

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Why Do You Do What You Do: Truth or Incentives?

(January 3, 2025)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to 2025. It's a new year. Question, are you making any New Year's resolutions? And if so, what's going to be different this year than last year? In other words, why do you need to make a change? Why haven't you been doing what you now think you should do? And I'm here to say that there is one reason that is perhaps more powerful than any other, and it's not reason itself.

Instead of reason, too often we act on incentive. Do you make decisions based on truth and evidence, or do you make decisions based on incentive? I have a friend of mine who sometimes sends me quotes from books he's reading. And he sent me a quote from a book called 'Same as Ever: A Guide to What Never Changes' by Morgan Housel.

And Morgan Housel is a writer, former columnist for The Wall Street Journal. He's a speaker. He's written books, mostly on investments and money. And that's what this book is centered on, 'Same as Ever, A Guide to What Never Changes'. In fact, Grok AI, that's Twitter or X's AI, says this book delves into the behaviors and aspects of human nature that remain constant over time, offering insights into how understanding these can lead to a better life and better financial decisions.

And so, I haven't read the whole book, just some excerpts. And here's an excerpt, and I want to see if you agree with this because I think he's spot on here. He says, incentives are the most powerful force in the world and can get people to justify or defend almost anything. He says, "Ben Franklin once wrote, if you would persuade, appeal to interest and not to reason". Now, that would put apologists out of business.

Never use reason. He's not saying never use reason, but he says if you really want to get somebody to do something, appeal to their self-interest, not to reason. Now, those two aren't mutually exclusive. Perhaps you could appeal to both. But if you really want to get someone to do something, incentivize them, in other words. And Morgan Housel goes on to say incentives

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fuel stories that justified people's actions and beliefs, offering comfort even when they're doing things they know are wrong and believe things they know aren't true.

He says James Clear, who wrote that book 'Atomic Habits', says this. He put it this way, people follow incentives, not advice. Now, we're going to unpack this in this program, and this is probably going to spill over into the midweek podcast as well, because I have a lot here I want to talk about with regard to what some, what some might say is a bifurcation between incentives and truth. Hopefully we can follow both. But when you have to choose between incentives and truth, what do most people choose?

They most often choose incentives rather than truth. Now, let me just point out that there is nothing inherently wrong with incentives. They are good when they lead us to truth. So, there's nothing wrong with getting incentives to believe something that's true. But we all have to be aware when incentives can lead us into error, especially error that could have eternal consequences. Not just temporal consequences, but eternal consequences.

Now, following incentives rather than truth can be the case for all of us, Christian or not. Now, I'm going to get into the differences here a little bit later in the program, but I don't want to make it seem like this is only a problem for non-Christians. No, this is a problem for everyone. In fact, Christian, are you just believing Christianity because it has certain incentives that you think make your life better? Secularists or atheists, are you just believing what you believe because it has incentives for you?

We're going to get into all this a little bit later but let me continue to quote from Mr. Housel. He says, "When you understand how powerful incentives can be, you stop being surprised when the world lurches from one absurdity to the next". He says, "If asked, how many people in the world are crazy, I might say, I don't know, 3 to 5%. But if I asked how many people in the world would be willing to do something crazy if their incentives were right, I'd say, oh, at least 50% or more".

You agree with him? I think he's probably right here, ladies and gentlemen. I mean, let me ask you a question. If you lived in Nazi Germany in World War II, would you have been a Nazi concentration camp guard if you were drafted to be one? You say, oh, I'd never do that. Really?

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Are you sure about that? If you were a white farmer in the south in 1830, would you have owned slaves?

Would you have been against slavery? Well, of course I'd be against slavery. Really? Are you sure about that? Or would you find justification, as even some Christians tried to find in the Bible, justification for slavery? What would you do? Where are you on the abortion issue today? Where are you on the castration of children issue today? Yeah, transing kids. Where are you on that? Because I think hopefully sooner rather than later, we'll treat the castration of children and abortion just like we eventually treated slavery and said, this is immoral.

We can't tolerate this. But right now, you're incentivized in some instances to be for abortion. You're incentivized to not say a word about the castration of children. In fact, some of you might have agreed to try and transition a child. And if you're listening right now, it's got to be really hard to admit you were wrong about that because then you have to say I actually harmed my child.

