

How to Win Gen Z Back to the Truth of Christianity with Shanda Fulbright

(September 5, 2025)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, C.S. Lewis said Christianity, if false, is of no importance. And if true, of, infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important, unquote. He's exactly right, ladies and gentlemen. If Christianity is true, there's not a more important fact in the universe than Christianity is indeed true. Jesus did rise from the dead, and that you can not only be forgiven, but given his righteousness right on into eternity. You will be an heir to the kingdom of God if Christianity is true.

If it's not true, then it's of no importance at all. The only thing it can't be is moderately important. And this is very consistent with what Paul said, as you know, in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, he says, if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. But thankfully Christ has been raised. The problem is a lot of people either don't know the evidence for it, think the evidence isn't there, or have been easy for me to say, or have been deceived to believe that the whole thing is made up, or it's legend, or that kind of thing.

And if you're a parent and Christianity is indeed true, you certainly want your kids to know this truth and be able to defend it. And what we're going to talk about today is how you can do that. And we're also going to see is it true that people are coming back to faith? Because there seems to be in the past year or two a number of indications that there is a revival going on among Gen Z. Who are Gen Z? People in high school and college, basically that people are coming back to Christianity. Is that really true?

And if so, what can we do to continue that trend, and what can we do to ensure that young people have the evidence they need in order to withstand skepticism? And my guest today, she's been on the program before, is the great Shanda Fulbright, ladies and gentlemen. Here



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she is. Shanda, you may know, was formerly a public school teacher in the California public school system. She has a degree from Biola University in apologetics, and she is also teaching several courses for us, particularly among the young. In fact, Shanda, you got one coming up next week. What is the one that you're going to be teaching next week with me, by the way?

SHANDA:

Yes, we're teaching 'Let's Get Real: Examining the Evidence for God', where we take the 'I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist' book that you and Dr. Geisler wrote, and we make it more palatable for middle schoolers to comprehend and grow in their faith.

FRANK:

And this is basically I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist for six to eighth graders. If you want to get your kid enrolled, and I know you probably do, especially if you want to make sure they're inoculated against the bad ideologies that are out there coming over their iPhones, coming over their Droids, coming over Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

Then you want to enroll them. Go to crossexamined.org, click on online courses. Sixth to eighth grade, sure, fifth to ninth, we can deal with that. But basically, sixth to eighth grade, and it's just those ages. And if they take the premium version, Shanda, you're doing some Q&A with them, right? Some Q&A via Zoom. And I think I'm on one of them as well, right?

SHANDA:

Yes, we do Q&A every Monday night. We have PowerPoints where I teach them through the material. And the kids are very interactive. I love it because they, it feels like more of a discussion, not necessarily just a lecture. So, we have everything, we combine everything into that 45 minute Zoom session.

FRANK:

Yeah, it's a lot of fun. I like doing it too. And these kids have so many great questions. You know, I was just today on a podcast with Cissy Graham Lynch. It was on her podcast. She of course is the daughter of Franklin Graham, and she has a podcast called Fearless. And she was saying, you know, growing up I didn't really get any apologetics.

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It was a different era. It's a different era. Back, say in the 90s or even going back further into the 80s, there was no internet. You weren't bombarded every day with skepticism about Christ, or God, or Christianity, or the Bible. Today kids are. But Shanda, you've been looking at some evidence that Gen Z seems to be returning to God or exploring Christianity today. What have you found? What's going on?

SHANDA:

Well, first, Frank, I'm invested into this topic because I have three boys in this category of Gen Z. And so, it's very interesting and encouraging as a parent to see that the trends in Christianity growing amongst this age group is what YouGov says in their poll is that 18 to 24 year olds, just their interest in going back to church, like they're literally going into the churches, has just tripled in the last four years.

It went from 16% to 45%. So, I'm like, okay, is that true? Because that is a significant jump. Some surveys or some reports are saying that it's quadrupled. And then you see that just this year the Pew Research came out in February saying that there has been a decline in people leaving. Christianity has slowed. And so, now we're kind of leveling out a little bit, which really, I saw that kind of take off on the social media sphere too, because people have been encouraged by that.

So, the trends are showing that Gen Z is more interested in, in not just spirituality, which is what we have seen in the past where people said, I'm not religious. I'm spiritual. Now they're saying they're buying into religion. They're going to see, to the churches to see is this true? And so, the trends are showing that.

FRANK:

Tripled from 16% to almost tripled to 45%. Some say even more. You know, I've seen some of that data and I've actually seen some anecdotal data.

Some of the pastors that I know who are pastors of these big mega churches, said that this past Easter was by far the most well attended Easter service that they've ever seen. And they're seeing a lot of young men coming back to church. And what are some of the reasons for this? Does the survey data tell us or are we speculating here?

