

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

The Birthday That Changed the History of the World with Bill Federer

(December 23, 2024)

FRANK:

So last Sunday, friends, I was coming back from the Middle East, our trip to Egypt and Saudi Arabia, when I happened, I had Wi-Fi on the plane when I happened to go to one of my favorite churches online, and that is Calvary Chapel, Chino Hills, the great Jack Hibbs out there. And I clicked on the sermon live and it was the equally great Bill Federer.

And I said, you know what? We've got to have Bill on again to talk about Christmas traditions. In fact, people have said the best podcast we've ever done over the past 15 or so years is the podcast we did on the Christmas traditions that Bill Federer enlightens us with.

We've done it a couple of times on this program. We're going to cover some of that today, but some other new material. And at the end of the program, I'm going to show you how you can get a video of Bill going through the Christmas traditions, the origin of Christmas traditions, you know, St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, gift giving stockings, Xmas Nativity Scene, North Pole, reindeer, all that.

We'll cover some of that today, but I want to show you a way that you can watch him give it with a bunch of visuals. We'll do it at the end of the program. But Bill, I clicked on the YouTube channel for Calvary Chapel, Chino Hills and you were on. I just caught the last 10 minutes of your sermon. What were you talking about?

BILL:

Right. Well, I gave two different messages. The first one, I went through December 25th and how we arrived at that date for the birth of Christ. It's fascinating. And then the second one, I go through the St. Nicholas story and how he was a real person there in Asia Minor, today it's Turkey and how his traditions morphed into what we have today. And that's quite fascinating too. And it sort of shows you what to keep and what to throw out, but it is fascinating.

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FRANK:

Well, those of you who have listened to this podcast for quite a while probably know Bill. For those of you that haven't heard it before, Bill Federer is an historian and he's written several books. In fact, one of them we're going to talk about today.

He also has a great email that he puts out at least a couple times a week called AmericanMinute.com, AmericanMinute.com. So, if you want to get some great insights that are colorfully well done with imagery, photographs, that kind of thing, you want to sign up for AmericanMinute.com. So, go to that website.

So, Bill, let's start with the birth of Christ. You know, I've heard that people say, well, you know, December 25th was just picked because it's winter solstice. It's not really the birth of Christ, but there's actually evidence that that probably was the birth of Christ, even though the Bible doesn't give us a specific date. Do you want to go through some of that here? It's interesting.

BILL:

Right. So, the largest religion in the world is Christianity. And according to Pew Research Center 2015, about a third of the world is Christian. Now, since most Christians celebrate Christmas, that makes Christmas potentially the most celebrated religious holiday in the world. And so, a little background.

There was a one world government at the time of the Roman Empire. And the Caesar, Augustus Caesar wanted to have a worldwide tracking system. It was called the census, a tax enrollment. I'm sure if he could have had access to 5G, and cell phones, and facial recognition software, he'd have been tempted to use that.

But nevertheless, Luke chapter two. And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, everyone unto his own city. And Joseph went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth, unto Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.

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Another verse, Luke 2:13. And suddenly there were the angels, multitude of heavenly host, praising God and saying, glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, goodwill toward men. So, though different people have different dates for the birth of Christ, I like to give the evidence for the traditional date, December 25th.

Now, Jews did not celebrate birthdays. Even Josephus wrote, the law does not permit us to make festivals at the birth of our children. So, most people in the Middle East... Recently, a couple of years ago, my wife and I went to Turkey, and we were visiting at a home.

And the lady of the house, my wife asked her when her birthday was. Well, she goes into the other room, shuffles through some papers, comes out with one of the papers and she tells us her birthday. She did not even have it memorized. And as a matter of fact, we went to Korea years ago.

Everybody in the country turns a year older on January 1st, right? They don't really recognize except for maybe their 64th birthday or something. So, it was not... So, the early believers were Jewish, and they cared mostly about the date of the Passover. When was Jesus crucified, died, buried and rose from the dead?

And so, they really didn't think about the birth date of Christ. It was not until large number of Greek Gentiles converted to Christianity that they began to raise the question, when was Jesus born? Now, it's in the Bible, but we have to do a little investigative work. Got to track it down. And it all starts with a clue from John the Baptist's father. And so, John the Baptist's father was a Levite priest in the last years of Herod, who died anywhere from 4 to 1 BC.

It's hard to nail down the exact year. And so, Luke 1 says, in the time of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah. Now, that's the first clue. What's the priestly division of Abijah? Well, 1st Chronicles 24 has King David, with the help of the priest, Zadok, separated The Levites into 24 divisions. Sort of interesting. First chronicles 24, 24 divisions, and he lists them in order.

The first lot fell to Jehoiarib, and then it goes through them all. And the eighth lot fell to Abijah. So, now we know that Zechariah's the father of John the Baptist is of the courts of Abijah.

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That's the eighth group out of 24. But how did these divisions work? We're not really told in the Bible. Well, the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947, and amongst them is something called the Sacerdotal Rota system.

And it documents that the priestly courses divisions served twice a year for one week each, six months apart. And so, now we have another question. When do these 24 groups start? Where? When's the first group starting? Now, you know, when Solomon dedicated the temple, but there's not really firm evidence when they came back from Babylon. There's maybe some other different recordings, but it's not really clear.

And then there's a clue. The temple was destroyed in Jerusalem on a date that is confirmed, August 4th, 70 AD. And that's in the Roman Julian calendar. Well, lo and behold, that exact date is recorded in the Jerusalem Talmud and with Josephus as being the ninth of Av. It's the Jewish month Av called Av. And so, in the Jerusalem Talmud, it says that the Levite family on duty when the temple was destroyed was Jehoiarib of the first course.

So, now we know that the first course of Jehoiarib is on duty the first week of August. And now the Wikipedia, and I don't often quote Wikipedia, but this is what it said. It says the Jewish tradition, Jehoiarib was the priestly course on duty when the Second temple was destroyed by the Roman imperial army in the second week of the lunar month Av in 70 CE, Christian era or A.D.

So, piecing this together. First week of August, Jehoiarib's on duty. Now we can count seven more weeks to come to the eighth week and find out that Abijah is on duty the last week of September. Now this is an important week. It's during the month of Tishri. At the beginning of the week is the day of Atonement. At the end of the week is the Feast of Tabernacles. Very important week. Now, Luke 1 says there was in the days of Herod, the King of Judea, a certain priest named Zechariah of the division of Abijah.