And if it were me, I'd want to suppress the truth about that. I wouldn't want to admit it. I'd want to double down on what I did because I don't know if I could bear the truth that I had done that to my child. So, I'd deny it. I'd suppress it. That's human nature. We're fallen. Dr. Clay Jones, who runs an online course for us called 'Why Does God Allow Evil?' and actually has a book by the same name.

We've had Clay on the program several times before. If you want to take his course, you can take it anytime you want in a self-paced version. Just go to online courses or go to OnlineChristianCourses.com. You can go to CrossExamined.org click on online courses, you'll see it there. And what Clay says, in his research he says, "All genocide research", in other words, in other words, all people that investigate the issue of genocide. He says, "100% of the researchers say that those who commit genocide out there in the world are just average everyday people".

Take the Nazi concentration camp guard. What's his incentive? Well, to not be killed himself. So, he might make up every rationalization and excuse in his mind to say that what he's doing is

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morally okay, or at least not morally wrong in order to not be killed himself. He has an incentive for self-preservation. So, he doesn't want to be thrown in the gas chamber himself.

So, he'll believe the propaganda that the Jews, the homosexuals, the gypsies, and the Jehovah's Witnesses were somehow subhuman, particularly the Jews. They tried to say they were subhuman. That's how you could convince a group of people to go along with your genocide. Just redefine them as not being human beings. Now, how does this affect us today? We're going to get into it. Those are extreme examples. What about less extreme examples that we have to deal with?

Are we following incentive rather than truth? Don't go anywhere. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio Network. We're back in just two minutes. Happy New Year.

Are you denying yourself and following the truth, following Jesus, regardless of the cost? That's a hard question to answer, isn't it? I don't know anyone who's completely sold out, me included. We have an incentive not to be completely sold out. In fact, we're going to talk a lot about that in this segment in this show and probably the next. We're talking about the question today, the hard question, are we following the truth?

Are we following Jesus? Or are we just following incentives? Maybe incentives that cause us to deny or to suppress the truth. Now, just before the break, we were talking about, you know, Nazi concentration camp guards. They have an incentive to stay alive so they might believe the lie that the Jews were non-human beings. That way they could justify themselves in committing genocide. But other than avoiding death. Our friend Jay Warner Wallace, the cold-case homicide detective, reminds us of the common incentives that we have as people living in the west have to deal with today or have presented before us today.

I've talked about this several times on the program. I talk about this quite a bit out on the road on college campuses. By the way, we have a bunch of college campuses coming up here in the spring. Keep an eye out for those on our, on our website, CrossExamined.org. Click on events. You'll see them there. Anyway, Jim says that whenever he finds a body that he knows has been

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murdered, he doesn't have to track down a thousand possible incentives for the murderer to try and figure out why did, why did that murderer kill this guy?

He doesn't have to do that. He says, I know that that guy was murdered for one or more of these three reasons, these three incentives, these three issues, these three motivators, whatever you want to call them. He says that guy was murdered because there was either a sex issue, a money issue, or a power issue. Sex, money, or power. Those are the reasons, the incentives that drive people to murder.

In fact, they're the same incentives that drive any of us to sin. Why? Because sex, money, and power are good things. We want them. In fact, they're so good, we'll often take shortcuts to get them. That's why we sin. In fact, I wrote this in 'Stealing from God'. No extra charge for this. It just came to me recently. I forgot I had written this, but I found it.

When it comes to incentives, quite often you hear people say, you know, why doesn't God stop all the evil in the world? And we point out that, well, if He did, He would take away free will. And if He took away free will, this wouldn't be a moral universe. And if it's not a moral universe, then you couldn't have love. And, you know, we explain all that. But you know what nobody ever asks? No one ever asks, why didn't God stop pleasure?

Why doesn't He stop pleasure? Because if He did, He could stop a lot of evil. Why? Here's what I write in 'Stealing from God.' While nearly everyone asks, why doesn't God stop evil? Few people ask, why doesn't God stop pleasure? Stopping pleasure would be an effective way of stopping evil while maintaining human freedom. That's because no one does evil for evil's sake. We do evil to get good things. We lie, steal, and kill to get pleasurable good things such as money, sex, and power.

