

Can We Trust Law Enforcement? with J. Warner Wallace

(December 19, 2025)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, why am I wearing a NYPD hat just before Christmas? Well, on my way to Jordan and Israel a couple months ago, I was in JFK Airport, and I was just looking for a hat. And I said, I'd really like to have an NYPD hat.

So I picked up this NYPD hat, kind of the first time I'm wearing it here. And I'm wearing it here for a reason, because I think there's a lot of, not just skepticism, but cynicism about law enforcement. And when we get to a point in our society where we don't just have skepticism, but we have cynicism about the foundational vocation that allows you and me to be safe in what we do every day, our country's in a very bad way.

Some of this goes all the way, of course, back to, at least in recent memory, the George Floyd fiasco. But some of it has been more recently brought up with all the skepticism around our friend Charlie Kirk's murder. Is the FBI hiding something?

Is local law enforcement hiding something? What is going on? How can we make sense of all this? And what should our real attitude be about law enforcement? And there's nobody better to talk about that than my friend J. Warner Wallace, who, as you know, has been a police officer for many years and then a cold case homicide detective.

He's retired now, but his dad was at the Torrance PD as well as he, and his son is currently at the Torrance PD right now. Just made sergeant by the way. So we want to talk about this because this is foundational to a civilization. We don't realize it, but law enforcement is the ground floor that makes civilization possible.

And too often we don't look at our law enforcement officers with the kind of respect, and the kind of gratefulness we should have because there are a few bad apples out there. So let me



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bring Jim in. Here he is, ladies and gentlemen, the great J. Warner Wallace, all the way from the once great state of California. It still has great weather, but—

JIM:

Trust me. The weather here is so good. It's so good that they really—

It can't be bad enough in the other way to make up for the good weather. I'm sorry, this can't be. I was born and raised on blue skies, you know, 15 minutes from the beach. I'm going to, basically, I'm going to die here. Okay? That's a choice I'm making. All right? Just so you know.

FRANK:

Hey Jim, before we get into a detailed discussion about this, I want people to know what you're doing with certain law enforcement couples. You know, a husband is a police officer, and his wife, you know, spends every day wondering if her husband's going to come home. And that creates strain on a marriage. But during the summer, you're really doing a ministry regarding that. Can you tell our listeners and viewers about that?

JIM:

Yeah, we started a number of years ago, because-- Let me just go back and give you some of the backstory. I don't think you and I ever really talked about this, but when I got saved at 35, I was already about eight or nine years and didn't think much of the fact that I got saved so late, except that I felt like, wow. Look what God did for me years before I ever was even paying attention.

And I felt like I was behind the curb. So everything we did, Susie and I, was about, how can we serve? And we jumped into service. And when I say service, I mean volunteerism. Like, what can we do? There's nothing in it for us that we just want to serve in some way as an expression of gratitude.

And I did that for years, as you know, even when I retired as a police officer. Went on Stand to Reason, our good friend Greg Koukl. I was the only volunteer in the organization for those year and a half that I was with him. Even then you asked me if I would come on at CrossExamined, and I said, I'm willing to do anything I can to help CrossExamined, but I don't want to be paid.

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I've always felt like true ministry for me needed to be volunteered. And after a number of years writing books and speaking around the country, well, you're suddenly getting paid. And Susie said to me about six years into that, hey, what are we doing?

We haven't served anywhere forever. And so I said, well, where do you want to serve? Well, she picked a ministry called Operation Heal Our Patriots, which does amazing marriage resiliency for veterans. And we just happened to get involved and started writing curriculum for that group, all of it as a volunteer. And then George Floyd happened. And so now for five years, we have been—

Franklin Graham has a heart for law enforcement. These are only officers who have been involved in critical incidents. Many of them are seriously injured. They're going to be medically retired. They are struggling with what to do next.

Who are we? Their marriages are sideways. And we have a marriage resiliency retreat in Alaska, and we do four couples a week. We've been doing it now for five years. This is our sixth year coming up. We've done the first 107 couples that have come through that program. And it's given us, I think, insight into local law enforcement, because the vast majority, 99.9%, are local law enforcement officers who are struggling.