So it was that while he was serving as a priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. Now what does it mean "his lot fell to burn incense"? We all know the high priest is

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the only one who can go into the holy of holies. But the holy place, the room outside of the holy holies, that's where the menorah or that seven golden candlestick is.

But also, there's a table where they would put bread on it. And then there's the altar of incense. Well, guess what? The other Levite priests can go in and do service in that holy place. And so, how do they choose who is going to go in there? Is it by seniority? Is it by popularity? It's by lot. They would choose just by random drawing of straws type of thing. And so, there's 24,000 Levites estimated.

And so, it's very rare to get chosen by lot to be a priest serving in the temple. But during this week, where there's the day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles to be chosen by lot to serve on this week, it's a once in a lifetime chance, right? This is very, very rare. And Zechariah gets it. And so now, he's in there burning incense.

And this would explain why the people are outside waiting. And it says the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. And Luke 1:11, there appeared unto him Zechariah, an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And the angel said to him, fear not, Zechariah, Thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son. When Zechariah's time of service was completed, he returned home. After this, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion.

So, the typical date, according to the Greek Orthodox and Byzantine Orthodox Church, the date of the conception of John The Baptist is September 23rd. He's the forerunner of Christ. Other, the Pro-Evangelium of St. James has the same date, September 23rd. And Greek Orthodox, Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, all the churches marked September 23rd as the conception of John the Baptist.

And nine months later, June 24th, they all celebrate the birthday of John the Baptist. It was one of the oldest Christian observances from the Council of Ag Day in 506 A.D. on, the church is celebrating the date of the conception of John the Baptist and his birthday on June 24th.

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FRANK:

All right. Hold the thought for a second because I've got to ask a clarification question here. Friends, if you've forgotten where we're going with this, we're trying to figure out when Jesus's real birthday was. And if we can figure out when John the Baptist's birthday was, since they're six months apart, we can do that.

But I want to go back to what you said about the temple being destroyed in A.D. 70, August 4, A.D. 70. You knew who the priest was because the Romans told you. Are you saying then that, Bill, that the 24 divisions of Levites always served the same week every year, so we could assume that if we went back to 4 B.C. or whenever Jesus was born, that we would know?

BILL:

Correct? Yeah. There's no written record of the order in 4 B.C. But the closest we can come is 70 A.D. There are some records of when they came out of Babylon and, you know, Ezra and Nehemiah, and they restarted up again, but that's several hundred years before Christ. So, the closest we have is the 70 A.D. that's where they actually say this priestly division is on duty. And we also have the Roman calendar to match it up with. And so, Josephus said that Jehoiarib was on duty.

The Jerusalem Talmud said that Jehoiarib was on duty. He's the first course. And so, eight weeks later is the last week of September. So, if we know the last week of September is when John the Baptist was conceived, the Scriptures twice say that in the six months of Elizabeth's pregnancy, the wife of Zechariah, is when the angel appeared to Mary, and she conceived of the Holy Spirit. And so, Luke 1:26, it says in the six months of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth to a virgin pledged to be married, to a man named Joseph, a descendant David.

The virgin's name was Mary. And then it goes on. The angel answered and behold thy cousin Elizabeth. She has conceived in her old age and is in her sixth month with her, who was called barren. There's no other pregnancy in the Bible that they give us the date of the month of the pregnancy. This is like God's really wanting six months. Six months, get it right. And so, six months after the last week of September is the last week of March. And the traditional date for the Feast of the Annunciation is March 25, when the angel announced to Mary that the Holy

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Spirit was going to come upon her, and she would conceive. And so, nine months after March 25th is, guess what? December 25th.

FRANK:

Boom. Okay.

BILL:

And so, you have a book Susan K. Roll, wrote 'Toward the Origins of Christmas', 1995. St. John Chrysostom, now he lived in the third century, which says St. John Chrysostom counts off the months of Elizabeth's pregnancy and dates Mary's conception from the six months of Elizabeth, then counts off another nine months to arrive at the birth date of Christ.

Another 4th century work called 'On Solstices and Equinoxes', says our Lord was conceived in the month of March, March 25, which is the day of the Passion of the Lord and of His conception. For on the day He was conceived, on the same, He suffered. So, Yale Professor Andrew McGowan wrote in 'How December 25th Became Christmas Biblical Archaeological Review Online', he said it was a common belief that the Messiah fulfilled his mission on the anniversary of its inception.

So, you have a lot of these early church writers say, March 25 He was conceived, and then 33 years later, March 25, he was crucified. Now, some in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, they tend to lean toward a January 6 date for the birth of Christ and, you know, a little bit off. So, it's like—

FRANK:

It could have been Mary was late. You know, that's their first baby. [Laughter]

BILL:

And so, forever you have the east and the west not agreeing completely on the date. So that goes back to even the disagreement way back when. So, here's St. Augustine. He wrote in 417 A.D. in a work called 'On the Trinity.' He said, for Jesus is believed to have been conceived on the 25th of March, upon which day He also suffered.

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So, if we have Jesus conceived, March 25th is what he said. Excuse me, 25th. If he's conceived on March 25th, nine months later is December 25th. Now, some people say that there would not be sheep in the fields in December.

But when you look at it, number one, sheep were needed all year round for sacrifices. They would have a daily sacrifice. So, they needed lambs. And then you look at the temperatures. The temperature of Bethlehem is like Dallas, Texas. It gets in the low 40s in December. So, it's cool, but it's not frigid cold. And so, a little research, I went online onto agricultural and farming websites and here's one called 'The War Horse Valley County Farm Park'.

It's a UK website. It says lambs are born around 145 days, about 4.5 months after the ewe falls pregnant. Lambing can start as early as December and go on as late as June. Another agricultural website from Maryland, it says 'Carroll County Grown Farms: Why are lambs born during the winter?' Sheep are short day long night breeders, meaning they breed late summer, early fall.

Consequently, their lambs are born in the winter and spring. So, it says the winter. So, another somebody might say, well, December 25th was chosen to replace Saturnalia. Well, Saturnalia is December 22nd. So, if you're going to pick a date, why don't you pick the date? So, what's Saturnalia? So, it's the winter solstice. For those not familiar, the Earth goes around the sun in an elliptical orbit.

And so, the Earth is the furthest away from the Sun, December 22nd. And then it comes back around and it's furthest away from the Sun and the other part of the elliptical orbit in June 22. So, when it's the furthest away, it stops going away and it starts coming back again. When you're looking at it from the Earth's perspective, it looks like the Sun is standing still for two days. And so, the word for Sun is sol and stice means still.