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SHANDA:

There's a lot of speculation. I think the main speculation is that the younger generations are looking for meaning. And I would say, there are people who speculate by saying, okay, look at the last five years. We've had a global pandemic with COVID It affected Gen Z. I don't want to—

I don't know if I would say more, but it impacted them so much so that they couldn't go to school. They were locked in their homes, specifically. I was in California at the time and that was just, you know, California was shut down and the school system was shut down for over a year. And it had an effect on the mental health of the youth. Then you had, you know, the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, you've had the attack on Israel by Hamas. All of these things that are making people uneasy in general. But you're looking at the Gen Z who's saying what is meaningful?

Where is the purpose? And I would also say anecdotally because I've kind of followed this throughout the years with my own boys. I've seen people, young men specifically, gravitate towards people like Jordan Peterson who are advocating for young men, and helping young men find purpose. And then you have Joe Rogan who is the most popular podcaster out there where he has another audience of a lot of young men. And he has West Huff on in December of last year, who doesn't put Christianity on the map because it's on the map.

It's been on the map obviously, especially in the West. But he brings a side of Christianity that not many young people see outside of these emotionalism, meology sort of messages on social media. And he brings a perspective to Christianity that it's also intellectual, and you have reasons for the faith. And I think young people are drawn to that because they're looking for meaning, specifically.

FRANK:

Yeah, Wes did a great job on that program. By the way. Wes has a great website. There's a lot of visual, sort of study aids he's put up on his website friends. So, if you want to teach yourself or teach young people some of the truths of Christianity, check out Wes Huff's website, W E S H U F F. And Wes is an apologist with Apologetics Canada. Does a really good job there. And there have been a lot of, I guess cultural events. I think probably Covid is the biggest one, as you mentioned, Shanda.

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And people came out of COVID very anxious and seeing a lot of evil going on. I mean we were treating our loved ones and our friends as biohazards, you know? It really shook people up. And I think people then started to think, well, there's evil out there. There's gotta be good, and if there's good, there's gotta be God. And I need something stable. I need some security. So, they started looking back at Christianity. They started looking back at something that is stable and eternal.

SHANDA:

Yeah. And you know what else, Frank? The Gen Z's are, they're tech natives. I mean they're born with a cell phone in their hand. They can navigate an iPad better than anybody else. But they are also exposed to social media and all of those other things, and they're asking, what is real? And when you ask what is real and you go on a truth quest, you'll find God.

FRANK:

Yeah, if you go on a truth quest, you will find God. And that's what we going to talk a lot more about with Shanda Fulbright here on I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Our website, crossexamined.org. That's CrossExamined with a D on the end of it, dot org. We're back right after the break. Don't go anywhere.

Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Ladies and gentlemen, what you win people with, you win them to. What do I mean by that? If you win people to Christianity on emotion, you can lose them on emotion. If the next emotional thing comes along that supplants Christianity, and they don't have any reasons for really believing that Christianity is true, they may not stay in Christianity because there's a new emotion that has come along that gives them a new buzz. Yes, emotion is important, but without facts, emotion can be washed away with new and higher forms of emotion.

So, we don't want to win kids with emotion. We want to win them with truth. And if you win them with truth, then they can be grounded in the truth. Emotions can come and go, but facts don't change. So, I'm talking to my friend Shanda Fulbright about this. Why do you think, Shanda, that Gen Z especially needs reasons more than just emotion to really be grounded in Christianity?

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SHANDA:

I think because they've had the emotion for so long. I mean you have, we have—

Like I said, they're tech natives. They've been exposed to every influencer, Christian influencers especially, on social media. And I'm talking, generally speaking. And what I love that—

You know, I first—

I don't know who first said that statement, Frank, but I know you—

I heard it from you first. Whatever you win them with, you win them too. And I grew up in a charismatic church. Up until about four years ago, I ended up switching to not so charismatic for a reason. I got into apologetics. And I like, I needed the intellectual side of my faith, and because the emotions did not sustain me. And they don't sustain anybody. And after a while, kids are going to be like—

I think everybody's going to say, if you can tell me God does not exist, let's just take it to the side of the atheist. You can tell me God does not exist all you want, but then I have to come up with my own meaning, and purpose, and decide. And that's, like you say, impossible to do. And you can't just go on what feels good, because what feels good today doesn't feel good tomorrow. And so, Jen Wilkin, she's a Bible study teacher. And I love the way that she puts it. She says, the heart cannot love what the mind does not know.

