

## Have You Succumbed to Stockholm Syndrome? With Dr. John G. West

(June 13, 2025)

### **FRANK:**

Ladies and gentlemen, there was a bank robbery in Stockholm, Sweden, in August of 1973. One morning that August, an escaped convict entered the bank with a submachine gun. And for the next 131 hours, that convict and another guy that joined him held four bank employees hostage. So, that's almost a week. Over the course of that crisis, something really strange happened.

The hostages began to bond with the criminals and view the police and the government as their enemies. And even when the criminals were threatening violence, the hostages expressed gratitude to them. Even at one point, the bank robber planned to shoot a hostage in the leg to show the authorities that he was serious. And the hostage later recalled, all that comes back to me is how kind I thought he was for saying it was just my leg he was going to shoot, unquote.

Now, this has become known as the Stockholm Syndrome, where you begin to bond with people actually opposed to you. What is this phenomenon? What explains it, and is it happening in Christianity today? Well, My guest today, Dr. John West, thinks it actually is happening today. In fact, he's written a brand new book. I just finished it 10 minutes ago before this interview. It's called 'Stockholm Syndrome Christianity.' It is a brilliant work.

It covers the waterfront as to what's been going on. Dr. West, as you may know, is a colleague of Stephen Meyer. He's been at Discovery Institute. In fact, he's the vice president there. He's been there since 1996 or so. He's written 13 books. This is only one of them. He's also done several, several documentaries which are in his bio.

We'll put it all in the show notes. He has his PhD. He's coming all the way from Seattle. Here he is, ladies and gentlemen, the great Dr. John West. I really like-- I really like this book. And I mean you cover so much in here. First of all, why did you decide to write it?



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**JOHN:**

Yeah, it was over a number of years where it really grew on me that as say, theologically conservative Christians, we often like to blame the atheists, the agnostics. They're ruining the culture. And I actually think there's a lot of truth to that.

But I began to see when I was in Christian higher education, in my work at Discovery, that there were a lot of Christian leaders who were sincere, personally sincere, but who they were end up pushing the same sort of stuff.

And I sort of came to the realization that if we didn't get our own house in order as Christians, how can we expect the secularist to come to reality? And so, that sort of was the burden of that. And again, seeing many people who, you know, there are some Christians who have completely fallen away and they're apostate, but I'm not so much focused on them as I was seeing people who personally believed Jesus was their savior and went to church, and I think they were sincere.

Yet in their public beliefs, whether it be on moral issues, social issues, or even theological issues, they were going in a different direction. And where were they getting that from? And as near as I could tell, they were reflecting say if they went into academia, it was what they learned in graduate school. If they were in politics or in the media, it was in their profession.

If you spend all this time held hostage, in essence, captive by all of the people who don't believe in Christianity around you, one result that some Christians can take from that is to end up basically becoming more like the people who are holding them captive and taking really imbibing their assumptions and their beliefs.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. The question is, are we influencing the culture, or is the culture influencing us? And your book points out that in many cases, certainly not all, but in many cases, the culture is influencing supposed Christians who are in positions of power. In fact, you point out that several cases, several court cases, several laws have been passed with the votes of supposedly Bible believing Christians, but they're voting against what the Bible and natural law tells them. How do we explain that, John?

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**JOHN:**

So again, I think it goes back to the Stockholm Syndrome mentality, which is if you are surrounded by people who have that you like and you form connections with, but that you're surrounded by people who have alien views than Christians, you end up beginning to adopt their mindset.

And, you know, part of it is always the love of the world, I get that. But part of it is these people genuinely believe it. They actually think they're speaking truth to power when they're basically bringing the secularist mindset to their fellow Christians rather than, as you put it exactly.

What are we most being influenced by? As Christ followers, we're called to be salt and light to the culture and missionaries to the culture. But in this case, these people are actually becoming missionaries from the secularist culture to their fellow Christians. And they think in their hearts, they tell themselves, well, this is the truth, because they've imbibed those operating assumptions.

So, for example, if you're someone who studied, say, in a seminary that maybe didn't have all that many orthodox people who were teaching that the Bible is filled with errors, and you can't trust it, and that we all scholars know that, even if you personally believe it, that's going to impact how you see the Bible.

And, you know, it talks in the Bible. We speak out of the things in our hearts. And so, I think it also says in the Bible, you know, bad company corrupts good morals. And so, I think that people aren't sufficiently aware of just how we can morph into the things around us.

**FRANK:**

You know, we did a podcast here about six months ago on the fact that too many of us, and we're all susceptible to this, too many of us are motivated more by incentive than truth. In other words, we're more apt to shade our Christian beliefs in order to keep our job or to not cause any consternation from people that we might love, or to keep the peace, or to get that raise, or to sleep with that person we want to sleep with because the incentive is too strong, and it overpowers our weak natures.