Take away pleasure and the incentive to do evil would vanish. But if God were to stop evil by ending pleasure, would the human race continue? If it did, would anyone like the pleasureless world that remains?" Again, that's from 'Stealing from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case'. Yeah, if you took away pleasure, there'd be no motivation to do evil because you wouldn't have any motivation to get anything pleasurable. But I digress.

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Let's go back here to the fact that quite frequently, we are incentivized to do things because we want sex, money, and or power. Those are the three major motivators for murder. Murder, okay? Sex, money, and or power. And under the power column, there's a lot of things that fit under there, like pride, recognition, popularity.

Those are all things that come under this third category, if you will. And by the way, John talks about this in 1 John 2, where he says, do not love the world or anything in the world, because all that's in the world is the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life: Sex, money and power. That's what's in the world. We're incentivized by those things.

They're motivators. By the way, this is why Pascal famously wrote, "People almost invariably arrive at their beliefs, not on the basis of proof, but on the basis of what they find attractive". In other words, people believe often what they want to believe because the belief is attractive and may bring them what they think are some benefits. Now again, this can be true for Christians and non-Christians. I'm not just saying that this is a problem for non-- This is a problem for all of us.

Are we just believing what we find to be attractive? Do we have any evidence for what we believe? Back to Mr. Housel, who writes in his book, "Soviet poet, Yevni Yevdashenko, once speculated that during Galileo's day, several scientists believed the Earth revolved around the Sun, but they had families to feed, so they never spoke up." All right, let's bring this to the modern age, right?

I mean now if you say, well the, if you say the opposite, that the Sun's revolving around the Earth, people are going to say you're nuts. Well, back in Galileo's day, if you had said that, you would have actually not been necessarily against the Church, you would have been against the scientific community. And so, they had families to feed, so they never spoke up. Now, there was a church element to this. I don't have time to go down that rabbit trail right now. But the stories you've heard have probably been exaggerated and aren't really true.

But that's another whole topic for another whole show. Let's bring this down to the modern age. They had families to feed. There have been many people over the several of the past, say,

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three or four decades that have been quiet about what they believe about the origin of the universe, and the origin of life, and new life forms. Those three big questions that Christians and non-Christians argue over, particularly Christians and atheists.

And in the scientific community, if you were to say that you believe in intelligent design versus say naturalism, materialism, Darwinism, you could be expelled from the academy. In fact, just a few weeks ago we had Dr. Jay Richards on. We've had Jay on three times, as you know, in the past month. The first show we had on his updated new book called 'Privileged Planet', we talked a little bit about what happened to his co-author, Guillermo Gonzalez.

Guillermo was on a tenure track, I think, at a college in Iowa when they came out with 'Privileged Planet', which suggested there's an intelligent designer out there. Why did they suggest that? Because that's what the evidence seems to be pointing to. And yet, he was denied tenure because of that book, because he didn't buy into the atheistic, materialistic, Darwinian view of the world. And this has happened to several scientists in recent decades because you can't question atheistic materialism in the academy prior to getting tenure.

And even if you do get tenure, you might have trouble after that. Why, why is this? This isn't all about science. There's incentives going on here. If you start to suggest that there could be an intelligent designer out there, well, that intelligent designer may put moral claims on us or give us moral commands. And no longer are we then as scientists going to be free to do whatever we want to do morally. In fact, we'll get into this here in a few minutes.

I'll give you some quotes from scientists on this, but that's an issue that many people in the academic world have to deal with. They're incentivized to be quiet about what they believe the evidence is telling them, not what just their mere religious beliefs are, whether they're based on evidence or not, but what the evidence from the natural world is showing them, that the universe had a beginning, that life appears to be the product of intelligence, new life forms as well. And they're going, I can't say that. They're incentivized to be quiet.

This is true in archaeology as well. We've put up some recent videos about how there's evidence in Egypt and Saudi Arabia that the Exodus is true. And, well, you can't say that among most archaeologists. They'll just poo poo everything you say because it can't be true. They've

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decided in advance it can't be true. I don't have time to go down that complete rabbit trail here. But there's an incentive to be quiet if you're an archaeologist to affirm anything that could affirm the Bible.

Now, there are exceptions like Titus Kennedy, and Joel Kramer, and Scott Stripling, and a few others we've mentioned, but you hear these people making even response videos to the videos that we've put out. Oh, you know, the archaeology consensus is what Frank's saying isn't true. What does that prove? The evidence is the issue, not what the consensus is. People can have a consensus over things that are false because they have an incentive to believe something that's false.