And that is why, you know, feeling God-- I'm not saying that we can't talk to Gen Z about having a relationship with the Lord and feeling God. But it doesn't come apart from knowing Him. And I think that when you have a generation that's looking for meaning, and purpose, and truth, they first have to start, because that's a worldview question. A worldview question of how do I live or what am I here for? You have to go back to the very top of that—

I call it, like when you look at the worldview questions, the starting point is, who is God? You can't say who am I unless you first know who God is. And so, those kids are trying to answer that question first. Because if God does exist, then God gets to decide what is true and how to live. And that's apart from emotion. And emotion cannot stabilize that. And so, I think that

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that's one of the reasons, if you have a generation going back to church for meaning, that's why they're not looking for emotion.

FRANK:

I remember our friend Dr. Stephen Meyer said when he was 14, he had a lot of trouble doing his homework because he thought to himself, what's this going to matter in a hundred years, right? Like, if there's no meaning to life, what's it going to matter if I do my homework or not? What's it going to matter how my life turns out or not if I'm just going to go into the ground and become worm food?

It ultimately doesn't matter whether I live like Hitler or Mother Teresa, because if there is no eternity and there is no God, then we're just doomed to heat death. What's the ultimate point? We may have temporary things that we're concerned about, quite obviously. We don't want pain, and so we get all that. But ultimately, there is no meaning if there is no God and there is no eternity.

SHANDA:

Yeah.

FRANK:

And that's absurd. Life is absurd if there is no God. I'm sorry, go ahead.

SHANDA:

Absolutely. And I tell the kids that. I'm like, if there's no meaning, if there's no truth, then shut off this video, because it doesn't really matter what we say. Don't watch YouTube videos. Don't go search-- Don't look up a dictionary. It doesn't really matter if you're going to take it to its logical conclusion. But even though whatever you win them with, you win them to, saying—

When you look at Brandon Lake just a couple months ago, he's a Christian music artist. I mean, he disrupted the whole social media world because he said, you know, when these casual Christians are walking into church, there's too much theology into our worship. We need to look at the guy like the avatar "Bubba", your average everyday Christian, sitting in the pew, and

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we need to make this music relatable to him. He needs to see himself in the worship music. So, let's not talk about holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. Let's—

[Frank]: [Grunting]

Yeah, I know. And let's make Bubba more comfortable. Well, what's going to happen when you begin to put theology into worship? Which, first of all, for a worship singer, I'm surprised he doesn't, you know, realize what worship is about. It's not about the people in the pew. And when you start with the people in the pew because you're trying to make it more comfortable with them, you lose the whole message of Christianity.

You lose who God is. And you're not going to make God real to anybody and show that you can have a relationship with Him if you're not going to talk about His attributes and His nature in the worship itself. So, when you do that, if you switch your theology and your music, at some point, Bubba's going to leave because you didn't win him to that.

FRANK:

Yeah, you're not really winning him to anything other than his own comfort and his own amusement if it's just all about him in the worship song. That's why it's exactly the opposite of what this-- What'd you say his name was? Brandon Lake?

SHANDA:

Yeah.

FRANK:

Yeah, it's exactly the opposite. In recent years or the past several decades, music is more-- Christian music in most churches I go to is all about me, me, me, me.

It's all meology rather than theology. There's a bunch of I songs. I did this, I did that. I love you. I worship you, I, I, I, I. Dr. Geisler used to say there 7/11 songs, seven words sang 11 times, and it's all inward focused rather than upward focused. Now, God doesn't need our worship. We need to properly worship God because God is infinite. You're not going to add to Him. You're

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not going to take away from Him. You're not going to add to Him by praising Him or take away from Him by cursing Him.

We need the worship. And ironically, it's not by focusing on ourselves, it's by focusing on God. And yet, we always want to make it so man centric rather than God centric. And that's a disaster long-term. Even Bill Hybels, who really started the, I think the megachurch movement way back in the early 70s, said, you know, all this mega church stuff. I'm not saying all mega churches are bad. They're not. But generally, he said, look. We never made disciples. We made half converts, and they're not converts at all.

We never took people deep. It was all come to Jesus. How do you feel this week? I've been at Jesus for 30 years, Pastor. What do I do now? You know, there's no discipleship being done. And kids see through all that emotionalism too?

SHANDA:

Absolutely.

FRANK:

I mean, do you think when they're bombarded with all sorts of different messages on Instagram or TikTok, do you think they get a certain amount of skepticism for emotional messages, Shanda?

SHANDA:

Yeah, well, I mean, that's a good question, because I thought about that. Because you have to be taught how to identify what—

Well, let me back that up. In some ways, you want to teach your kids how to identify what's true. But just by asking good questions and teaching them to think through something. Okay, fine. But I do believe so. I think it's just with the meology.