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We would rather have what the incentive provides us than to follow the truth of Jesus. And that's something we all need to deal with. And I think you point this out very clearly in Stockholm Syndrome Christianity. Friends, this is a very well written book. It's a very well researched book. It is a book with-- You've got like a hundred footnotes per chapter. I mean, you are really doing the research on this, John. But it's not written in an academic way. It's written in a very folksy way. It's a very understandable way.

So, people you need to get 'Stockholm Syndrome Christianity' by my guest today, Dr. John West. John, we're going to, we're going to name some names here in this program because that is what, a, a—

Someone who is a—

I'm looking for the right—

A shepherd does. Right? A shepherd chews away the wolves who may be dressed in sheep's clothing. And you do that in the book. Paul does that in the Bible. Jesus does that in the Bible. Peter-- In fact, you make a great distinction between 1 Peter 3:15 and 2 Peter.

And you point out the distinction between how Peter treated people who were interested in Christianity versus how he treated people who said they were Christians but were actually heretics. Can you unpack that distinction for us?

**JOHN:**

Yeah. So, I think it's certainly true. Peter talks in 1 Peter about the need to be winsome. Always have an answer for people who are asking about the gospel. And that's certainly true. And also, I would say, trying to find common ground with them so that you could build on that and point them to the truth.

But, when it comes to fellow Christians, whether it's Peter or Paul, who are saying some of them at the time of the New Testament, saying, well, the resurrection has already occurred, or teaching things that are not true, then you pretty much need to be pretty direct in challenging that. And that's for a couple of reasons. I mean, it's not good for the Christian who's spreading

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things that are false. That's not good for them. But it's also you have to look out for the flock. I mean, you have to look out for their fellow Christians who are being harmed by those sort of untruths.

Because I think that's a problem today. A lot of Christians think, well, you know, we don't want to be harsh, and I agree with that. But they use it as an excuse for not speaking out because they think somehow never giving offense, and never making anyone feel uncomfortable, no matter how loving, that that's just like the biggest sin. That's not the biggest sin.

In fact, that isn't even up there. But so, I do think the Bible is very clear that truth-- You believe in truth, not just as an academic exercise, because it's true. It's good. It leads to human flourishing. It's the way God made us. And so, if you surrender it, this is not just being harsh. You're harming people.

**FRANK:**

And we're going to unpack that further with my guest today, Dr. John West. His brand new book, 'Stockholm Syndrome Christianity', excellent book. And by the way, it's not just doom and gloom. There are a lot of positive ways to turn the tide. He has that in the book, so you'll want to pick it up. Well, we're back right after the break. Don't go anywhere.

Pastor Loran Livingston here in Charlotte a number of years ago came at the beginning of his sermon-- He came out at the crowd pretty hard because over the week he had gotten a lot of emails because the previous week he named people who were false teachers in the church, mostly the name it and claim it people. And he said, I got a bunch of emails from you guys. And you said things like this. Hey, Pastor, don't name names. Just preach Jesus.

So, Loran said, let me ask you guys a question here this morning. If I were to come out here today and tell you that I found people on our staff here at the church, introducing your kids to drugs and pornography, what would be your first question? Who are they?

Suppose I said, well, I can't tell you who they are, but let me tell you, I'm going to preach Jesus. You would be furious at me. You would need to know who these people were so you could save your children from them. Well, that's what almost every writer of the New Testament does.

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That's what Dr. John West does here in the new book 'Stockholm Syndrome Christianity.' He's naming people you need to be aware of who claim to be Christians but are actually deviating from the Scriptures publicly, and in some cases, even voting for things that they know are anti-biblical and will hurt the church, and hurt others.

Let me start with one guy, if we can, John. You spent a fair amount of time on him. He was the darling of evangelicals 10-15 years ago. But given the policy positions he has actually supported, it's hard to believe this guy is an evangelical Christian. And a lot of people are going to go, I can't believe you're going to say it. Well, we have to say it. It's in the book. His name is Dr. Francis Collins. Explain please, Dr. West.

**JOHN:**

So, Dr. Francis Collins is probably the most prominent evangelical Christian scientist in America.

**FRANK:**

He claims to be evangelical.

**JOHN:**

Yes. So, I'm going by his self-identification. That's true. And he, for more than 12 years-- For 12 years he was head of the National Institutes of Health. And he was really powerful and looked up to.

And he wrote a book called 'The Language of God', which I think people need to understand the background. He was celebrated by many Christians because he was on Time magazine. He helped in the Human Genome Project of un-coding some of the DNA. And he had a powerful—

I want to give him credit. He has a powerful testimony. He had been an atheist. He read C.S. Lewis. It convicted him. He says he believed Jesus is his savior. But from early on, if you actually read him, even while many people were praising him, he embraced Darwinian evolution.

