Josh. We are so distracted. There's so many other things that fight for our attention. And of course, you know, we want to do what we want to do when we want to do it.

So, it's really a challenge to be a pastor in today's society. You know better than me, but tell more. Just give us a few 30 seconds on Lakepointe Church if people want to get plugged in, they're in the Dallas area. I'm sure you're also online. Tell them about that.

**JOSH:**

We are. You can find us on YouTube, Lakepointe Church. We're the orange little bug logo. It's going to be awesome. You can come hang out with us. Man, the Lord's doing a really unique thing here, caught in a hurricane of grace. And I think, hey, you know our show notes. We sent you the wrong show notes. We're at seven campuses now in the DF area.

**FRANK:**

Beautiful. All right.

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**JOSH:**

I know we got, you know, some of the finest people on earth. We'd love to see you if you're in the area. If not, join us on YouTube for church online. We'll have fun together.

**FRANK:**

That's great. Josh, thanks so much. Thanks for your boldness, brother.

**JOSH:**

Thank you, Frank.

**FRANK:**

Josh Howerton, ladies and gentlemen, Lakepointe Church. Also check them out on Instagram. Also look in the show notes. There is a presentation from him there and some other presentations you want to avail yourselves of. And friends, Lord willing, I will see you here next week. Don't forget tomorrow, I'll be in Austin, Texas Monday night, 7:30 PM YouTube channel. See you there.

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