And it gives us a snapshot of what's happening across the nation because they're coming from pretty much every, every corner of America. And that has been kind of our way of continuing because it's all volunteer work. And the whole point is, what can we do? What can we do in gratitude for what's been done to us, done for us? And that's what we're trying to do with Billy Graham Association.

FRANK:

And every summer you go to Alaska and do that. You're trying to put couples back together who've been through some traumatic experiences. People don't seem to understand the sacrifice that law enforcement people make every day.

Yeah, of course, most people aren't shot at. Most people aren't injured. But you live with that every day. And particularly the spouse lives with that every day. You know, when her husband

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goes out the door every morning on beat somewhere, she's wondering, is he really going to come home? What's it like living like that?

JIM:

Well, and, you know, a lot of the people we get too, are women police officers who come up with a husband who's experiencing the same thing in reverse. Of those 107 couples, there have been 135 officers. So we've had many that were both came up, they're both police officers. I can only imagine the problem with that. Right? So I think that part of it, for what you just said, and this is a good way to kind of talk about this as an opening here, is I've always told—

Years ago I was asked to do an ethics program for our local agency where I worked. And I said, okay. Well, this is how we're going to do ethics. The first thing we have to help guys understand, guys and gals who are on the job here is that you are the one necessary profession upon which every other profession is contingent. You are the one necessary.

The same way that I have an iPhone, there are millions of dollars of industries making just iPhone covers. Without the iPhone though, none of those other industries exist. They are dependent upon iPhone to produce the product that they then, cling to.

So the same thing is true, by the way, if you're a doctor. You're only able to do your work safely because someone is there protecting the order so you're not going to get robbed by your next patient. And if that does happen, there's a consequence. So it turns out, we talk a lot after the pandemic about necessary essential services. Well, there is no service more essential. You can't even have firemen. We had volunt—

How I discovered this was I dumbed into it doing this ethics project. I simply looked at the history of state of California, and I noticed, interestingly, that every single major county that was founded, the sheriff's department started in 1850.

And I thought that's weird that every single county started in 18--. Why? Because the state became a state in 1850 and the first profession you lock in is your sheriff's department. Why? So you can have all the other professions. And in the end, it's about not-- Here's what I will say too. We have a tendency to call these law enforcement officers. Well, there's some--

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Of course, that's true. But we do two things. We enforce laws, but we also protect culture. We enforce and we protect. And what are we protecting? Not just individuals. We're protecting your way of life. And so, I have a tendency to not want to call them law enforcement. They're cultural protectors because what they're doing really—

And sometimes you have to enforce a lot in order to protect the culture. And again, nobody, everyone loved to be protected, but nobody wants anything enforced. And regardless of where you are, let's say you're on a different side of the political divide. If your worldview could come into full blossom in our country, so that where now it's worldview X, whatever your worldview X is, you're still going to want that worldview protected and you're going to have a group that's going to do it.

You're not going to get rid of law enforcement, or culture protection, regardless of which side of the political aisle you're on, because every side needs someone then to make sure. And by the way, it's going to have to be somebody who's able to use force, because often the people who want to destroy your view of culture will use force themselves. So even if you're on one side of the party or the other, you're going to need someone to come in who has the ability to aggressively protect the culture that you've created, whatever that culture is.

FRANK:

And this is why God set up government, ladies and gentlemen, as he says in Romans 14 or 13, I should say, which we'll get into a little bit after the break. Without government enforcing laws, and protecting innocent people from evil, and punishing wrongdoers, nothing else matters, ladies and gentlemen. You wouldn't be safe to do what you do every day. So we're going to get into this more with my friend, J. Warner Wallace, the cold case homicide detective, Coldcasechristianity.com. Don't go anywhere. Back in two.

Next time you see a police officer, ladies and gentlemen, I want you to say thank you for your service. It's what I do, and they always appreciate it, and it's a service that actually has more of an impact than you think it does. That's what we're talking about here. It's why God established government to begin with.

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Without somebody enforcing laws, and punishing wrongdoers, and protecting innocent people from evil, nothing else would work. We'd have chaos. And I see so many people in our culture trying to run down law enforcement because, look, in any profession, you're going to find some people that are going to be crooked.

That's true anywhere. But if you take down the whole show, if you try and say we can't trust any of these people, there's no alternative, there's no coming back from that, ladies and gentlemen. You're not going to have a civilization at all. You're not going to have a community at all. And too often we think there's only certain people involved in the culture war for good, for truth, for righteousness. But that's not true. Jim, tell us why there's more people than we think in the so called culture war.