Now, someone could say, well, the incentive goes the other way too, Frank. You're just believing it because you think it's true. Well, of course I'm believing something that I think is true, but I think I have reasons to believe so. How about DEI in your workplace: diversity, equity and inclusion? How about LGBTQ issues, and speech codes, and pronouns? Are you incentivized to be quiet about that? Yeah, you are.

You're Incentivized. Doesn't mean you agree with it. But you're incentivized to keep your mouth shut because you have a family to feed, don't you? This is not an easy issue, friends, but at some point, Christians are going to have to say enough of this. In fact, if enough Christians did that, they couldn't fire everybody, could they? And by the way, you would probably have a legal case if they did fire you if you're an employee. I didn't when I got fired because I wasn't an employee. I was a vendor.

But when I came out against, say, same-sex marriage because I thought it was wrong and had reasons for that, I was fired, as you know, by Cisco and Bank of America, in the name of inclusion, tolerance and diversity. I was not included, not tolerated for holding a diverse view. Well, much more friends. Don't go anywhere. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network, back in two minutes. We're talking about incentives here, ladies and gentlemen.

Do incentives overpower our decision making process in their favor rather than in the favor of the truth, rather than in favor of Jesus? That's a big question we all have to answer ourselves

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because it's an important question. And as we'll see as we go through this, there's even historical precedent in the Bible for people going with incentive rather than truth.

And by the way, now that we're talking about the Bible here for just a minute, there's one question that I think kind of befuddles me more than any other when it comes to the Church, and that is, why don't more churches teach you how to interpret the Bible? I mean, you would think if we really believed that the Bible was God's word, that would be one of the first things a church would want to teach its people. Have you ever been in a course at a church that taught you how to interpret the Bible?

Oh, that's just for seminary. No, the church is supposed to make disciples of everyone, not just people that want to go to seminary and be in the clergy or if you will, or the paid staff. Why does nobody do that? Well, very few. I've had a few people say, yeah, I was in a church that did this. It's rare. That's why we created the course 'How to Interpret your Bible'. We're about to run it live. I'll be your instructor starting January 9th. If you're hearing this later than January 9th, no problem.

You can join it a week or two after that and still be part of the five live Zoom sessions we'll have where we'll do Q&A. But go to CrossExamined.org, click on online courses, and check out 'How to interpret your Bible'. There's a lot of great insights in this course that I learned from other people. It's not all just from me. In fact, if I had to footnote everything I learned from somebody else, all I'd be doing is giving footnotes.

But there's a lot of good insights that will help you interpret the Scriptures well. That should be very important. In fact, I'll show you four steps you can go through. And if you go through these four steps, 90 to 95% of what you'll need to know, you'll know in order to interpret the passage properly so you can then apply it rightfully to your life. So go to CrossExamined.org, click on online courses, you'll see 'How to Interpret Your Bible'. Sign up before we fill up and I'll see you on those five live occasions for Q&A.

There's over, I think, 12 hours of video on this course, in this course, and we'll go through some of the toughest passages that are controversial. You know, how do you interpret them? We'll go into it. So, check that all out at Crossexamined.org, click on online courses. Let me go back to

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the DEI LGBTQ speech codes, pronouns thing. We've pretty much ceded that ground. I heard Pastor Gary Hamrick recently say that the culture has worked really hard to get us to celebrate such things, and the Church has hardly worked at all to counter it.

We don't love people when we allow them to believe that celebrating these things is good. We should be loving them by showing them the truth. And isn't it interesting, by the way, that we're talking about these issues about sex at work? Why are we talking about sex at work? What does sex have to do with workplace productivity?

In fact, I wrote a column right after I was fired by Cisco and Bank of America called 'Sex at Work'. Do not Google that, ladies and gentlemen. It'll take you right to Harvey Weinstein's website. No, go to CrossExamined.org and go to our blog and type in 'Sex at Work'. You will find it. And what I'm doing in there is just asking the question, why is corporate America obsessed with sex at work? Are we supposed to have sex at work? Why are we talking about this? What does it have to do with workplace productivity. The answer is zero. What?