You can sit there and tell somebody to look within themselves and they, you know, they're perfect the way that they are because that's a very emotional message, and that's everywhere. That's even in meology, which has a scriptural spin in some way. But it's still about you. And

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even in the worship-- Because they'll know when it doesn't fulfill. They'll know when it doesn't-- When you have to preach that same message to yourself again tomorrow. That it is—

There's something that's not sustaining in that. And it starts with if you can't walk through the church—

Like, we look at this—

Frank, we're talking about these statistics that Gen Z is the—

Going to church is on the rise, which we're saying it's trending that way. Trends have an end. They have a cycle as well. They have an introduction, they have a peak, and then they have a decline. I don't really concern myself with whether or not this is going to fizzle out. I look at it as an opportunity at the moment for the church to say, okay, you're getting them in there.

Now, what are you going to do with them? The concern I have on the inside of the church from a discipleship perspective is that George Barna statistics show that the church needs to get her act together with discipleship because the worldview of those who claim to be Christians in America is only 4%.

So, yay, Gen Z's going to church. The question is, what are we going to do with him? Brandon Lake, what are you going to do with worship? Pastors, what are you going to do when you preach behind the pulpit? We have to be able to give them the answers to their questions or we will not keep them either. And that's just the bottom line.

FRANK:

Yeah, well, the job isn't to keep them necessarily in church. The job is to make them disciples. And if they become disciples, they will stay in church. Yeah, you can keep people in church by doing the Joel Osteen method, right? Telling them how great they are and how God wants to prosper them. You can get a lot of people in church. That's not the issue. The issue—

Are you equipping them first of all to do ministry and also as ambassadors for Christ? Are you making them more like Jesus? Are you trying to conform them to the image of His Son?

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Yeah, you can get big crowds by a lot of emotion and a lot of false teaching. In fact, as we all know, Paul warns against that in his first and second books, his books to Timothy, 1st and 2 Timothy, he warns against that. But we have to ensure that we are making them disciples and not just "believers". Jesus didn't say make believers. He said make disciples. Now, Shanda, I know that some people will say that the heart should be over the head. Why is that false?

SHANDA:

Well, first of all, again, go back to Jen Wilkin's quote, "the heart cannot love what the mind does not know. And I don't know why we compartmentalize things. Like, when Jesus says in Matthew 22:37, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. He's not compartmentalizing those things. He's saying, love God with all of your being, with every part of who you are. And I think this people can relate to the fact that you can know about somebody or you can intimately know them.

And the way that you know somebody more is when you spend time with them, and you get to know who they are. So, your fondness of them grows, your friendship grows, your relationship grows, your love for them grows. It is no different with God. You cannot love a God that you don't know. I remember, Frank, when I was teaching youth.

I was in youth ministry for about eight years in California. And the worship leaders would get very upset when the youth did not respond by raising their hands, by, you know, coming down the altars. Cause like I said, it was a charismatic church. And so, you flooded altars with youth. And at camps, yes, they flooded altars.

But then they'd go back in about a month after camp, go up, go home on a high. After a month after camp, they'd be back over to their old shenanigans. Right? But in youth group on Wednesday nights, why aren't they worshipping God? I said they cannot worship what they don't know. How do you—

We need to teach them. We need to continue to teach them in the word and disciple them. And a lot of our youth at the time, parents did not come to church. The kids would just come on Wednesday nights. And my philosophy stands to this day. You cannot compartmentalize the

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head and the heart. But those two go hand in hand. Teach them to know God, then they'll love Him.

FRANK:

Yeah. That's the greatest commandment. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And then your neighbor as yourself. Much more with Shanda Fulbright. How can we do this effectively to ourselves or with ourselves and with our children? We're going to get into it. Don't go anywhere. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek back right after the break.

Christianity, if true, is of infinite importance. If it's false, it's of no importance. The only thing it can't be is moderately important, yet many of us treat Christianity as if it's only moderately important. Look, if Jesus rose from the dead, Christianity is true. If He didn't, it's false. The Resurrection, how do you know it's true?

Oh, He lives in my heart. Well, you might know it's true that way, but you can't show it's true that way. And especially to a young person, how do you show that Christianity is true? That's one thing we're talking about today with my friend Shanda Fulbright, who is about to teach an online course for us called 'Let's Get Real.' It's for sixth to eighth graders.

We'll talk more about that later, but you can check it out at Crossexamined.org. Just click on online courses. Shanda, right now, as always, young people in particular are being challenged. Some of them are even being mocked or persecuted for being a Christian. How does evidence help a young person endure that kind of thing?

SHANDA:

Yeah, I think that's a great question because, you know, we all know that—

I think it was Peter [who] said, if you want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus, you will be persecuted. You will suffer persecution. So, that's very real to the Christian life. And if it's only—

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If you only think you love God based upon an emotion or feeling Him, like we said, since emotions are fleeting, the thing you're going to feel during persecution is, you know, fear, rejection. And you're going to—

That will sway you if you're not rooted in truth. I think a lot about John 6 and what you know, when Jesus says-- He has a hard saying to all of His followers and says, if you eat my flesh and drink my blood, they think He's crazy.