JIM:

Well, okay, let me give you a little thought experiment because I do feel like there are. There's like an infrastructure in place that we often take for granted. We just kind of, it's like the air we breathe, and we don't think about it.

We happen to live on this foundation. I tell officers this all the time. The fact that you're the one necessary profession does not give you elevated status. It means that you're the foundation. And if you'll recognize how people treat the sidewalk, or the foundation, they spit on it, they pee on it, they throw their trash on it, the dogs poop on it.

Nobody cares about the foundation until it cracks, and you see the crack in the wall, and you finally go, okay. We've got to deal with the foundation. The foundation just gives you an added responsibility. With great power comes great responsibility. It's not a blessing. I don't want the responsibility.

But you have it if you step into this profession. Let me give you this thought experiment. If I told you that there was a young man, 31 years old, who died on September 10, and his job, for the most part, most of it involved public communication.

You're constantly trying to talk to people. He was very persuasive. The longer he did this job, the more persuasive he became. And sometimes he'd have success with people, often he

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wouldn't. But he was young, 31 years old. He had a wife, young wife, two children, a young boy, a slightly older daughter.

And one day when he's out doing what he always does, talking to like hundreds of conversations he had publicly, he was shot in the neck. It was all captured on camera. Happened publicly, as a matter of fact. Cameras also captured the escape route of the assailant.

And that shot was so brutal that people who were with him thought, oh, this is not-- He's not going to survive this. And they took him to the hospital. And ultimately, he died on September 10th. You might have heard about it. And afterwards, there was a huge public funeral. There was an outcry.

Public officials attended. It was on YouTube live. It's still there. You can go see it right now. And his wife, as part of the funeral, she said, I want to just protect his legacy. Because they called him a martyr, a man of faith, a man of family, shot and killed, and dies on September 10th of a shotgun shot wound in the neck.

And within probably a month, none of his friends, except for his friends, nobody else remembered him. As a matter of fact, I suspect that most of your listeners and viewers today don't know his name at all, because his name is Jaime Roman.

He died on September 10, 2024. A Philadelphia police officer shot to death while doing his job in a conversation with a man who turned violent and shot him. We don't give a lick about police officers when they die. And this was just as tragic as, by the way, we both, you and I-- Like, you know, I texted Charlie the night before he was murdered.

FRANK:

Yeah.

JIM:

And you texted me back that morning. I just texted Charlie about the murder in Charlotte. You know, we were just talking about the murder in Charlotte and some of the details of that. And you text me the next morning and said, Charlie will get back to you. We're at an event in Utah

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today, and sure enough, then he's killed. And we were all just shocked by this, as we should be. And this is not to minimize what happened to Charlie, but it turns out Charlie didn't die eight times last month.

Eight more police officers died in the line of duty last month. This happens every month. It's been happening forever, and nobody gives a lick about it. They just don't. You can go on the-- As a matter of fact, just the last three, the last four that were killed in the last two weeks.

Two black men, one white man, one white woman. Their ages range from about 25 to about 47. Nobody knows their names. And they basically represent demographically the same kind of culture that you mean. This is kind of the percentages you see in law enforcement agencies, and they were killed in the last month, and the last two weeks.

Nobody cares. So look, in the end, you're right. There's an expectation. This is a service profession, right? And here's what I mean by service. I have always seen service as what you do for nothing. I know there's entire biblical warrant for paid ministry. I get that.

But I had a job. I had a full-time career before I ever met you, Frank. I had an entire career. I was retired when I met you. So, I mean, almost retired. So, I mean, this was a whole career. Service for these folks, it's paid. Yeah, but you know what? Do you know what they're getting paid?

I know. You know how I live. You've been to my house. You know, this is not a place to get rich. This is not even a place to be able to anymore to do it on one income. I don't know many cops who are living on one income. They're either doing a part-time job, and their wives are working full-time. But the expectation is that this, you will—

And here's why I still call it a service. Because there's no amount of money that can pay for the loss of those men and women. No amount of money. And so, they are working for far less than what it's worth.