He made it really sort of unclear whether God even guided the evolutionary process because he talked about how we were littered with junk DNA, which we now know is really fake.

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**FRANK:**

Junk theory.

**JOHN:**

But, you know, he helped champion that theory as an example of why God, you know, wouldn't be responsible for it all. That maybe, you know, God. Or if God did direct, he did offer another solution. Maybe God did direct the history of life, but he just made it look random and undirected. I mean, that way he was even further from Richard Dawkins. Richard Dawkins, the arch atheist, even said that biology does look designed, even though he thinks that Darwinian evolution disproves it.

But he even says it looks designed. But Francis Collins would say, well, no, maybe God made it so it looked undesigned. I mean, so he really had such strange beliefs. And on pro-life beliefs in his book 'Language of God,' many people didn't read the appendix where he makes clear that he really didn't think that life begins at conception.

So, that's the background. But he's appointed because Christians uncritically celebrate him. And he's appointed and elected or appointed by a number of presidents, including Christian, George W. Bush, and many conservative Christians in Congress vote on him. But then here's—

What is his record? I mean, what did he actually do? Well, when he was the head of the NIH, he authorized the spending of millions of our tax dollars to create a tissue bank for medical research that harvested baby parts from aborted babies. This was the University of Pennsylvania. Aborted babies up to 42 weeks in gestation. I mean, that's infanticide.

**FRANK:**

42 weeks?

**JOHN:**

Yeah. You're talking about infanticide. I mean, really.

**FRANK:**

Right. So, these are late term. These are babies that have gone beyond even the normal term?

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**JOHN:**

Yes.

**FRANK:**

And he's, he's—

He's doing experiments on them or he's giving money?

**JOHN:**

Well, so—

So, he gave money to the university to create this tissue bank, harvesting these aborted baby parts up to 42 weeks.

**FRANK:**

Was he University of Pennsylvania or University of Pittsburgh? It's one of the two. Might have been Pittsburgh. It's one of the two.

**JOHN:**

Yeah. Yes. Yeah. But-- And then they did do research on it. So, one of the-- One of the things that they actually, one of the studies underwritten also by the NIH involved taking scalps from aborted babies and grafting them into mice. And so, that's some of the research that he funded through the NIH.

And what's worse, even in some respects, he must have known something was wrong, because the only reason we know this, I mean, this is now documented. There's no question about this. So, this is not fake news. This isn't speculation. We know the NIH under Francis Collins funded this. But the only reason we know is when the group, Judicial Watch, that tried to find out about it, they couldn't get their public documents request approved.

NIH wouldn't release the information. They had to go to court, and a judge had to force Francis Collins to release this information. So, that's one thing. He also oversaw millions of dollars of your tax dollars going to some children's hospitals and some doctors who engage in giving kids

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puberty blockers, and actually even gender, what I call deconstructive surgery. You know, cutting off body parts from young men and women.

And this was, again, millions of tax dollars going to that. At the same time where he publicly identified himself as an ally and advocate of the LGBTQIA movement and using those terms. And this was our most publicly identified evangelical Christian. And then, of course, you could talk about COVID and talk about a lot of other things. So, in addition to—

**FRANK:**

He was Fauci's boss, for those of you that don't know who Francis Collins is. Now, I think he's out of government now, isn't he?

**JOHN:**

He is. He is, thankfully, actually, in my view. But, yeah, no, Covid-- And I know Christians have different beliefs on certain things, but where I would fault him on Covid primarily is he demonized and weaponized the biblical principle love thy neighbor, to use it as a club against any Christian who, say, had conscience objections to the COVID vaccine. There were many Christians and also had health objections.

And so, by demonizing and weaponizing that, I think that was really unfortunate. And he also, we now know, actually, even since I wrote my book, some stuff have come out. There's a great debate about, say, if you had Covid, what was the utility of getting the vaccination? And at the time, many doctors were saying, well, there isn't really much additional benefit. Collins publicly pooh, poohed that.

But what came out late last year was from a participant in a meeting that he, a private meeting that he had held with some epidemiologists and others experts to talk about this. You know, should we be having a mandate on people who already had Covid? And their consensus of all of them according to this participant, who is very much pro vaccine, but the consensus scientifically was there was no benefit.

Now, they disagreed about whether they could say that because they feared-- The majority of them feared that if you said that, then, you know, you were giving people an out that shouldn't

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have it. But they agreed on the scientific principle. All this time, though, publicly, Francis Collins was pretending, you know, that the evidence wasn't clear on that. So, I actually think that's a really ethical problem.