Many of them walk away. And Jesus turns to His disciples and says, are you going to leave, too? And Peter's response, I think says it the best. Where else can we go? You have the words of truth and life. And Peter, you know, we look at the disciples. They saw the evidence that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

Because when Jesus turned to them and said, who do men say that I am? Who do you say that I am? Peter said, we've come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Messiah. And Jesus says, flesh and blood has not revealed this to you.

They saw Him. They lived with Him. They saw the miracles. They heard Him speak. Jesus gave the evidence of who He was, the Son of God, His claims. So, that's the same with our kids. It's the same with us, anybody. We need to know that what we believe is true. And you know, I love what you guys say in I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist.

And we talk about this in 'Let's Get Real', Frank that I tell the kids cause they're middle school age, which means that their worldviews develop by the time they're 13. You believe in God for a reason. What reason do you? Or you claim it anyways.

What reason do you claim to believe in God? Mine for a very long time was because my mom told me God exists, the Bible was true, and that was enough for me. I didn't need to be convinced, I always say. But I still had to make the decision that I would follow the Lord, and I needed the reasons for that.

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My son came to me and said, I don't know if I believe that God exists. And I can't just believe that because you told me. Like, I need to know. And I didn't question God's existence. My son did. I didn't. So, I had to give him reasons that there are good reasons for God's existence.

And then he said, okay. That's what I needed to know. Everybody needs to know that what they believe is true. Because even if you just say you're a Christian, you will be-- You will suffer some sort of persecution. And your emotions and love for Jesus from a goosebump from summer camp is not going to keep you, is not going to sustain you.

FRANK:

Yeah, we are very susceptible as human beings to follow incentive rather than truth. The incentive to say you're not a Christian is to avoid persecution and to fit in with the crowd.

And when you're a young person, what do you want to do? You want to fit in with the crowd. And so, too often, we'll follow incentive. And as adults, we do this too. We're going to be quiet at work because we don't want anybody knowing we're a Christian because then we're going to get into trouble maybe at work, or we're not going to get that promotion, or people are going to keep us out of their little lunch group or whatever it is, or that we're going to get—

God forbid, we're going to get blocked on Facebook or whatever. I mean, it's minor persecution here in America, but we're still apt to go with that incentive to remain comfortable and not experience any kind of discomfort rather than to go with truth.

And it's even more so when you don't know the truth is really so. If you don't have evidence behind Christianity, man, it's going to be real easy to say I'm out, when the going gets tough. I'm out. Forget it. I don't even know if this stuff's true anyway. Why would I put myself through this?

SHANDA:

Right.

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FRANK:

And so many young people need to be discipled with the evidence. And Shanda, you've said this before, that discipleship is happening to you and to your kids somehow. So, how are people being discipled if you as a parent don't actively disciple your kids in Christianity, how are they being discipled right now?

SHANDA:

Well, whatever is at the center of your life shapes you, and whatever's shaping you is forming your beliefs. And when you look at statistics of kids who are on their phones, they're on their phones for eight hours or more per day, and I'm talking teenagers about the age of 13 to 18 years old. And that phone is discipling them. On TikTok alone right now Frank, I think there is like over 8 million posts about the Bible. Now, that doesn't mean—

I'm not saying that that shows an interest in what the Bible has to say, whether or not it's reliable, whether or not, you know it's not. Because there's all sorts of conversations. But you don't want your kid getting in front of one of those TikToks that tell you that the Bible is not a reliable source. It's been changed over and over and over again, which is why there's many TikToks like that, that say that. But that's what kids are watching.

Those are the social media platforms that kids are on for hours a day. And so yes, those are the people having the conversations that they're asking questions about, and they're the ones that are discipling them. But when you look at Gen Z, they're in their teens and twenties, which means that their worldview is being tested, shaped, and refined.

So, there's still an opportunity right now to have these conversations with your kids while they're looking, and asking questions, and testing it. Because if you don't, lots of other people already are, and we know that. I mean, they spend seven and a half hours of their day even in school, whether or not it's, you know, public school or private school.

But they're being discipled. And we need to own that. God gives the responsibility of discipleship to the parents, not to the church, to the parents. We should partner with the church in that, but it is a parent's responsibility.

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And there's other studies that show that the amount of meaningful conversation that parents have with their kids, their teenagers per week, is less than one hour a week of meaningful conversation. Discipleship isn't happening with that.

FRANK:

Yeah, I saw, I think I remember it was 42 minutes father to son on average, per week. That's not per day. Forty-two minutes of meaningful conversation. That's not going to cut it when they're on TikTok eight hours a day. And look, most adults aren't equipped to refute false teachings on TikTok, or Instagram, or YouTube, much less young people. This is why I think Jonathan Haidt, who's not a Christian, but he teaches at NYU, wrote that book 'Anxious Generation', that had to do with what social media is doing to our kids.