What do we get paid? I remember one time you and I were speaking at a conference, we were in North Carolina, and I was there with Greg Koukl. So I'm just going to give you a little out of

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school conversation I shouldn't have said. But I was in the elevator with Greg and Greg said, man, you guys, I can't believe you can retire so early.

Well, you know, part of it's because we learned to live on nothing. And so, we're good with that. And number two is we get paid for not for what you necessarily have to do today, but for what might happen to you today. And then the question becomes, well, how much would be enough knowing that you have this competing thing?

I'm willing to die to protect my community, but I'd also like to get home for dinner. And those two competing things make it really hard to, I think, function on a daily basis. And that's the kind of thing that we're dealing with when we're talking to law enforcement officers.

FRANK:

What does the morale of the police force do when the public becomes so cynical of them, Jim? I mean, it certainly happened around the George Floyd thing. I see some of that happening now with all the Candace Owens conspiracy theories about oh, we're asking this question and that question.

When really what she's doing is insinuating certain people are guilty, and she has no good evidence that they're guilty, and everybody's lying, not just law enforcement, but everybody involved. What does that do particularly to law enforcement when they hear that kind of thing, and people kind of take this very cynical attitude toward their profession?

JIM:

Well, we have to ask ourselves what is it we think cops do all day? So we're unusual in the sense that we have a proactive side as first responders. That for example, other first responders like fire department or EMS medical services don't have a proactive side. In other words, there is no patrol division in the fire department or in medical services. There is a patrol division in law enforcement because we know that our very presence can suppress crime.

And the stats are very clear. I've been collecting those for years. Here's what people don't probably realize is that anywhere from 20 to 50% of the activity of a patrol officer today is self-initiated. So yes, we respond to calls, but anywhere, depending on the surveys, depending on

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the city, anywhere between 20 and 50% of activity is self-initiated field activity. It's officers who are trying to suppress crime by—

And we have to make a decision as a culture, do we care about that anymore? Do we want officers? Because let me tell you, for what little they're going to get paid, I'm sure officers would be fine just sitting in the station. You call us when you have a problem and we'll come out and take a report. And so, what's happening since all fully since George Floyd in the pandemic, because a cultural shift took place.

Not only did it take place in terms of public opinion about police officers, it's always been rough. Remember that there's, that law enforcement and fire are kind of like two sides of God's nature. I always say that if you want to see what your culture is about, examine the nature of your first responders.

They're the first ones who are going to show up when you're in crisis. If you wonder if you're living in a good society or a bad society, who shows up when you're in a time of need? That'll tell you. It turns out God's nature is the fullness of truth and grace, justice and mercy. Well, fire, the police and fire, represent truth and justice, grace and mercy.

Fire comes out that most of it, most of fire department calls, people don't realize this. The vast majority of fire department calls are EMS, they're medical services. So they're going to come out when you're having a heart attack. You're going to get a fire department and an ambulance. Those kinds of things are going to respond.

So everyone loves people who come to their rescue that way. Nobody wants to see a cop in their rearview mirror because that's the truth and justice side. So but this is, these are both important. They reflect God's nature in the culture and together we do that, right? We have to do both of those things.

We have to decide as a culture do we want police officers to still proactively try to suppress crime? Because here's what's happened statistically. We know the data is really pretty clear is that whatever self-initiated field activity was occurring prior to 2020 has dropped precipitously

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and has not returned to those levels. The cops are saying, look, I get it. You don't want us to do anything. We're happy to do not-- We get paid the same if we do anything or do nothing.

FRANK:

So there's a lot less prevention. There's a lot less prevention than-- People are still reacting to calls, but they're not preventing crime by being on patrol.

JIM:

Yes, as a matter of fact, there is good, good data that shows that when we stop acting proactively, when self-initiated field activity decreases, crime increases, especially violent crime, it increases.

And it's not surprising that when you have a presence, a police presence in a community, people typically behave better and it suppresses crime. This makes, it's like same as being a parent. If you as a parent decided you will never punish your kids, you'll see that your kids will figure that out pretty quick and they will start to behave really poorly.

We don't tend to have a tendency not to self-regulate. So a patrol division does have an advantage. We have to decide though as a culture. Look, we get it. If the culture says, you know, we're not interested in proactive police work anymore, then cops will not be. And I've talked to so many field training officers who are maybe in their 15th year.