Solstice means sun standing still. And so, the winter solstice is December 22nd. Summer solstice is June 22nd. And then halfway in between is called the equinox. Equi means equal, Knox means night. And you have the spring equinox and the fall equinox, 12 hours exactly of sunlight and 12 hours of darkness. And so again, December 22nd is the date that they celebrated Saturnalia, not December 25th. But there's another Roman date, Sol Invictus.

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What's that? Well, sol means sun and Invictus means invincible or unconquerable. And so, the Romans had a celebration of the unconquerable sun God on December 25th. And so, the thought is, maybe Christians picked December 25th to overshadow Sol Invictus. Well, no Christian writer prior to the 12th century ever suggested this. In fact, Christians were celebrating December 25th before the Romans instituted Sol Invictus.

There was a Pope, Telesphorus, the seventh Bishop of Rome. He died in 136 A.D., and he began the midnight mass on December 25 as part of the liturgy because he wanted to celebrate the exact hour that Jesus was born. So, as of 136 A.D., the seventh person that followed, you know, Peter there in Rome, is celebrating December 25th at midnight.

FRANK:

Is that, is that the earliest we know about it being celebrated?

BILL:

Yes, as far as my research goes.

FRANK:

136 A.D. That's pretty early. By the way, let me amplify a couple things you just said there about shepherds being in the field. The forecast for Bethlehem this Christmas, the high is 61. The low is 45. Yeah, that's not too cold. You could have sheep out in the field. No sweat there. And then the other passage you mentioned earlier, I just want to amplify too, Bill. Luke 1, when Mary and Elizabeth meet, it says that when Elizabeth.

This is Luke 1:41. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. This is one of the more overlooked but very pro-life passages in the Bible. When it says, when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, it doesn't say the blob, the fetus, even. It says the baby. The baby leapt in the womb. Even the Bible is explicit about what's in the womb.

And we all know what's in the womb. We try and suppress it so we can have a more convenient life and say, well, if this baby or this fetus is an inconvenience, I have the right to get rid of it.

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But this is a very pro-life passage. Jesus was just a zygote. He was just fertilized. And yet, it says here that in verse 42, in a loud voice, Elizabeth exclaimed, blessed are you to Mary among women, and blessed is the child you bear.

The baby, Jesus is a zygote. He's just been fertilized. And Elizabeth calls Jesus a child that you bear. So, this is a pro-life passage here in Luke chapter one. All right, no extra charge for that. Sorry, Bill, continue.

BILL:

No, I love that. I love that. So, every Christian goes back to believing in Christ. And Christ was in Mary's womb from the moment the Holy Spirit came over her.

FRANK:

That's right.

BILL:

Right. So, we believe that life begins at conception and Jesus's divine life began at conception in Mary at that very moment. Now, let's fast forward. You have a 181 A.D., a Theophilus of Caesarea. That's when he dies. So, he probably gave the quote before he died, but at least 181, he's the Bishop of the See in Palestine. And so, this was an important area. And he said, we ought to celebrate the birthday of our Lord on what day soever the 25th of December shall happen. You know, Wednesday, Thursday, whatever day.

Now you have a saint, Hippolytus of Rome, and he writes commentary on Daniel around 204 AD and he says for the first advent of our Lord in the flesh when he was born in Bethlehem was December 25th. He suffered in the 33rd year, March 25th, Friday in the 18th year of Tiberius Caesar, while Rufus and rebellion were consuls. So, he also believes that Jesus was conceived and crucified on March 25th.

But nevertheless, he says that the first advent or the first appearing of Jesus was in Bethlehem on December 25th. So now he made that acknowledgment in 204 A.D. Why is this significant? It's not until 274 A.D. that Roman Emperor Aurelian introduces the cult of Sol Invictus. The Christians were celebrating December 25th before the Romans.

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Now, you look at the history. There were 10 major persecutions, beginning with Nero. Wanting to do what? Stamp out Christians, erase Christians, kill Christians, burn them. Right? And so, it would only make sense that here you have a Roman emperor trying to stop this movement and he picks their day, December 25, and he tries to overlap it with his pagan day. Very similar to Kwanzaa. What's Kwanzaa?

Well, it was started in 1966 by a liberal professor, California State University, a former felon named Ron Everett. Right? And so, this is during the 1960's and the rioting and everything. And he started it specifically to be an alternative to Christmas.

FRANK:

Wow.

BILL:

Here's a guy that starts something to intentionally to want to overlap and overshadow Christmas. If they're doing it today, Aurelian very well could have wanted it done back then.

FRANK:

Well, not only that, but it reminds me of what Emperor Hadrian tried to do to stamp out Christianity. He would put temples on Christian sites like Bethlehem, like the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It turned out to be the Church of Holy Sepulcher, but the place where Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead.

He put inadvertently; by putting these temples in those places, he inadvertently marked the places where they really were. So, Christians, when they came back after Constantine declared Christianity a tolerable religion, when they came back to the Holy Land, they knew where Jesus was born.

They knew where Jesus died and rose again because Hadrian had put these temples, these pagan temples in those locations to try and obscure Christianity. Inadvertently, he actually marked those spots. So, yeah, trying to stamp Christianity out hasn't worked in the past. It actually backfires quite often.

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BILL:

Yeah. And Hadrian built a temple to Jupiter on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. He hunted down every descendant of David and killed him. Now, we don't need any more descendants of David because Jesus was the only one we cared about.

But Adrian made sure there weren't any more descendants of David. Hadrian sent a legion over there. It's called the Simon Kokhba Revolt. And this Simon Kokhba had 400,000 Jews as soldiers. And so, when Hadrian sends a legion over there, they wipe it out. He sends another legion over there, it's gone. It's like erased from history. And so, Hadrian decides to send every Roman legion over there and they go city by city, town by town, wiping out, killing these Jews.

And then he said the final coup d'etat, I'm going to erase this people from history. He changes on the map Judea, and he writes Syria Palestina. So, that's where you get the name Palestine from.

FRANK:

That's right. Palestine, named after the Philistines, by the way, the arch enemy of the Jews. So, there's never been a state known as Palestine, ladies and gentlemen. Not to go too far field here, but that was just a name that Hadrian in 135 A.D. gave to the area to try and completely wipe out the Jews.

BILL:

Yeah, yeah. And matter of fact, even the 1930's and 40's, you had Rabbi Stephen Wise, he was the head of the Palestine Appeal, and it was a Jewish organization. And Franklin Roosevelt is supporting him, and he says, I applaud your efforts to renew in Palestine the ancient Jewish connection, you know, to the land. And so, they're still calling Palestine the land of the Jews.