And not just our kids, but adults as well. And he said, look. I'm never giving my kid one of these phones until they're, you know, adults. And even then, it's a problem. So, parents, if you're not taking a proactive approach to teaching your kids the truth about Christianity, then, I don't know. I hate to say this, but you're really risking the eternity of your child by such negligence.

In fact, a lot of times I get questions at our book table. Hey, my son, my daughter went off to college. They were Christians. They're atheists now. Do you have a book that can help? No, I don't. Forget it. I don't have a book that can help because they're not open. And you know, I don't mean to be unkind, but you should have thought of this earlier, all right? You should have grounded them in the truth. Now, could they come back? Of course they could. Keep praying they do. But don't throw a book at a kid.

A book you're not willing to read and say, oh, you need this. You need to know this. I don't know it, but you need to know it. No, not going to help. Now, if they're open to reading a book with you, fine. But man, you need to prevent this kind of departure rather than try and rescue somebody after it's already happened, after they've already made a willful decision to go, you know, my life's a lot easier without church, and without moral rules, and without all the emotionalism of Christianity, and all the things I don't like about it. I'm going my own way. Too late.

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SHANDA:

Well, Christianity in the United States has been very cultural and a lot of people assume that because they go to church as a family on a Sunday morning that their kids are buying into their beliefs. And you know, I always say as a teacher, if you didn't teach it, don't assume they know it. As a parent, I don't assume that my kids know it or not. I don't care if I think they know it, if I don't. If they haven't learned it, we're going to have conversations about it, ongoing conversations about it as long as they live in my home. I have a 22 year old, and a 20 year old, and a 15 year old, and I'm constantly—

We're constantly talking about these things, but they have to eventually—

Like, you want to teach your kid to own their own discipleship at some point, but they will never do that if you're not discipling them and making that important to begin with.

Now, as far as, you know, some people, some parents don't realize until their kids are older, oh my gosh! I missed that window of opportunity. What am I going to do now? What can I do? And I would never want to make them think that it's hopeless because with God, all things are possible. And so, you know, the prayers of a righteous person availeth much.

They're effectual and they're fervent. And I think that the Lord still hears our prayers as parents. And I say take opportunity in every way that you can if you have adult kids. But is it easier and more effective when they're young? Well, hands down. Again, George Barna's worldview inventory shows us that you do have a window, and it's very, very short. You know, out of all the years of my 22 year old just being his mother, at 13 his worldview was developed. That's nine years ago.

That doesn't mean we still don't have conversations here and there. But it means that at 13, his worldview has been formed and shaped. And in his teens and twenties, it really was when he came in and was testing it, and asking questions Frank, and questioning what he was raised to believe.

But that's when you give them apologetics, and that's when you start to say here is the evidence and the reasons. When you're 0 to 13, we talked a lot of Bible. We talked a lot about

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that. In teens and twenties, give them apologetics. And I still think that that's effective for adults. There's a lot of people who, you know, again, you and I weren't raised under the umbrella of apologetics in our churches. I never heard it until I was in my 40s and I was like, thank God. Where's this been? I needed this.

But I feel like apologetics helps even when your kids are not saved because it gives them the reasons and the evidence that at least rocks them a little bit, shakes them a little bit out of their stupor and says, okay. If there is evidence for God, maybe I need to rethink this if they're open to it.

But that's where the also the spiritual side comes in. We can't do this without praying. We can't do this without taking it to the Lord. And I thank God for even the spiritual trend of Gen Z. The Lord is hopefully not just bringing them to the churches like you said. Hopefully, he's bringing Gen Z to himself. So, thank God for that as well.

FRANK:

We're going to talk some very practical ways in our last segment on how you as a parent, or a grandparent, or even just a friend can help bring up people to know why Christianity is true. So, don't go anywhere. We're back in just a couple of minutes right after the break.

What are some very practical ways that you can help young people build and a strong evidence-based faith? I'm talking to Shanda Fulbright who is about to teach a course for young people six to eighth graders called 'Let's Get Real.' It's basically I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist for six to eighth graders and it's going to start September 8th. If you're listening to this after September 8th you can still join. I think the first Zoom session's in the second week. The Zoom session is Q&A with Shanda, and I'll be on one of those Zoom sessions as well.

And of course you can take the course anytime you want, because it's a self-paced course. You can take 'Train Your Brain', a great course in logic that Shanda and I developed. Shanda is the primary teacher on that as well. There's a worldview course as well. Shanda, what's the worldview course you're teaching?

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SHANDA:

It's the 'Expedition to Reality' and we're discovering the major worldviews, and world religions, and that one's a great one too.