So they have a life. They remember pre George Floyd and then are now living post George Floyd. And also post George Floyd is also that season in which all of the most liberal district attorneys were elected that were the promised police reform, and those district attorneys became aggressive in their prosecution of police officers.

So police officers quickly learned, you know what? Better for me to do nothing than risk my entire family and go to jail for something that I was actually asked to do as a police officer.

FRANK:

A lot more with Detective J. Warner Wallace after the break. We're talking about the importance of law enforcement, how God established it for a reason. It's the ground floor of

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civilization. It's the ground floor vocation. If you don't have law enforcement, you're not going to be able to do anything else. And yet, too many people are making it really hard to trust in law enforcement. Much more after the break.

AD:

Students across America are more open to the truth of Christianity than ever before. And Dr. Frank Turek is taking the powerful evidence for God to campuses like UC Berkeley, the University of Georgia, Ohio State, and Alabama, reaching thousands in person, and millions more online.

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FRANK:

Welcome back to I Don't have Enough Faith to be an Atheist, with me, Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network and other stations around the country. My guest J. Warner Wallace today. We're talking about the importance of law enforcement and how you cannot be cynical of it. If you do, the foundation of a civilization goes away.

In just a minute to, I want, want to mention that, as you know, due to Charlie's murder, when we go to a college campus, now we have to bring security not just for our safety, but for the audience as well. So our costs have tripled when we go to a college campus. Used to be \$5,000 or so when you add in the, you know, the flights, and the hotels, and the videographer's fee and all that. Now it's tripled to about \$15,000.

And the students, we don't charge them anything. So donors pay for our ability to go on college campuses. We already have about 15 scheduled for the spring. So as we come up to the end of the year here, if you feel led to help us do that, we really would appreciate it.

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We now have a \$300,000 matching gift. So all donations up to \$300,000 will be matched. So if you give, you know, \$1,000, it's going to be 2,000. If you give 10,000, it's going to be 20,000. You get the idea. A hundred percent of your donations go to ministry, 0% to buildings.

We're completely virtual. You don't come to us, we come to you. So you're not paying for a building. You're paying for us to go out there and engage a very dark culture. So go to crossexamined.org. Click on donate. And there's several ways to donate.

We really appreciate that. So thank you so much for your support. My friend J. Warner Wallace has been a detective for many years. His dad was a detective. He is his son. He knows law enforcement quite well.

Also want to mention that this case that we may get to by 2027, the Charlie Kirk murder, it's really run by local law enforcement. It's the Utah police doing this, it's not the FBI, contrary to popular opinion. The FBI is involved, but they're involved from a distance. This is going to be a state police case and it's going to be a probably death penalty case.

So when people come out and say, well, how come the FBI hasn't done this? How come the FBI hasn't done that? It's not really their ball to run or their game to run. And Jim can speak to more of that and the importance of local law enforcement. Jim, tell us about that.

JIM:

Well, I mean, I'm like others who have been watching. It's not just forget about Charlie Kirk for a second. We've seen all the deployment of federal troops around the country in efforts to kind of help its situation, just in the kind of the temperature of crime in certain cities.

And I get that. I have my own hesitations, like I'm a big advocate of local law enforcement, and I think that anyone who thinks deeply about this ought to also be a big advocate of local law enforcement. I can think of several reasons why this would be the case.

The first and foremost, like, I think it's great if local law enforcement says we need help, and they as a way of adding bodies for a short period of time, reach out to federal agencies, that's one thing. And even then, I would say we've got to be careful about how much we do it, for practical reasons and just for constitutional reasons.

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I think one of the things we would say is that local law enforcement usually involves people who are local to the agency, local to the city, they're governed by law. Every city is different. You do not want a one general type of law enforcement being applied to a city of 1500 in a city of 15 million. You want this to be tailored to the actual region, and you want people who know their constituency, who know the community that they are policing.

They grew up there, if you can. Look, we had problems with that because you're not going to pay cops probably enough to live in California and probably not enough to work in the kinds of cities that I was working. I could never afford to live in my city. I just didn't make enough money to live in my city. So I had to commute 50 miles.

FRANK:

You were living like more than an hour away when—

JIM:

Right, right.

FRANK:

When you were working in Torrance, California, which just made life even more complicated. You not only have to put your life on the line every day, you've got to drive an hour to get there.