**FRANK:**

Can I ask you a question about this whole COVID vaccine thing? Because I think now, we're discovering beyond any reasonable doubt that vaccine has some really negative side effects, mostly heart problems for young people and there may be turbo cancers coming from it.

That's still to be decided, but it's being investigated. But what I never understood and still don't understand to this day, is why anybody like Francis Collins, or David French, or any other people you talk about in here, were claiming you weren't loving your neighbor unless you got the vaccine. Why would they say that?

Because someone getting the vaccine doesn't affect their neighbor, if the neighbor has the vaccine. Right? Why would it matter whether I got the vaccine? How am I loving or not loving my neighbor if the neighbor can immunize him or herself with the vaccine, why does he care what I have?

**JOHN:**

Well, I think they would say in fairness to them, that there were people who were immunocompromised in ways that couldn't get the vaccine if they wanted it, and so that you'd be helping them. But I don't think—

The issue there is, there were so many conflicting things, and it was a new vaccine. And there were a lot of legitimate questions. And I actually share much of your skepticism about that. But I don't-- I realize there are differences of belief for me, the demonizing of Christians.

And actually, I mean, I cite some of his, the interviews he gave where he championed after three months earlier. Many people forget he publicly in a town hall—

I think actually Russell Moore was part of this. He pledged there will be no federal mandates on vaccines. I can assure you. That's like verbatim. I can assure you. And then within three months,

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he was one of the biggest champions and boosting. Actually, when Biden put some of his draconian mandates, he actually praised them as muscular mandates that were as good.

And he's never actually had to own up to his saying one thing and then three months later, you know, undermining it. And the really scary thing about Francis Collins, apart from his views on evolution and everything else, when it comes to public health, a lot of people championed that he did admit, a year or two ago that, well, maybe we weren't really paying attention to how this was working out on the ground with some of these restrictions.

But if you actually go back to-- It was at a Braver's Angels conference. If you actually go back and look at everything he said at the conference, which I have, here are his lessons that he's saying we should take from COVID is number one, that the public health bureaucracy is too weak and we need to model it after the Defense Department so the next time it can be more powerful. Wow. Okay. And then he actually said we allowed too much free speech and that we need to get in control of what he was calling pre-bunking of—

**FRANK:**

Too much free speech? What?

**JOHN:**

And that we have to-- And the government next time has to be more in control of fighting, of course, what he considered disinformation. Misinformation, but in many of the cases, it was simply just difference of opinion. So, I'm glad he is no longer in government because his ideas, even for the future, are scary.

And he went sort of-- Last year, he published a book on the road to wisdom, where he attacks intelligent design again, and on global warming and you name it, and tried to rehabilitate his image. But his views are not good views.

**FRANK:**

Is there any--? Has he given any explicit statements for any of this on how it differs from biblical Christianity? I mean, to support aborted baby research and LGBTQ issues? Has he come out and said anything like, here's how I explain this as a Christian?

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**JOHN:**

So, on my—

To my knowledge about LGBTQ issues, I don't think he has. With regard to abortion, usually he doesn't like to talk to people who raise critical questions.

So, you know, he doesn't have to do it. But there have been a few cases where he's been asked about when it came out publicly about what they were funding on the abortion, you know, the aborted babies. And I think his general answer is, well, you know, those abortions were going to take place anyway, and we can make good from it.

**FRANK:**

Thanks, Joseph Mengele. Okay. [Laughter] I don't think that washes with the Lord, but in any event, we've got a lot more with Dr. John West. His book, 'Stockholm Syndrome Christianity' covers what we're talking about and a whole lot more. We just drilled down on Francis Collins. A lot more after the break. Don't go anywhere. Ladies and gentlemen, on the 29th of June, Lord willing, I'll be at Faith Assembly in Orlando.

I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist in the morning, and then at night with Q&A. Hope to see you there. Details on our website. Don't forget about CIA coming up on July 31st through August 2nd. If you want to be a better apologist, you want to attend CIA, but you need to register. You need to apply.

Go to [Crossexamined.org](http://Crossexamined.org). Click on events. You'll see it there. And don't forget, Lord willing, we are going to Israel. We're going to hit Jordan and Israel, and then an extension to Egypt in the first couple of weeks of October. We only take one bus, 50 people.

So, if you want to be a part of it, you need to sign up soon because we're, we're-- We got about, I think maybe 10 seats left. So, you better sign up soon because those trips fill up pretty well. And we've got some great guides. Eli Shukron, the archaeologist who discovered the Pool of Siloam. And then we get to Egypt. We got me, Mido Dido, who's a Christian. Great Egyptian guide there. You don't want to miss any of that. So, go to [CrossExamined.org](http://CrossExamined.org). Go to events.