It wasn't until the KGB started the PLO, Palestinian Liberation Organization in Moscow in the 1960's, and then Yasser Arafat got the head of it that they came up with "a Palestinian". It was part of a communist tactic called Critical Race Theory, where if you're wanting to take over a country you send in KGB agents, and they look at all the groups, ethnically, religiously, economically, and they call some victims, other oppressors, haves and have nots.

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And then they weaponize them against each other to create internal crises. And then in the confusion, they seize power. And so, whenever you see liberation, you know, right, they have the ELN in Bolivia and FARC in Colombia and, and in the Congo, and they were all use liberation, you know, Kosovo liberation.

And whenever you see liberation in the name, that's Moscow, that's KGB. And so, Galatians 4, when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman made under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption as sons. And one of the little things I get into is looking at the history.

So, probably around 1800 is when Abraham lived, and you know this better than I do. But then probably around 1400 B.C. maybe 1300 B.C. is when the Jews came out of Egypt into the Holy Land, and they got the law. And in the law, Moses has seven major feasts and they're at three times of the year.

So, the first three are Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Feast of First Fruits, and they take place in the spring. Fifty days later is the Feast of Pentecost when you celebrate the beginning of the harvest and the end of the harvest season, you have the feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and Tabernacles.

And so, now you have... And those three times they're supposed to go to Jerusalem, you know, go to gather together. And so, that's around 1400 B.C. is when they get that law. Then you have 722 B.C., the 10 northern tribes of Israel are taken captive and scattered around. And then the next century you have Judea taking captive to Babylon. A small percentage goes back, but a lot of them don't.

But now you have pockets of Jews scattered all around the world. And then you come up to Alexander the Great, conquers and spreads the Greek language. Now you have a common language. And then you have the Roman road system is built connecting it all. And then around, beginning around 40 B.C. you have the Pax Romana. Pax means peace. And it was the Roman peace. It's a 100 year period of world peace. And 40 years into that, Jesus is born, 33 years later He's crucified.

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And then all the way up until 66 A.D. when you have Nero beginning the first persecution. And so, if you think of it, on the day of Pentecost, all these people are gathered from around the world to celebrate the beginning of the harvest season. And they hear the Gospel. And at the end of the week, they can travel back on the Roman roads. They can speak to people in the Greek language. There's a Pax Romana. There's peace, right? And then they go back to these Jewish settlements all around the world.

It's almost as if God, in the fullness of time, set up the world for the rapid spread of a message where in one week's time something can happen, and boom, at the end of the week, the whole world knows about it. And so anyway, this is Galatians 4. It says, and when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption as sons.

And for God so loved the world, John 3:16, that He sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever shall believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. God's a just God. He has to judge every sin. But He's a loving God in that He provided His Son to take the judgment for the sin.

FRANK:

That's why Christmas is necessary, friends.

BILL:

And you think, well, how can one person's death pay for all of us? Jesus is divine. And so, if you were to have a scale, I have a degree in Accounting, so I like things that balance. You take an eternal being who is innocent suffering for a finite period of time. It's equal to all of us finite beings who are guilty, suffering for an eternal period of time.

Right? An eternal being who's innocent suffering for a finite period of time is equal to all of us finite beings who are guilty suffering for an eternal period of time. Infinity times finite equals finite times infinity. An unlimited being suffering for a limited period of time is equal to all of us limited being suffering for an unlimited period of time.

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Jesus suffered the equivalent of eternal damnation in all of our places. And it says, a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. He experienced that day on the cross as if it was a thousand years, right? And then He rose from the dead to prove He was who He said He was.

So, the Lamb is God's way to love you without having to judge you. He's a just God. He has to judge every sin, because if He doesn't judge the sin, by default, He'd be giving consent to the sin, like in a wedding ceremony, if you're silent, you're giving your consent. It's called the rule of tacit admission.

And so, if there's a sin, God has to judge it. Otherwise, He's denying His just nature. And so, when people, if you expect God to overlook your sin, you're expecting Him to deny Himself. He can't deny Himself. But what happens is He sent His Son to take the judgment in our place, and we can approach Him through the Son, and we can pass out of judgment and into the kingdom of His dear Son. And so, He's a complete, just God, but He's a complete, loving God because He provided the Lamb to take the judgment.

FRANK:

I want you to just take a minute to reflect upon that. If this is really true, if the story of Jesus is really true, this is the most incredible and important fact in history that the Creator and Sustainer of the universe added flesh to His deity to come to Earth and save the people who rebelled against Him from their own inequity, from their own sin.

And He took our punishment upon Himself. And then as a method of us accepting that we trust in Him so we can be forgiven for what we've done and then given His righteousness. That's the purpose God came to earth for. In fact, Christianity is the answer to the problem of evil. People are always saying, well, if there's a good God, why is there evil in the world? Well, there's evil in the world because people made a choice to rebel against God.

And yet, God initially, as soon as that happened, initiated the rescue plan where He would come to Earth and take evil upon Himself so it wouldn't be foisted upon us eternally. So, Christianity is called the greatest story ever told for a reason, because it is, and it just so happens to be true, even on the small things like the detective work that Dr. Federer here, Bill

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Federer, just did for us a few minutes ago on this broadcast to try and figure out, is December 25th really the birthday of Jesus, even though the Bible doesn't explicitly say so?

Well, it appears to be. Yes, it is. And it goes all the way back to looking at who a particular priest was on a particular day in 70 A.D. And from that point, you can figure out that, yeah, He was probably born on December 25th. Let me ask you another thing, Bill, before we move on to just a few of the holiday traditions.

BILL:

I want to make one comment about when we're talking about the gospel is Charles Wesley wrote the hymn Amazing love how could it be that Thou, My God should die for me. When Abraham and Isaac are going to the top of Mount Moriah, Isaac says, father, we have the wood for the sacrifice, and we have the coals for the sacrifice. But where's the sacrifice? And Abraham says, son, God will provide Himself a sacrifice. And it has a double meaning. I'm trusting God will have the ram up in the bush.

But the other meaning is God will provide Himself as the sacrifice. And that's what happened. Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, the only begotten Son of God, in the plan of redemption that was hidden from ages. It was a hidden plan, because if the princes of this world had known, they never would have crucified the Lord of glory.