JIM:

Yeah, well, and also it doesn't help your community the way that if I was living in the neighborhood I would. So, you want local. And that's why, that means you're probably going to have to do something to incentivize because it's not like, oh yeah, this is a personal choice. I'd like to live in a better way. There was no financial way to do it.

So you're going to have to kind of think about that. Agencies need to think about that. That's the first thing. But I think the Constitution, right? And the 10th amendment basically tells us that all of these local agencies are the agencies that should take care of local policing. And so,

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you have to be careful about-- And I think what happens is, we often will say, and why is that the case?

Because we've seen it over and over again, both here and abroad, especially. That when you have a federalized police agency, it's often going to be at the mercy of whoever's in power at the moment because it's federalized. When you've got 1500 or now, we have 18,000 agencies in America, it's really hard to get them on the same page about anything, good or bad.

But you probably are not going to be able to leverage them to get your idea enforced. So, this is what's good about having local-- So I'm pretty moderate on that. I see that the federal agencies are often used and I have. When do you use a federal agency?

Well, I've had a couple of serial murders that have jurisdictional problems. In other words, not just in my city, but they are also in other jurisdictions, often across a state line. Well then, I'm definitely going to ask the federal agencies to come in and help coordinate because it's not just my investigation, it's running across several agencies.

So you just need kind of one overarching agency to deal with it. And I think aside from that, there's not a lot of reasons why I'm going to probably reach out to a federal agency to do what I can do at the local level. Local police officers still matter and you're going to have more public trust.

And the surveys show this, more of a sense of legitimacy if your agency that's doing the police work is a local police agency. I've collected the studies on those. And I also think that you're much more effective. Like, you know, if you live in our city, I know which areas need to be policed which way, because I grew up in those neighborhoods and I know where those-- I know where all the, for example, in our city it used to be one of the highest number of banks in Southern California.

And in the 90s we had the most ridiculous number of bank robberies. And you know, before 911 those were federal crimes because your money is federally insured. So FBI would often get involved. But after 911 we had to handle those at the state level.

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But I knew which parts of our town had all the banks. And you want police officers, if they're going to continue to work proactively, and they know because they've read the serial bank robber description, they know what he looks like. Well then, you've got an opportunity to work proactively if you happen to spot this guy outside of a bank.

So this is the kind of thing is done best at the local level. But here's what I would say we talked about in the last segment, this idea that we have to ask ourselves as a culture, do we want that kind of proactive work? Because it comes with risk. If you're saying, hey, I'd like for you, do you mean just drive around?

And if the people know that I'm never going to get out of the car, never going to stop anybody, but I do drive around a lot, is that going to suppress crime? No, I think what you need then is somebody who will drive around and when they see something suspicious, they will engage it.

Oh boy. Well, how do I know that something's suspicious? In the end, you're going to ask an officer to make a human decision about human behaviors and there's a good chance he'll be wrong because a lot of things that look suspicious when you actually investigate, aren't.

FRANK:

Yeah, yeah, I noticed that with all the conspiracy theories going on. You know, he looked at his phone too quick. He smiled at the wrong time. He's guilty. It's crazy, right?

JIM:

So the question becomes, as a culture, do we want officers invading our privacy in this way? And what often happens is that the kinds of actions that, that become highly public. And by the way, we have data for this. When a police incident goes viral, the first reaction for the local agency is to pull back local police officers like, okay, I'm not going to, because that might have been a self-initiated stop that caused all of this.

You know what? And by the way, if you call me to a call and I get there, and it's potentially problematic, like I told you about the four officers who died in the last two weeks. One was just there, you know, a domestic violence situation. You know, you could, if you want to do that safely as a police officer, wait until it settles out.

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Might someone get hurt? Yeah, but it won't be you. No, it turns out you want us to be as proactive as we can to get there as fast as we can, and that just puts us in a place. Now what if I get there and this thing goes sideways and you determine later, well, you could have taken a different approach that would have caused less harm.

Well then for the officer it's like, how do you know in the moment as you're doing it? I'm just telling you it's much more complicated than this. And what typically happens when it's judged unfairly or judged harshly by the community, two things statistically happen according to the data that I've been collecting.