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You'll see it there. Let me go back to my guest, Dr. John West. Now, John, we talked about one guy to be aware of. There are many others you mention in the book. We can't obviously cover them all, but let's talk about young people right now and even older people who want to send their young people off to a school, off to a college.

You've been a college professor. You've seen what happens at the college level. What are, first of all, what are some of the signs people ought to look for if they're sending a kid to college? Or what are the warning signs that make you go, maybe they ought not to go to this place?

**JOHN:**

Yeah. So, I want to just really emphasize how important this is. So many Christians are wanting to raise their kids right, and so they sacrifice. When I was a college professor at a Christian college, I saw families go into great amounts of debt because they thought they were sending their kids to be equipped, empowered, and, you know, to graduate as Christians.

When in fact, sadly, in the 12 years where I was at, in the Bible department, they were taught that the, you know, Old Testament and let alone the rest of the Bible was not accurate. They taught that God didn't know the future, something called open theism. I had one student who came to me upset because her professor was trying to argue her out of being pro-life.

And then, since being at that institution, over 70% of the faculty have voted against biblical marriage. And so, the tragedy is I've seen so many really humble, and devout, and self-sacrificing parents who are sending their kids to places that actually they're sending them into the lying dens, into the fire, not into a place to actually build their characters.

Now, this isn't true of all places. So, how do you know? And I do on my website, [StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com](http://StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com) in the resources section on preparing for college you can get an essay on '10 Questions to Ask.' So, here are some of the things that you should be thinking of. Well, go to their website where they put who is speaking at chapel. That will tell you a lot. Often you can't go into each and every classroom. But now post Covid, most of the chapel talks end up being online so anyone can see them.

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Is it a never ending parade of critical race theory, woke economics, everything else under the sun? Or are they bringing people to defend the pressure points, defend biblical sexuality, help kids to understand that, defend say the archaeological evidence for the Bible? Who they are investing in bringing to speak on campus will tell you a lot. Go to the Bible department and this is the question you can ask when you're visiting there.

Well, how many members of the Bible department are members of ETS, the Evangelical Theological Society which has a statement on biblical inerrancy? At the school where I was at, by the time I ended my time there, the theologians boasted to the other faculty that they didn't have even one person who belonged to ETS precisely because none of them could agree to the statement on inerrancy.

So, that's another thing is find out the associate things. Another thing, every college has a campus health center. Find out where they do referrals. Do they do any referrals to Planned Parenthood? Do they give prescriptions for birth control to non-married people? That's another thing to find out about.

So, there are a lot of questions. The good news is that a lot of parents feel at sea because while I was at the Christian college I was at, at the very time it was getting less Christian in the classroom, they did a marketing study that they needed to become more intentionally Christian in their marketing and come here for faith integration even wasn't happening. So, don't believe you know the talking points. But if you ask these questions, you will likely get true answers, and it will give you a much better feel for what's really happening.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, it's almost better if a kid goes off to a psycho institution like Harvard right now because at least he knows what he's up against. If he goes to some of these so-called Christian schools where the faculty have gone completely left, he may be-- He may let his guard down or she may let her guard down. Right?

**JOHN:**

I saw that. And you know, if it's an atheist agnostic professor preaching against the Bible, many solid Christians could-- Okay. But if you're a young person and you have someone who maybe

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prays at the beginning of the class and they're personally devout, but they're telling you, well, you believe in the Old Testament isn't historically accurate or the Gospels aren't historically accurate, and you believe that.

And Christians have always-- You know, God changes his mind, therefore you should change his mind. I mean, then I did see that that can be really destructive of young Christians who are striving to be godly when their Christian mentors are actually undermining them. So, you're right. Actually, in some cases going to a secular school can actually be better for a student, a Christian student, than going to a Christian school where they're going to get the same stuff but with a religious veneer that may transform their views.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. By the way, I don't mean to broadbrush Harvard too much. There are some good profs still up there, but when their-- When their last president couldn't point out that there's the truth, not my truth or your truth, the Veritas on their seal was completely basically mocked and she didn't even know it. I mean, Veritas means truth and she couldn't say it's true that you ought not try and kill Jews. She said, well, it's my truth you ought not try and kill Jews.

**JOHN:**

Yeah.

**FRANK:**

I mean, how far have we fallen here, John?

**JOHN:**

We've fallen pretty far. And the tragedy is that the joke used to be that in the evangelical academia, look at 20 years ago where the secularists were and then now that's the newfangled truth in evangelical academia. And again, there are some good Christian colleges. So, I want-- But unfortunately that is in my experience again in my 12 years, is that a lot of the fellow faculty were looking to the secularist in the culture to give them their validation. That's not good.