FRANK:

1 Corinthians 2. Important passage. Yes.

BILL:

Apostle Paul called it the mystery of the Gospel, hidden from the foundations of the world, now revealed through us, His saints. Right? And so, in this hidden plan, Jesus, the Son of God became man, became a lamb, and He took the wrath of a just God upon Himself in our place.

And so, in mathematical equations, there's constants and variables. In the equation of redemption, the constant is God is just, was, is, and forever will be just. That will never change. The variable is who takes the judgment. You or a substitute. Jesus is our substitute.

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FRANK:

Well said. Well said. I want to ask you a couple things before we go through a few of the family or holiday traditions to see where they came from. And as I mentioned, friends, if you want to get all or a lot more of this, you can go to a video. We're going to give you access to here at the end of the program. But you can also get Bill's book, 'There Really is a Santa Claus: The History of St. Nicholas and Christmas Holiday Traditions'.

There it is right there for those of you watching on YouTube. That book right there goes into a lot of detail as to how we got, you know, St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, gift giving, stockings, nativity scenes, the North Pole, reindeer, all that stuff. So, if you really want to see how it all has derived over the centuries, you can in Bill's book, 'There Really is a Santa Claus'.

And as I say, a video we're going to give you access to at the end of this. You'll be able to see some of it as well. But Bill, let me ask you a couple historical questions regarding Herod. What evidence do we have that Herod is the kind of guy who might order the death of babies?

BILL:

Yeah. So, he was pretty cruel. For those not familiar, you had the Jews come back from Babylon and they rebuilt the temple and then you had Alexander the Great conquers. He conquers all of Persia, and he conquers the Holy Land.

FRANK:

300's B.C. friends about there, 300's B.C. Yep.

BILL:

And so, then you have the... He dies, his kingdom's divided into four. And the general, Seleucius takes Persia, another general, Ptolemy takes Egypt, and then another one takes Macedonia, and then another Greece. But the one that has the Persian area is the one who wanted to wipe out the Jews with the Maccabees period. And the Jews fought back, cleaned out the temple, and then poured the oil into the candle, golden candle oil lamp.

And there's only enough oil for one day. It burns for eight days. And so, they call it the Feast of Dedication, the Festival of Lights. From that point on, the Jews drive out these... Sometimes

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they're called Syrians because that area still controlled parts of Syria. And so, for a century, the Jews have their own kingdom. And so, they get to be an independent nation again. It's tremendous.

Now, when they came back from Babylon, you had. Ezra is a priest, and he says, we need to teach the law. And so, he would send the Levites out, they would build platforms, they would read through the law. And then there were students of the law. And the word for student is Pharisee. And so, out of all the planet Earth, they were worshiping God as close to the way God wanted to be worshiped. But when Alexander the Great's people conquered, they brought Greek stuff.

And the Greeks were pagans, and they were into naked statues, and they ran the Olympics naked. The word gym for gymnasium, is the Greek word for naked. And they would build statues. And anyway, and so the Sadducees were—

FRANK:

By the way, Bill, that might solve the transgender problem. If we all went to the Olympics naked, then we would know who really should belong in this game. [Laughter] But I'm sorry, go ahead.

BILL:

And so, the Jews that wanted to kiss up to these Greeks are called Sadducees. They're nominal Jews. They're secular Jews. They look at the Pharisees sort of with embarrassment, like, oh, yeah, those [Pharisees], you know. So, the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection.

FRANK:

That's why they were sad, you see. That's right. [Laughter]

BILL:

They didn't believe in prophecies. But they were kissing up to the Greek leader. So, they got left in charge of Jerusalem and left in charge of the Temple Mount. And the Pharisees were out in the countryside. And they were the decentralized, where every little town had a synagogue,

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which means meeting place. And that's where the Pharisees would do what? Teach the law. That's what they did.

And so, you had, inside of this 100 year, what's called Hasmonean kingdom, you had the Sadducees and Pharisees going after each other, even to the point of getting into a civil war. And so, you had the Romans were a republic, and they had a general named Pompey, and he's conquering around the Black Sea, the Kingdom of Pontus.

And he conquers into Armenia with Mithrades VI. And so, it's called the Mithratic wars with Rome. And then, anyway, so Pompey gets word that there's a civil war going on in this Jewish Kingdom between—

FRANK:

This is about what year, Bill, are we talking about?

BILL:

This would be around 69 B.C. or so.

FRANK:

69 B.C. All right.

BILL:

And so, you have Pompey saying, hey, great time to invade. And so, he goes into Judea, because it's named after the Tribe of Judah. He goes into Judea, and the Pharisees side with Pompey against the Sadducees, who control Jerusalem. He comes in, they conquer the Sadducees. They even have a holdout at the Temple Mount. And when Pompey goes into the temple, and he sees it, and he comes out and he tells his men, don't touch this place.

And so, that's when, from that point on, we begin to see Rome taking more of an interest in politically, in what's going on in Judea. And then you have Herod Antipater, or Herod's father named Antipater. And so, you have Pompey. There's a triumvirate between Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus. Crassus dies.

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53 B.C., and it turns into a civil war now between Caesar and Pompey. And there's fighting going on in Egypt, and Julius Caesar is about to get ambushed and killed. And this Edumean, and Edu means Esau's descendants. So, Antipater, which means like a father, but Antipater rescues Caesar, and Caesar's very grateful.

And on the way back, he says, can I do anything for you? And Antipater said, yeah, I'd like to be the governor of Judea. And that's when Julius Caesar says, done, you're it. And so, Antipater's son is Herod the Great.

FRANK:

Oh, Antipater's son is Herod the Great. Okay.

BILL:

Yeah. And so, actually I want to correct myself. It was 63 B.C. when Pompey invaded into Judea.

FRANK:

And so, Herod the Great takes over Judea in 37 B.C. and—

BILL:

Right, so—

FRANK:

He's not a nice guy, is he?

BILL:

Yeah. So, Herod was, let's see, just giving you some dates here. It was 47 B.C. when Julius Caesar was rescued by Antipater.

FRANK:

The father of Herod the Great. Okay.

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BILL:

Right, that was 37. And so, Caesar's assassinated in 44 B.C., Antipater is poisoned in 43 B.C. Then you have Mark Anthony and Caesar's nephew Octavian, who becomes Augustus Caesar. There's what's called the Roman Parthians having a war. And so, this conflict spills over into Judea and there's the high priest who's sort of related to royalty.