FRANK:

That's self-paced. You can take it anytime you want. Of course we'll run it live again. And don't forget we're doing 'Digging Up the Bible', starts September 8th as well. I'll be your main instructor for that.

We're going to go through the top archaeological discoveries from Genesis, all the way to maps, all the way to the book of Revelation. And we discovered over a hundred people found in the dirt that are in the Bible. We also discovered seven individual people associated with the crucifixion of Christ that have been found in the dirt. We found scores of places that the Bible talks about to be found actually on the map in the dirt. It's a very interesting 22 hours of video.

There's a lot of archaeological evidence out there. So, if you want to be a part of that, go to Crossexamines.org. Click on online courses. You'll see 'Digging Up the Bible.' I'll be your main instructor along with Dr. John Ferrer. We'll also have Titus Kennedy, an archaeologist whose two books—

He's written several books, but two of his books are part of the reading for 'Digging Up the Bible.' He'll be on for a live Q&A Zoom session as well. You don't want to miss 'Digging Up the Bible.' All right, Shanda, let's talk about some practical ways parents, mentors or youth leaders can help ground young people in an evidence-based faith.

SHANDA:

Well, I want to encourage parents, and teachers, and pastors. It doesn't have to be complicated. And I think a lot of times we think, how am I going to teach them all this stuff? Well, start with what's simple and that's—

In 'Let's Get Real', we start with the first question, does truth exist? Teach them to care about what is true and teach them that it's okay to ask questions. And I think starting off with just

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questions. Kids love Q&A. Frank, when we had it in youth group, it was always great. So, teach them it's okay to ask questions and to value what's true.

We teach them that truth, you know, truth is discovered. It's not determined. Truth matches reality. It doesn't care how you feel. So, if it hurts sometimes, it doesn't mean somebody doesn't love you because the truth can hurt. The truth matches its object. The truth doesn't always have to be popular. The minority can be right in some instances, in many instances.

So, we talk about the attributes of truth and how to identify truth, but also teach them to care about the truth in such a way that when you ask them questions that it gets them thinking, and owning their own knowledge of whether or not they have the answer for that, or whether or not they have to go seek it out, which brings me to teach kids how to find reliable sources.

I think that that's-- They're bombarded with so many voices, and they have access to so much information. I think what kids are asking is not, does truth exist? But what is true? And I believe, again, that's why we're seeing these trends in Gen Z going to church, because they're looking for that.

And so, you know, when I was talking to youth last month, at a conference about apologetics, and we were talking about sources, and I said, when you think about it, I mean, you think about all these ideologies, all these philosophies, and they seem overwhelming because there seems to be so many out there.

Like, what is true? Look at all these claims to God. But Jesus kind of made it simple. The Bible makes it simple. Because in John 8, Jesus tells the religious leaders, you're of your father the devil. He was a liar from the beginning, a murderer from the beginning.

He shows the genealogy of deceit. So really, every statement, truth claim falls into one of two categories. It either comes from God the Father or the father of lies. Teach the kids to trace back these sources to see are they reliable, and is this true, and to care about where they get their information.

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The generation that we're raising right now has to have the tools to do that because that's what they're exposed to. So, I think that we have to teach them quick reporting isn't always accurate. Getting information quickly or coming to this conclusion so rapidly isn't necessarily going to land you on the truth.

God in His Word never tells us to speak first. He tells us to be slow, to speak, to think before we speak. And so, we need to teach the kids to do that so that they land on the truth. And those are very basic. But if you don't start with those, they won't know how to grow from there.

FRANK:

Yeah, Q&A is so important. I can't tell you how many times I've heard people say they were told in church never to ask questions. That's just so ridiculous. And maybe one of the reasons is, is because the pastors don't know the answers. So, they don't want to be exposed as being imposters. Right? But no, it's good to ask questions.

And doubts can drive you to find the right answer and become closer to Jesus. Because if you follow the, the evidence where it leads, you're going to wind up at the foot of the cross. If you're honest, you're going to wind up at the foot of the cross.

So, the idea that you shouldn't ask questions is a lie from Satan. Questions ought to be asked, doubts ought to be expressed because you don't have enough information. And as a young person, how could you have enough information? You're young. You haven't even been around very long. You need that information.

And if parents can't give it to you, they're going to find it on TikTok and it's probably going to be the wrong information. Of course we're out there trying to counter that. We're on TikTok, we're on YouTube, we're on Instagram, Facebook, all these places.

But it's so hard for some young people to discern what truth is and what error is, and even for older people that we've got to do the best we can as parents, and mentors, and youth pastors to show people how to discover the truth, especially among the young. Go ahead, Shanda.

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SHANDA:

Our kids, you know, they're, they're growing up in postmodernism, where everybody's beliefs are valid. We have to hear each other out. I can't tell you that you're wrong. You can't tell me that I'm wrong.