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**FRANK:**

My mentor, Dr. Norman Geisler used to say this. That fraternity will nearly almost always overpower theology, meaning that we will often throw Jesus and the Bible under the bus in order to agree with our friends. And you've seen that. It happens over and over again. You write about it in the book. Can you comment on that a little bit?

**JOHN:**

I think, Norm Geisler was a very wise and upstanding man, and we all miss that. He's now in heaven. We're rejoicing. But, yeah, I saw that. Again, in academia, there was a book that was the rage of Christian academia in the 1990's, and it was just reissued a couple years ago called 'The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind' by Mark Noll.

It has some good things about it. We should have a mind. We should think of it. But if you actually read the details of that book, what he means by excellence is, well, what does Harvard say? Are you published by an elite publisher? Whereas I would say the standard historically for Christians is, does our scholarship-- How does it fit with the truth?

That's the old view. Actually, truth is important. But when I saw how that book, 'The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind', was received among my colleagues, it was as a call to try to be loved by the people at Harvard or the New York Times. And that just-- We've seen how that has turned out.

**FRANK:**

Do you think David French, who claims to be a Christian, would have a weekly column at the New York Times if he wasn't so negative on Trump, if he didn't support same-sex marriage, if he decided that we shouldn't--?

What did he--? What did he call--? He called Drag Queen Story Hour a blessing of liberty. Yeah. Would he have a column? Like, why does--? Why does he have a column there and not, say, Voddie Baucham, or Steve Meyer, or you know, your colleague Steve, or, you know, somebody that's going to really stand for the truth?

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**JOHN:**

Because of what you just said. It's because they were standing for the truth. And no, obviously he wouldn't. And David French, who I once had, I mean, I wasn't close friends with him, but I remember having dinner with him with just one of or two people.

And this was a number of years ago. I'm very sad about David French because I do think in his personal life he believes in Jesus. But he is so much-- He is so imbibed the talking points of people around him. It's not just about Trump. It's a range of issues. And, you know, Christians disagree on Trump on various things. He just has it out for—

He's really become a mouthpiece for the secularist establishment. And the way he treated people who differed from him, Christians who had conscience issues with the vaccination. He wants-- And I highlight this in the book, but he wrote a piece that basically said they were immoral, that their hearts were wrong. And I mean, it was, talk about judgmental. I mean, he often talks about, oh, these conservatives aren't—

They're judgmental or they're not winsome. He is one of the least winsome persons. And this is actually something to watch out for, that people need to watch out for. Some of the times, the people who most talk about winsomeness, I saw this actually in my college campus, were the people who are the most vindictive, and the most people who are the most mean to other people. And his rhetoric about his fellow Christians who disagree with him, you know, sincerely, is just awful.

**FRANK:**

You know, you have a section in here where you talk about the fact that David French said that we should stop talking about issues like transgenderism, and he scolded Christians because we're not talking more about the sins of gluttony and porn. What is your response to that?

**JOHN:**

Oh, just another stupid talking point. Of course, I don't know of any church where they praise gluttony or porn. And in fact, I've heard lots of messages on various things. So, that's not—

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I mean, that's just a phony talking point. But where Christians have had a problem with is telling the truth about transgender. And he thinks it's just this culture war thing. No. Kids are getting abused and harmed by this so-called culture war thing. And so, what I really object to on that are the Christians who pretend that this is just a theoretical discussion that doesn't matter if we aren't clear on.

No. Real kids are being victimized. If your body parts are cut off, you can't put them back. And if you're filled with puberty blockers for 10 years, yeah, you can go off them, but that has permanent damage. If, you know, if you love kids, how, as a Christian, can you take a pass on that?

**FRANK:**

Yeah, well, I think you make a clear point there that nobody is promoting porn and gluttony. But there are people promoting puberty blockers for kids. There are people promoting same-sex relations. There are people promoting, actually, they are promoting porn from the LGBTQ community. They're trying to get these porn books into schools, into elementary schools.

So, if anybody, anybody's promoting porn, it's not the Christians, it's the other side. And David French is silent about it. A lot more with John West. In fact, I want to ask him the question, well, won't we, if we talk about these things, aren't fewer people going to accept the gospel and then they're lost for eternity? What do we do about that? And what are some positive things you can do?

Because the book has many of those positive things in it. Don't go anywhere. Back after the break. Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist that's on several radio stations around the country. It's also a podcast. If you want to hear this again, you can. For those of you listening on the American Family Radio Network, we have podcasts that are not broadcast on radio. About half of them are not.

So, if you want to hear these shows, go and find the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast. Today we're talking to Dr. John West, Vice President of the Discovery Institute. Great place to go, by the way.