I mean, why? Why don't we have forced indoctrination sessions into proper diet, health, and exercise? That's certainly more impactful on workplace productivity than getting everyone to agree on the celebration of certain unnatural sexual preferences and practices. And I say unnatural in the sense that they go against natural law. They go against the natural design of the body. I mean, really, if you had forced indoctrination into proper diet, health, and exercise, you'd, you'd help your job productivity out much more than trying to get them to believe certain sexual practices and preferences are correct.

What does that have to do with the work, the work they're doing? It doesn't. It's political. And the companies are incentivized to do this because if they don't, they're going to get a bad score from the so-called Human Rights Campaign. And nobody wants a bunch of protesters, a minority of people out there demonstrating. That's bad PR. And the public doesn't really follow these things. Why are people protesting outside this company?

Why does they have, why do they...? Oh, human rights. They're bad on human rights. Oh, no, I can't. I must boycott them. So, it's basically hush money in many cases. Yeah, we'll put this program in place. Just leave us alone. Are they following truth or are they following incentives?

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What about vaccines? We talked about this with Dr. Jay Richards a couple of podcasts ago. Yeah, you got to take the untested shot or you're going to lose your job.

Were you incentivized to do that? Yeah, you were. You were incentivized to take an untested shot that has now turned out to be a disaster. And by the way, if you want to follow people who are qualified to make certain assessments regarding the vaccine, you might want to follow Dr. R.W. Malone, MD, on X and also @P_McCullough, MD, on X.

McCullough is spelled M C C U L L O U G H M D on X. Because those two doctors, one of them, Malone, helped apparently invent the so-called RNA vaccine and he is now a big critic of it. And Dr. McCullough, if I understand correctly, is an expert on... He's a cardiologist, an expert on the heart, and he's pointed out all the problems this vaccine has brought to the human heart.

So, if you want to follow people who are qualified to make the assessment that these vaccines are deadly, then follow those two gentlemen. What about the vaccine manufacturers themselves? Jay talked about this on the podcast where we, in our country have an incentive for these companies to develop these vaccines quickly and without real testing because they can never be sued if anything goes wrong with the vaccine. What a perverse incentive that is.

Now, you might say, well, you know, if you can sue them, then they won't put out any vaccines. Well, I'd rather have them put out none than vaccines that hurt people. Wouldn't you? Isn't there a happy medium here somewhere? And what about Big Pharma? Who now has an incentive to transition kids because those kids will become lifelong customers of Big Pharma, the Big Pharma drugs, because those drugs are necessary to continually and artificially force these young people's bodies to go in a direction they don't want to go.

And they have to take those drugs the rest of their lives. Cha Ching. Are they following the truth or are they following an incentive? Here's a case where you can follow the money. And it's not just me saying this. Many people are saying this. In fact, I don't have time to get into it now. But in my book, 'Correct, Not Politically Correct: About Transgenderism and Same-Sex Marriage', I have some data in there, including people who have gone through these procedures saying, man, this is just a big boon for Big Pharma.

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How about welfare? We talked about that with Jay the other day. We have a perverse incentive in our, some of our welfare programs where a woman gets more money if she has more kids with no husband. Gotta keep the husband out of the house. The husband comes in the house, you don't get as much money. What kind of perverse incentive is this? In fact, this is just an element of bad economic policy. Bad economic policy is often the result of or misunderstanding, or I should say, it's often the result of misunderstanding or ignoring the need for good incentives.

I mean, think about it, ladies and gentlemen. Why doesn't handouts, why don't they work as well as helping people help themselves? You know, it's that old adage, is it better to give a person a fish or teach them how to fish? Well, obviously it's better to teach them how to fish so they can help themselves. If you want to make people dependent, just keep giving them handouts. And they may be perfectly logical once they get these handouts, as Dr. Richard said, to want to, even though they don't like it, to say, well, if I start working more, I'm going to lose all this money.

I just can't do it. If I stop having kids, I'm going to lose all this money. I just can't do it. Economic policy must incentivize people to help themselves if they're able. Of course, we're going to have a safety net for people that aren't able, but we don't want to make the safety net a hammock. Even in the Old Testament where God said, leave the corners of the field so the poor and the people coming through the area, the sojourners could harvest food for themselves.