And there's a sort of an interesting little trivia here. So, one of the Jewish leaders was named Aristobulus II and he sided with the Parthians and then he had an uncle named Hyrcanus II and he's the high priest and they're going to meet. And according to Josephus, they meet, and he bites off Hyrcanus' ear.

FRANK:

Mike Tyson. [Laughter]

BILL:

Yeah. And so, why is this important? Now he's disqualified from being high priest because the priest cannot have any physical deformities. So, he like got back at his relative. So, Herod the Great, around 36 B.C. ransoms Hyrcanus II from the Parthians, the guy with his bit off ear.

Herod marries Mariamne. She's the granddaughter of Hyrcanus II, the guy with his ear bit off. And so, this allows Herod to sort of claim legitimacy with this Hasmonean Kingdom rule, this hundred year period where the Jews... Because he's married into this royal family. Mariamne pressures Herod to appoint her 17 year old son as the high priest.

So, he's 17 years old, he's Aristobulus III. He's the last male descendant of this Hasmonean royal line and Herod fears him as a rival to the throne. So, Herod orders Aristobulus III to be assassinated by drowning while bathing in a pool at a party. So, this is beginning to give us a little insight into—

FRANK:

Charming, charming.

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BILL:

So, at the height of the Roman civil war, now this is between Octavian Augustus and Mark Anthony with Cleopatra, which takes place 31 B.C., it's the most consequential naval battle in world history, considered by many. And Cleopatra commits suicide.

There's a terrible earthquake in Judea, kills 30,000 people in 31 B.C. So, Herod meets Augustus Caesar on the Island of Rhodes. And Herod pledges his allegiance to Augustus Caesar. In return, Augustus Caesar confirms Herod as the King of Judea.

FRANK:

King of the Jews.

BILL:

And if you remember, Jesus, He's telling a parable and He says, you know, a king left some people in charge and then he went off to receive a kingdom and then he comes back and then he, you know, kills the people that didn't want him to rule over him. It says who would go and receive this? Herod. He went to Augustus to get permission.

So, now Herod is suspicious of plots against him, and he had his 80 year old former high priest Hyrcanus II with the ear bit off, has him executed. And then Herod is supported by the Sadducees. They're the secular ones. And Herod funds the reconstruction of the second temple in Jerusalem. And that's the temple that Jesus says, do you see all these buildings?

Not one stone will be left upon another. Herod was what's called the Hellenized leader. Helen of Troy was one of the, you know, early names in Greek history with Ulysses and Odysseus and the Iliad and the Odyssey. So, when you're spreading the Greek stuff, they call it Hellenized. So, Herod was a Hellenized leader. He liked the Greek stuff. He restarted the Olympic Games. So, the Olympic—

FRANK:

Still naked, Bill? We're still running the Olympic Games naked at this point? Okay.

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BILL:

Yeah. And then naked statues they would build. All right, so when Greece was Greece and Rome was Rome, but then Rome conquered Greece, and once Rome conquered Greece, you got Pompey, right? He's conquering.

The Greeks don't have any money, and they can't fund these games anymore. But now you have, that was 146 B.C. The Olympics stop. But it's Herod the Great that restarts them. And they're honoring Zeus. Herod also erects pagan temples in honor of Baal, another one in honor of Apollos, another temple to honor Augustus Caesar.

And he actually names the city Caesarea after Augustus Caesar. So yes, Herod's building the temple in Jerusalem, but he's also building pagan temples. Herod had many wives and many children, so his sons by Mariama were Aristobulus and Alexander. Alexander marries a Cappadocian princess. That's up near Turkey.

And they have a son named Tigranes V, who's the king of Armenia. Herod was paranoid of treason, so he divorced, drowned, exiled, or executed many of his family members, including his wife Mariamne, and including her sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, and as well as Antipater, a son by another wife. So, he's got a wife, and three sons are killed by Herod because he's nervous. He's fearful of somebody plotting against him.

FRANK:

Bill, who was it who said, I'd rather be Herod's pig than his son? Somebody said that. [Laughter] Yeah, it was some historian at the time said Herod was such a bad guy, you're better off being his pig than his son.

BILL:

And so, Herod, when he's getting old, about to die, he feared that no one would mourn his death. Matter of fact, he overheard that they were going to celebrate his death. So, he ordered that upon his death, they were to arrest all the political leaders in Jerusalem and execute them. So, it's like, if you're not going to mourn me, you're going to mourn somebody. But when he dies, his son, Herod Archelaus, did not carry out this order, so—

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FRANK:

But Archelaus was a pretty bad guy himself, it turned out to be. He wiped out a whole bunch of Jews at the temple. That's why Joseph did not want to take Jesus to the area that Archelaus was covering, which was, of course, Jerusalem. That's why it says in Matthew that he chose instead to go to Nazareth because he didn't want to go back to a homicidal maniac, Archelaus, when he fled from a homicidal maniac. Homicidal maniac, easy for me to say.

His father, Herod the Great. This could be like a soap opera, the way this goes, Bill. It's all this intrigue, and it could be a cop show, almost could be Game of Thrones. I've never seen the Game of Thrones thing, but I hear it has a lot to do with this. A lot of power, sex, money. It's all going on. There's a lot of conflict. And so, when we asked the question about is Herod the kind of guy who might order the death of babies? The answer is absolutely yes.

BILL:

Oh, definitely, definitely. Now, Herod, the wise men from the east came to visit him. And so, a little unpacking of this. Daniel is taken captive to Babylon. And Daniel was into studying prophecies, and he saw that Jeremiah said they would be in captivity 70 years and then be allowed to come back and to the Holy Land.

And so, Daniel set himself to fast and pray. The angel Michael was sent to him and said, from the date you started fasting, I was sent, but I was withstood by the prince of the power of the power of the air in Persia. But now I'm here. And anyway, so Daniel is into studying these prophecies and he's made chief of the wise men.

So, this is what Daniel 5 says. The Queen said, oh King Belshazzar, there is a man in thy kingdom whom Nebuchadnezzar, thy father made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldean and soothsayers, the same as Daniel. Now, magicians was not rabbit out of a hat. Magi meant wise men. And these were the super wise counselors to the king. And Daniel was the master of them. And Daniel was Jewish. And Daniel studied prophecies.

And so, the thought is he must have had a school of wise men studying prophecies and studying astrology. And then there's Daniel 6. King Darius wrote, I make a decree that everyone tremble

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before the God of Daniel, for He's the living God, His dominion shall even be unto the end. He worketh signs and wonders in the heavens and the earth.