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If you want to learn about this dispute between intelligent design and evolution, go to [discovery.org](http://discovery.org). But his brand new book is a little bit broader than that. It's called 'Stockholm Syndrome Christianity.'

And we're talking about the fact that some supposed Christians seem more enamored with people who are opposing biblical truth and are actually voting and giving cover to people who are driving people away from Jesus rather than standing for Jesus. So, I want to ask Dr. West this question. And before we get into some positive things that people can do about this, John, you hear this all the time.

You know, if I start talking about these issues which have become political, whether it's transgenderism, LGBTQ, whether it's race, or whether it's economics, these kinds of issues, abortion. If we talk about any of these things, we're going to drive people away from the gospel. They're not going to get saved. I'm not going to sacrifice somebody's eternal soul for these temporal issues. What do you say to that?

**JOHN:**

So, I mean, as with all lies, there's a kernel of truth. We don't want to place ourselves obstacles in front of the gospel. We don't want to make dividing lines of, you know, there are lots of issues, and I'd say political issues that Christians can legitimately disagree on. But, and it's a big but. If your issue of saying that is because the Bible is clear on something, and you're saying, well, that biblical truth, not my hypocrisy, or my problems, or creating the obstacle of the gospel, but it's actually the truth.

God's truth is somehow creating an obstacle to people accepting the gospel. Then I think you really need to do some soul searching. You are not God's press agent. And to think that you know better than God-- I mean if God is clear on something, he's not giving you a pass to dig a pit in the ground, and put it there, and never talk about it. And so, again, I think in my own personal experience, this is where it gets most troubling. Some people making that argument, they're using it to say, well, we can't talk about things where God is really clear on because then that's an obstacle.

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People might not accept the gospel. Well, who are you to tell God that he doesn't know what he's doing? And again, that's hubris. We're not God's press agent. But more than that, people often talk about what gospel are you actually converting them to?

And I'm not going to name the people here, but there are some pastors who have gone soft on various things, and they have some high profile conversions. But then within several years, those conversions, they're not really conversions. Because if you so trim off the teachings of God's word, people aren't really being converted to the gospel.

They're not being converted to saving grace because they're not really accepting God's overall message and truth that they're a sinner, and that they need to repent, and that Jesus's blood covers them. But they have to understand what repentance is and understand what truth is.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, it's also bait and switch, right?

**JOHN:**

Yes, that's right.

**FRANK:**

You know, you just, you're going to hide some important things in order to get people converted. And as you say, they don't really become converts. They're half converted. They still hold on to their own beliefs. Is that really a conversion?

It's not your job to get a result. It's your job to be faithful. Also, there's some research out and I was talking to pastors about this that I know who are in these bigger churches. Josh Howerton's one of them down there at Lake Pointe, and he's saying that, you know, a lot of times we think if we can get somebody converted to Christianity, that will then convert them to a conservative biblical natural law viewpoint when it comes to these issues that hit on politics.

But there's some research coming out now that there are conservatives who will go to a church, they're not Christians, but they'll see the fact that when a pastor is talking about issues that are

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biblical and they intersect with politics, that that then becomes an on ramp for them to become Christians.

**JOHN:**

I think, yeah, that, that you know, the, the common trope of people like Tim Keller and others who are now deceased was that, well, you have to track left or else you'll turn those people off to the gospel. But the other side of it that they don't pay attention to is that you have a whole bunch of politically conservative people who are not saved by the gospel.

Nonetheless, they understand certain common sense because of the natural law. And so, then if they start going to church and they're connected with that and they realize that the deeper meaning of that, of what that really means and points to, then God saves them. And so, we're writing those people off.

And I actually think one of the most tragic things, you actually see this in the area of race issues, where there's a real biblical teaching on equality that was-- Then you had the phony teaching of the critical race theorists, which is anything but that.

But because so many Christians, particularly 2020 post, gravitated toward the phony teaching. You had a lot of conservative, say, young males that went in some destructive directions even in the name of Christ that I think actually is genuinely racist.

And I think that scary and needs to be called out. But I think one reason they did that is because there was a vacuum of actual genuine teaching about what the Bible really teaches. You know, nature abhors a vacuum. And that is also true in society.

And so, all these Christians were saying, read 'White Fragility' and all these other things that are just completely anti-biblical and said that's your option. Well, that wasn't the option. But they end up driving some people to some really things that were not good.

But they were partly responsible for that. Had they been preaching biblical equality, or, you know, or pointing people to people like Voddie Baucham, I mean, they, they would have, I think

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it would have been a better result. So, again, you know, people think, you know, we don't deal with this.

You have consequences. There are real consequences for not really telling the truth. I think all the time we make excuses for why we shouldn't tell the truth, but then people don't realize the truth is good. It relates to reality, the way God created us in the universe. And if you track against that, you're creating a never ending succession of bad things.