Notice they had to work, the poor and the sojourners, to harvest the food themselves off the corner of the fields. They weren't just given the grain. They had to work for it. It was just provided for them, but they had to work for it. That helps the individual rather than just giving it to them. I mean, think about this. Think about incentives. When was the last time you washed a rental car? Never. You don't wash your rental car because you don't own it. You don't have an incentive to wash it.

Why is private housing on average much better than public housing? Because you have an incentive to take care of private housing that you might not have with public housing. Why are there no caravans going from the United States to Venezuela? Because this country has incentives. We have an economic environment that helps people get out of poverty. The

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opposite is true in Venezuela. And pray for Venezuela, they're about to. Their leader is. Who is it?

Maduro there? I think, in early January, according to one of our staff members, is going to decide whether or not to step down because he actually lost the last election. But he's insisting that no. He won. Pray for them. The bottom line is, if you have bad incentives, you're going to get bad or at least negative behavior. In fact, here's an excerpt from a book called 'Nine Ways that Socialism Will Morally Bankrupt America'. "Socialism creates an environment of poor stewardship.

Perhaps somewhat ironically, it encourages overuse and over consumption of underpriced resources. Moreover, it makes people careless about being wasteful or polluting the environment because it erodes any sense of personal responsibility. When something is owned by everybody, it's really owned by nobody. Accordingly, no one has an incentive to steward or protect what they have". We're back in two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

Are you incentivized to follow the truth or to deny the truth? That's what we're talking about today, ladies and gentlemen, on I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist on the American Family Radio Network because too often people make decisions based on what they find attractive, not based on truth, but on what they find attractive. How about unpopular Christian doctrines? You know, the sex issues in particular, like abortion, homosexuality, transgenderism, premarital sex, cohabitation, divorce?

How often do you hear pastors talking about that? Oh, those are unpopular in our culture, the Christian position is. And so, people are, I don't know if I want to talk about that. How about the biblical claim that you should not follow your heart, you should guard your heart? I talk about this quite a bit now on the road. I think the most important Bible verse to our culture. Well, the second most important Bible verse.

Of course, there are no verses in the Bible. I've talked about that before. But let's just say a truth from the Bible. The second most important truth, other than the Gospel itself, the second most important truth in the Bible for our culture today is Proverbs 4:23, which says, above all

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else, guard your heart. Because everything you do flows from it. Doesn't say follow your heart. It says guard your heart.

You can't blindly follow your heart. If you follow your heart without moral restraint, without wisdom, you're going to wind up broken, addicted, alone, and probably prematurely dead. You just can't follow every whim that comes across your heart, that comes across every impulse that comes across your mind. You can't do it. And you might have an impulse to get an abortion or to get involved in some sort of illicit sexual relationship, or try and transition yourself, or cohabit with somebody, or get frustrated in your marriage and say, that's it. I'm done, I'm out.

When you made a vow, for better or worse, till death do you part. And there's no biblical grounds for divorce. How about gluttony? Whoever talks about that? We can't talk about that. There are people in the Church that are overweight. That's why you ought to talk about it, to help them. Don't make them feel like what they're doing is okay by never bringing it up. I know it's uncomfortable. How about when you put something on social media? You think, if I post this, what are people going to think?

Will I lose followers? Will I lose friends? Will they demonetize my account? Will we lose donations here at CrossExamined if we put something out that people don't like? What an incentive. What are we going to do? What are we going to follow? Are we going to follow incentives? Or are we going to follow the truth? What are you incentivized by?

What are your kids incentivized by? You know what most teenagers are incentivized by? They're incentivized to go with the crowd in order to fit in, to become popular. Parents, what are you doing to counter that? What are you doing to show your children that knowing and following Jesus is the purpose and reward of life, even if it results in persecution, even if it results in a premature death? What are you doing?

Are you countering what they're getting? If, tragically, they have an iPhone or a Droid and they're under, say, the age of 16, maybe the age of 18. Look, you don't even need me to preach to you on this. Go read Atheist. Why is his name escaping me all of a sudden? The guy that wrote the book on social media now, 'Anxious Generation'.

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The guy teaches at NYU. Why has his name just flipped out of my head? I had it. Anyway, look up 'Anxious Generation'. And he's a, I believe, a psychologist at NYU, wrote a great book on social media and how he... Yeah, yeah, Jonathan Haidt, I think it is, and just a fabulous book. He's not a Christian, but he's saying, look. This is poison to your kids.