So, now he's looking at the heavens. And so, the thought is, and I'm not an expert at this, but the same way we have the Scriptures and then cults come along and twist the Scriptures and even come up with, you know, these different other books and so forth. Well, the thought was that when God created the heavens, He says He made them for signs and seasons, but He made them for signs.

And so, the thought is that maybe the Gospel story, the virgin shall bear [unintelligible], and you know, the hunter will step on the serpent's head or the, you know, maybe the story of the Gospel was in the stars and the devil perverted that and turned it into horoscopes. Take the truth of it and twisted it the same way we have the truth of the Gospels, and the devil tries to twist it today.

Again, I'm not an expert, but Daniel and his wise men were studying the stars. And the thought is, the wise men that came to see Jesus could have been from Persia and could have been ones from Daniel's school, so to speak. So, it says in Matthew 2, now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea, in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem saying, where is He that's born King of the Jews?

For we have seen a star in the east and have come to worship Him. And so, you can picture Herod, he's killing his own sons because they wanted to usurp and become king. He's killing his wives; he's killing all these people. And then these people come from the east and they're like wise men and they're like, rich and they're carrying expensive gifts. And they're like, where's the king of the Jews? He's like, hello, I'm the king. It's like, what do you mean there's another king? And so, now we don't know if these wise men came the instant Jesus was born or a year or two later.

Because when Herod turns to his wise men, his scribes, and says, quick, tell me where's this king supposed to be born? And they go, page, page, page, Bethlehem. And then Herod's response was, kill all the babies in Bethlehem two years and younger. So, it could have been a year or two after Jesus being born that the wise men came.

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FRANK:

By the way, friends. And we'll cover this on a future program. One of the parallels between the book of Exodus and the Gospels is the fact that the leader wants to murder Hebrew children. In fact, there are several parallels between the book of Matthew and the book called Exodus. And we're going to cover that on a future program. But one of the interesting parallels is that Pharaoh wants the Hebrew babies dead because he's fearing that the Hebrews might take over.

And in the New Testament, you have Herod wanting to kill the Hebrew babies because he's afraid there may be a king that might take his power away. And we'll cover that in a future show. But it just struck me, as we're talking about that, Bill, that there is that parallel there. Now, there are so many holiday traditions we could go to.

BILL:

I want to throw one thing in.

FRANK:

Go ahead, Bill.

BILL:

Prophecies. They have to be not clear enough so the devil can't figure them out and try to stop them.

FRANK:

That's right.

BILL:

Right. Like Herod. If the devil could have figured out the prophecies, he would've tried to kill everybody along the way to keep it from. So, God had to have the prophecies not clear enough so the devil couldn't figure them out and try to stop him. But they had to be clear enough so that when Jesus was born and He fulfilled them, He's walking on the road to Emmaus after the resurrection.

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And it says, beginning with Moses and the prophets, He went through all the Scriptures confirming that He's the Messiah. So, the prophecies have to be clear enough to confirm. It's sort of like those little cards that you would have, you know, as a kid that have like plastic ridges on it, maybe a Cracker Jacks prize. And if you look at the picture from one angle, you see one picture.

But if you tilt it and look at it from another angle, you see another picture. And so, when the devil looks at the prophecies, he can't figure them out. But when people are filled with the Holy Spirit, you get saved. The Holy Spirit unlocks them. Now you can see and they... It's like driving by a cornfield. From one point of view, makes no sense. But you turn the corner, boom. You see all the rows line up.

FRANK:

Yeah. I think the New Testament is the box top to the prophecy in the Old Testament. And the passage you mentioned before, Bill, I want to highlight right now because it's a very important passage that I just learned about this passage applying to what you're saying just a few years ago.

But it makes a lot of sense now that you mentioned it. In 1 Corinthians chapter 2, Paul says, we declare God's wisdom a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they never would have crucified the Lord of glory. What you're saying here is, and what Paul is saying here is that if the prophecies were too clear, as Bill just said, ladies and gentlemen, they would have never allowed the sacrifice of Christ to go through.

They would never have done that because that would signal their defeat. But the prophecies were vague enough that they didn't quite get it until it already happened. Because if they had gotten it, none of the rulers of this age understood it.

For if they had, they never would have crucified the Lord of glory. That's again, 1 Corinthians 2:8. But the prophecy's looking back. Once you look back after you see what's happened with the New Testament, you go, oh, the New Testament now provides the box top to prophecy from the Old Testament.

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Now I can see how Micah 5:2, and Daniel 9, and Isaiah 53, and Isaiah 7, and Isaiah 9, how all these passages fit together like a puzzle after I have the box top known as the New Testament. So, that's a very important point, Bill.

BILL:

Yeah, it's like the prophecies are given in encryption. It's not until you have the Holy Spirit and the New Testament that you can decrypt it, right?

FRANK:

That's right. Yeah. You've got the key now. You've got the box top to the whole thing.

BILL:

Now, I mentioned the wise men. I have to throw in one last thing.

FRANK:

Go ahead.

BILL:

The revealing of Jesus to the world is called epiphany. And so, we call it three wise men because there were three gifts. We don't know if there were three wise men. We know there's more than one because they're men and they had three gifts. So, we're assuming there's three. But when Jesus was revealed to them, the epiphany that's celebrated on January 6th, and this to Eastern Europe, to the Greek Orthodox is the holiest day.

And yet, Western Europe celebrated December 25 as the holiest day. And they could not decide which day was holier. So, they decided at the Council of Tours in 567 A.D. to make all 12 days from December 25th to January 6th the 12 days of Christmas.

FRANK:

So, contrary to what we think, the 12 days of Christmas lead up to Christmas. You're saying that the 12 days of Christmas started Christmas and go to January 6th. But why did they think it was January 6th, Bill, rather than December 25th?

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BILL:

Well, January 6th is the epiphany. That's the three wise men visiting.

FRANK:

Oh, okay, okay.

BILL:

And so, the days leading up to Christmas is called Advent. And then beginning in 480 A.D., they would fast three times a week for the four weeks leading up to the birth of Christ. But the days of Christmas are between December 25th and January 6th. And they called them holy days. And over the centuries, holy day got pronounced holiday.

So, when they say, don't say Merry Christmas, just say happy holiday. Well, holiday means holy day. And what are the holy days but the 12 Days of Christmas? And then one more thing. If I could give the calendar, the history of the calendar.

So, important events were dated based on the most important king in the era. You have 1 Kings 18, in the 14th year of King Hezekiah, Luke 3 in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. So, they didn't have the calendar we have today. They would just pick. It would be like us saying, you know, in the second year of Trump's first term, it's like, okay, okay, you try.