FRANK:

It would be wrong to do so, Shanda, to tell somebody. [chuckling]

But it's self-defeating. I have no tolerance for this.

SHANDA:

Yeah. You know, Frank, because you always talk about this on stage, but when you—

Again, like I think back to what this is, why it's so important also to lay a biblical foundation. Because when you go back to Genesis 3, Adam and Eve had a source right away. It's God, of course. He gives them the word, that's their source. Then you have a contradiction through the serpent in Genesis 3. He contradicts the source, which means he contradicts their authority.

And if you teach kids that where there's a contradiction with the reliable source of Scripture, then they're, more apt to say, okay, I have a source. I have a reliable source, which is the Bible. And I can take every claim to see if it measures up or if it contradicts.

And it really makes it, I think, a lot easier and more simple than just saying there's all these beliefs, there's all these worldviews, and it can be very overwhelming even for parents. And again, you can bring it back down to one of two sources. But when-- You know, Satan didn't come out and say, don't believe in God.

He doesn't exist. He said, did God really say? And that is the thing that the kids must understand. You're looking at the authoritative word of God and all of these other claims. How do I measure that against the most reliable source that we have as Christians? Because if we are Christians, that is our source. And you teach kids to do it. If we just tell them the truth—

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I had Michael Moore on my podcast a couple months ago. He's the Honest Youth Pastor. And he said, I don't like to go and tell everybody, hey, don't follow this guy. Don't follow this lady. They're wolves in sheep's clothing or they're false teachers.

He said, I've got to give them the tools based upon the Scripture to interpret their Bibles, to know how to do it for themselves. And that's the same way for our kids. We want to make them own their own discipleship, but it starts by discipling them. And I think we can over complicate it. Don't do that. It doesn't have to be that hard.

FRANK:

Yeah, well, in 'Let's Get Real', you show them how to not complicate it and make it simple. Like, the first thing you deal with is truth.

So, you show, if someone says there's no truth, you ask them, is that true? Okay, you can show them that anyone that's claiming there's no truth or just true for you, but not for me, is wrong from the beginning. And then secondly, you show them that God exists. So, anybody that has a worldview that says there is no God or God is all things, God is me, God is you, God is the grass, God is the trees.

That can't be right either. So, you're narrowing down what could be true. You show them that miracles are possible. If Genesis 1:1 is true, then miracles are possible. The greatest miracle has already occurred, and even atheists are admitting the evidence for the greatest miracle.

So, you show that miracles are possible after Genesis 1:1, which means resurrections are possible. And then you get in and you start to show that there's evidence that Jesus really did rise from the dead, and what is written down in the New Testament is historically accurate.

Once you do that, you have really put a filter on what young kids can, or a filter that young kids can use to say, okay. I know that if anything contradicts any of these three points or four points, truth, God, miracles, New Testament, I know it's got to be wrong somewhere.

So, now I can focus in on what's true. If you give them that filter, then you've given them a way that they can discern truth from error, no matter where they see it, whether it's on TikTok, or

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from their teacher, or their college professor, wherever it is. Shanda, we're running out of time here. Tell people about your podcast and a little bit about the course before we have to go.

SHANDA:

Well, we get really great responses, from the course, Frank. A lot of times parents will, you know, they'll watch the videos with their kids, go through the lessons with their kids. It's a whole family affair.

And I love it because we do get to know these families very well. They usually take all of our courses. And so, just what we're there for is to strengthen the faith of the kids. You know, a lot of times people will say, you can't teach kids to defend their faith. Well, we're really teaching kids to strengthen their faith.

We're not telling them, now go out there and change the world. I mean, they'll do that if they own their own discipleship. So, that's what I love about our classes and teaching these kids at this age. It really is whole family discipleship. So, I encourage families to look into it.

As far as what I do on my podcast, I love to take cultural issues and examine them through the lens of Scripture because like I said, I grew up in a charismatic church. It's very important to me to say, okay, here's the church, but here's life and how do I live the Bible? How do I think through these things that culture is, you know, bombarding me with scripturally.

FRANK:

What's your website so people can know? Because we're running out of time. What is it?

SHANDA:

ShandaFulbright.com

FRANK:

ShandaFulbright.com. You'll find her podcast there. And if you'd like to sign up for the course, go to CrossExamined.org. Click on online courses.

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You'll see it there. So, Shanda, it's always great having you on the program. Thanks for doing this and thanks for teaching those courses. I want to mention, ladies and gentlemen, on September 17th, we're going back to campus. I'll be at Western Carolina University.

On September 23, I'll be at McNeese State University in Louisiana, then a high school in Orange, Texas. On the 24th and then the 25th at Lamar University. Please pray for those events. Pray for Shanda's work, too. She's doing great work. Hope to see your kid in the course, and we'll see you here next time, Lord willing. God bless.

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