And, I mean, if it's poison to a guy who's not even a Christian for his kids, what about Christians? Those kids are incentivized to fit in. They want to fit in. They want to have an iPhone so they can fit in. They want to be on the text chain. I get all that. Oh, man. If I ever took that away from my kid, it'd be World War III. Yep. Probably would be. Sorry. Parenting's hard. If parenting is...

If you're parenting just for convenience, don't be a parent. Parenting is not convenient. It's hard, but the rewards are great. No, but none of us does perfectly. But make sure, make sure that you're protecting your kids when you can. Don't give them something they're not ready to handle. The late Tim Keller once did a presentation about how kids on social media, or even adults on social media, when they change their allegiance in the culture war, like, say they go from, I used to be a Christian, but now I'm LGBTQ affirming.

You know what they're really doing? They're just changing cheerleaders. Yeah, they had some Christian cheerleaders who generally are quiet on social media, and now they've got these new loud cheerleaders going, oh, wow, you're on our team now. How great you are, how tolerant, how wonderful you are. They've completely thrown Jesus under the bus because they're incentivized to. You know, Peter was incentivized to deny Christ to save himself. He said, oh, Lord, I'll never deny you.

Then what did he do? He wound up denying Him. Yeah, three times. That's why when people say, well, you know, if, if you were put on the spot, someone threatened to kill you, would you deny Jesus? You know what my answer is? I don't know. I'm not going to make the same mistake that Peter said, I'll never...! You don't know what's going to happen. I hope I do the right thing. I hope I'd follow Jesus and not the incentive, not the temporary incentive.

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There's a long-term incentive obviously to following Jesus. And of course I've mentioned, look, I've mentioned this many times on the program that being a pastor is the second hardest job in American Christianity. The hardest job is pastor's wife. But the second hardest job is being a pastor. But I know in talking to pastors that they may be tempted to avoid these difficult, controversial issues. I mentioned a little bit earlier, particularly the sex issues: abortion, homosexuality, transgenderism, premarital sex, co-habitation, divorce, gluttony, not a sex issue.

But they want to avoid those issues because they want to keep people coming and giving the incentive. Follow the money. I want to pay the staff. I mean, there's some good sentiments in there. Yeah, I do want to pay the staff. I don't want to have to lay people off. I want to influence as many people with the Gospel as I can. I can't talk about these issues because, well, then I can't talk to him about the Gospel. Well, ladies and gentlemen, if people are going to get up and leave your church because you speak out against the dismembering of babies in the womb, then they're probably not candidates for the Gospel anyway.

And your job is to preach the whole counsel of God and leave the results to God. You're not here to hide certain things about God's word so you can bait and switch and get them to believe something that they really don't believe. So, we've made it an incentive to avoid talking about controversial issues. And that's one of the reasons, by the way, I think there's a problem with the seeker model of the church.

The seeker model of the church says we can't talk about those issues because there may be seekers in the church, and they'll leave before they have a chance to hear the Gospel. Well, you know what happens when you do that? You wind up never talking about those issues. And the number of issues you can talk about gets smaller and smaller because the culture has taken over those issues and has begun to celebrate the opposite side of what the Bible says. And so, now you can't talk about any of those things because you're trying to get people fire insurance. Do what's right, leave the results to God.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Some people may get up and leave, but at least right now in America anyway, according to Tony Perkins, who studies this stuff through the Family Research Council, says when you do that, a lot of people are going to get up and leave, but a lot more people are going

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to show up and they'll be fully devoted followers of Christ. Look, we can't do what Paul told us not to do.

Paul told Timothy this. This is the last chapter of the last book he wrote. He said, in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing in His kingdom, I give you this charge. Preach the word. Be prepared in season and out of season. Correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

They will turn away. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you keep your head in all situations. Endure hardship. Do the work of an evangelist. Discharge all the duties of your ministry. In other words, don't be the pastor or the Christian that will just tell people what their itching ears want to hear. Don't do that. Do what's right and leave the results to God. Don't fall into incentives that keep you from carrying out your ministry.

Follow the truth. Follow Jesus, regardless of the cost. And we're going to continue this on the midweek podcast. For those of you listening on AFR will not hear it on AFR. You've got to find the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast. Find it on Tuesday and I'll see you there, Lord willing.

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