And so, it wasn't until 526 A.D. in the reign of the Christian Roman Emperor Justinian, that there was a monk named Dionysius Exeges. And they didn't have copy machines. Everything that was copied had to be hand copied by a monk. They were very educated, and they were very detail minded, and they would date things.

And so, he's like, look, we're dating stuff based on this Diocletian, this emperor who was a pagan who killed Christians, and they called it Anno Diocletian. And he's like, I don't want to date stuff. So, on his own, he counts back as best as he can to the birth of Christ and he begins to put in the margin Anno Domini, in the year of our Lord's reign.

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Now, we know he's a little off because he didn't have the year 0. He goes from 1 B.C. to 1 A.D. But he does this. Well, the other monks pick up on it and they do it. And as the centuries go on, they totally forget Diocletian and they just dated Anno Domini in the year of our Lord.

And when Attila the Hun conquers, a lot of civilizations are destroyed, but the monks are in monasteries and they're preserving this. And then Islam comes in, destroys, but these monks in the monasteries. And then the Vikings come in and destroy. But the... And then you have, when the Muslims are invading into Turkey, the Greek scholars flee west, and this is something we call the Renaissance. And then you have what's called the Age of Discovery.

And you have the Portuguese, Spanish, the English, the Dutch, and the sailing around the world starting colonies. And they would take their dating system with them for the colony. And then as the colonies grew and as the colonies began to take over some of these countries, that dating system was applied until now you have, that dating system is used throughout the entire world.

So, the whole world is dated to the birth of Christ. And some, in the early 1900's you had some archaeologists that were academics, and they didn't want to acknowledge B.C. before Christ and A.D., Anno Domini.

So, they changed it to BCE and CE, Before Common Era and Common Era. It's like, I have a question. When does it change from Before Common Era to Common Era? The birth of Christ. They cannot get away from it. Everything in the world is dated to the birth of Christ. And one of my favorite quotes is Clarence Mannion. He was the Dean of Notre Dame's law school during Eisenhower's reign, Eisenhower's term as president.

But Dean Clarence Mannion wrote regarding Christmas, the long march of measured time suddenly stopped and did an about face and started to march in another direction to a different drum, straight through the ensuing centuries of Christ and Christendom. B.C., Before Christ and A.D., Anno Domini, the year of our Lord, mark each one of the only reliable milestones along the path of world history.

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The end of the first time chain and the beginning of the second, came together on the night that Christ was born in Bethlehem. The first Christmas Day thus stands as the great divide for the timing and recording of all people, things, and events that have lived or taken place on this Earth, the one place on the long, long trail of time where the magnetic needle of history stands vertical and points up. Whenever you date something, you're pointing to Christ.

Everything is dated to the birth of Christ. And sure enough, it was on this date that you'd have kings be baptized. Like Clovis, the King of the Franks was baptized with 3,000 of his soldiers on Christmas Day in 496 A.D. St. Augustine of Canterbury baptizes 10,000 Anglo Saxons on Christmas Day in 597. Charlemagne's crowned Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas day in the year 800. St. Stephen's crowned King of Hungary on Christmas day in the year 1000.

FRANK:

And my wife was born on Christmas Day. My wife was born on Christmas Day, Bill. So, she gets ripped off every year. I got you one big gift. [Laughter]

BILL:

Well, happy birthday to your wife.

FRANK:

She's a Christmas baby, Stephanie. But Bill, we're out of time. I wanted to get to some of the other holiday traditions, but it's okay that we didn't because last year we had you on and we went through that.

And there's also your book, 'There Really is a Santa Claus: The History of St Nicholas and Christmas Holiday Traditions'. Friends, if you want to see Bill present that from last year's podcast, we've actually superimposed some graphics on there from Bill so you can see it.

Here's how you can see it. Type in CE for CrossExamined, events.org. All one word, CEEvents.org. You will see then how to access that video for free, CEEvents.org. He's going to tell you about St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, gift giving, presents, stockings, Xmas.

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Where does that come from? Nativity scenes, the North Pole, reindeer, elves. It all actually has a connection to the truth and you're going to want to see it. He does a great job in that presentation. So, go to CEEvents.org. Also want to mention that makes a great gift.

The 'How to Interpret Your Bible' course starts January 9, but you can give it to somebody for Christmas. Go to CrossExamined.org. Click on online courses. You'll see it there. I'll be your instructor. I'll be with you on at least five occasions for live. Five occasions for live Q&A Zoom sessions.

So, check that out as well. And just, Merry Christmas everyone. Bill always does a great job in telling us the truth about history and how we got to where we are. So, please check out his book, 'There Really is a Santa Claus'.

Also, check out his website. You want to sign up for his email. I get it. It's called AmericanMinute.com. Also, at the end of the year, remember that 100 of what you give to CrossExamined goes to ministry, 0% to buildings. So, when we go to a college campus, you're providing the funds for us to get there. I just learned yesterday that so far through 2024, we've impacted people on 110 million occasions.

When you add up all of our social media, and our podcasts, and our presentations, it's more than 110 million people influenced or occasions where people are influenced. And all of that is because of you, because 96% of what we do is donor funded. Four percent comes from online courses, that kind of stuff.

BILL:

Frank, I'd like to mention I got an email from an 18 year old in Germany and he saw me on your program. So, you're influencing people around the world.

FRANK:

Good. Well, thank you for that. I was actually in Egypt just last week and a young... Well, actually an older woman from Taiwan recognized me because she watches the YouTube channel. So, I'm in Memphis, Egypt, this old ancient city. And a lady goes, are you Frank? I said, well, yes.

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And so, I was kind of blessed that someone from Taiwan who happened to meet me in Egypt is watching the programs. And as you know, friends, we're also translating our material into about 15 different languages. That takes quite a bit of resources to do. That's our Kingdom AI project.

I've told you about that before, but not to belabor the point, go to CrossExamined.org. Click on donate if you want to help. Bill, leave our listeners with anything you want them to know about from your ministry. And a final message before we go.

BILL:

Well, AmericanMinute.com is my website and I want to encourage you to support Frank. And it's just an honor to be with you. I with the gospel, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever shall believe in Him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

So, we celebrate Emmanuel, God with us. FRANK: Amen. Ladies and gentlemen, great being with you. I'll see you, Lord willing, in a few days. I hope your Christmas is wonderful. See you right here. Lord willing. God bless.

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