**FRANK:**

You have great chapters on race, on poverty, on homelessness, on all these issues that are front and center politically, but also the Bible speaks to. And isn't it interesting, John, that you have somebody like David French or Russell Moore, they will come out really hard-- Like for example, on the vaccines, which is a kind of a disputable position.

They'll say every Christian ought to get the vaccine, and every citizen ought to get the vaccine. But when it comes to same-sex marriage or abortion, which are clear in the scriptures, they are, indifferent almost, you know? Or they'll say, I'm for same-sex marriage. That's what David French said. Yeah, you go, wait a minute.

On the clear things, you're muddled. On the unclear things, you think everyone has to agree with you. Look, ladies and gentlemen, we can change our method. We cannot change our message. The message that we ought to be giving people is the entire theological Bible, not just hobby horsing on a few issues and ignoring everything else. People out there are screaming for truth. And people who are dealing with this, especially with their kids, want to hear truth so they know how to run their lives.

And when pastors don't give it to them or they're quiet about them, they're not doing their duty. Now, John, we just got a few minutes left, but you have several chapters in here on what people can do about this. Give us a few tips, will you?

**JOHN:**

Yeah, I just want to say one chapter has 21 things to do. Even if you're a board member, a teacher, a pastor, or a parent. And this is one thing that I think, and it may, it's not rocket

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science. It's the principle of do no harm. Maybe you're a Christian who feels overwhelmed. And what can I do? Well, the very least you can do is make sure that you are stewarding your time, talent, and treasure.

Which means like, so are you part of a biblical church that's doing good things that you can really support? Or are you part of a place that's really where the pastor say has gone off on the other side and you're just there for social reasons?

Well, you're not, you know, you should be going to a biblical church. Also, where are you writing your checks? So many people who may have graduated from a great Christian college 20 or 30 years ago that they now know the Christian college has gone off the deep end. But out of a sense of misplaced sense of sentimentality or devotion, they write a check.

Well, in many respects, you're worse than the woke faculty because they think they're doing right, even though they're not. But you, know that what they're doing is wrong and you're writing the check to bankroll it. So, how are you stewarding your resources? So, at the very least, do no harm.

And then, of course, there are lots of other ways, like if you're a parent, you know, who's really raising your kids? Is it you? Or is it TikTok, or is it Netflix, or is it, you know, public schools? I mean, Christians in theory believe that, you know, they're raising their kids, but I know so many devout Christian parents who just farm it out to youth group once a week.

That doesn't cut it. And so, and then where do you get your information from? Is it from, you know, great ministries like Frank's and CrossExamined, or is it that you're just imbibing the same stuff from New York Times, CNN at all? And in my experience, many of the Christians who just—

If you get garbage information sources, you're already down the path of, you know, that's not great. But on the other hand, if you get good information sources, and there are lots now, and I list some of them on my website, and, obviously, if people are watching or listening to this podcast, you get great ones from Dr. Turek, and so, from you, Frank.

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But that's another thing to think about is how are you stewarding your information sources? And then if you're a board member or a deacon, there are lots of things you can do. And I go about that in the—

**FRANK:**

Yeah, the book has all these very practical insights on what people can do. They're simple things to do. And I love the point. Do no harm. Don't give money to institutions that are leftist and are pulling people away from Jesus. My friend, the late, great Mike Adams, used to say of people that gave to Chapel Hill here because they love the basketball program.

Do you love your basketball tickets more than your kids? Oh, apparently you do. That's why you're given to Chapel Hill while they're teaching all sorts of false information to your kids, trying to talk them out of Christianity. And if people continue to do this, I don't understand why. You've got to open your eyes to where the money's going. But, John, we're running out of time. Give people the website for the Stockholm Syndrome book.

**JOHN:**

Sure. So, it's [StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com](http://StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com) [StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com](http://StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com).

**FRANK:**

And the Discovery Institute is [discovery.org](http://discovery.org). There's so much great stuff up there. What other resources are they going to find on [StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com](http://StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com)?

**JOHN:**

So, there's a whole section on resources that gives place, you know, what are some information sources, some entertainment resources for Christians, questions to ask to go to a Christian college, a lot of free resources.

**FRANK:**

It's all great stuff. Dr. West, thanks so much.

**JOHN:**

Thanks, Frank, for having me.

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**FRANK:**

That's Dr. John West, the Discovery Institute. Go to [StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com](http://StockholmSyndromeChristianity.com). Get the book. It's a great read and it's by the way, it's very respectful, too. So, you're going to enjoy the book and it's going to help you out a lot. A lot of practical things. All right, see you here next time. God bless.

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