Number one, self-initiated field activity dumps. Cops will say, okay, I don't know if it's worth it. Two, crime, especially violent crime, increases. Now look, the people will say, well there's all kinds of contributors to violent crime. Yeah, of course there are. But trust me, that the communities know when police stop kind of being part of their community, things go sideways.

And so, in the end you're gonna-- Now, you said something earlier, Frank, that I think is really important and it's that, yes. Do you see it? Do I see police misconduct? All the time. Because those agencies are filled with those dirty little things called humans. And they're going to make mistakes all the time.

And I'll tell you that nobody hates misconduct more than a cop who's doing his best not to behave this way. And this is why, honestly, this is an important group to reach. If you wanted to change the way your culture behaves, reach its first responders.

If you wanted an ethos that is humble, and protects the innocent, and tries its best to balance the truth and justice on one side, and the grace and mercy on the other, then try to reach first responders with the gospel because very few are Christians, and you will see a huge change.

And how do I know that? Body cameras. So it turns out that since we started using body cameras, the data has shifted. Number one, there are far fewer personnel complaints in those agencies that are now using body cameras. And there are also far fewer acts of force.

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Well, it's one thing to say, well, there are far fewer complaints. If you say that, then the right says, see. All those complaints were all false to begin with. But if you say, oh yeah, but there's also a much fewer number of uses of force, the left will say, see, there's—

And there's a truth in both sides. Here's what I think is happening with the body cameras. It's what's called the observer effect, is that if you know you're being observed, you behave better. Both sides. So, if you're an officer and you have a body camera, the best thing you can do is tell the person you're talking to, I have a body camera.

You're going to get much better response from that person. You also know you're being filmed. Now, it turns out that there is a body camera that's always been there, if you were aware of it, and it was called God. If you are in a worldview in which you believe the body camera is always present-- This is the weirdest claim of all Christianity, if you ask me.

The weirdest claim is not that God exists or Jesus rose from the grave. It's that if you believe that Jesus is your savior, the spirit of God will come and live in you. What other religious view holds that view? The first century Jews didn't hold that view.

This is earth shattering, the idea that the Spirit of God will come and live in you. And if cops felt like the Spirit of God is actually watching, is residing in them, well, they've got a body camera, whether they have a body camera or not.

FRANK:

And that's true of everybody in every profession. If we thought we had God watching us all the time and with us all the time, we'd have a much better culture. I'm gonna ask Jim when we come back about cynicism about law enforcement and why is it just cynicism about law enforcement and not other professions?

We'll talk about it right after the break. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, my guest J. Warner Wallace. Back in just a couple.

As we come up to Christmas, ladies and gentlemen, there are some great gifts you can get. You can actually get them an online course. In fact, in January, late January, I'll be teaching 'Why I

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Still Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist.' If you get your person you want to give the gift to at the premium version, I will be their instructor not only during the video sessions, but during the live Q & A Zoom sessions.

Also, there's two courses in Logic. One is a section for kids 6th to 8th grade, and the other is for adults. They're both called 'Train Your Brain.' Shanda Fulbright is the main teacher, but I'll be involved too. There's no better thing to teach your kids other than the Bible, than logic. But actually, logic comes before the Bible.

If you want to know the Bible well, you should know logic. So you want to teach them logic. And unfortunately, in our public schools, we're not teaching kids how to think anymore. We're teaching them what to feel.

And that can be very dangerous. Get them the logic course, 'Train Your Brain.' Go to Crossexamined.org, click on online courses. You will see it there. Hey, Jim, I've noticed, one thing about cynicism when it comes to law enforcement. You know, if somebody, detects some malfeasance among a police officer, suddenly all cops are bad.

But we don't say that about doctors, right? Like if some guy is found guilty of malpractice, we still go to doctors and we still trust our doctors, right? If some restaurant gives a bad meal, you know, we say, okay, I'm not going to that restaurant anymore, but I'm going to other ones.

I'm going to eat again. Right? Why is it with law enforcement, suddenly one guy is found out to be bad, you can't trust any of them. Where does that come from?

JIM:

Well, I think a lot of it comes from the kinds of physical presence we present to the community. Here's what I mean. So your doctors are seen as individuals, but police officers usually aren't. We all wear the same uniform. Here in, Southern California, there's more than 30 local municipal agencies just in the Los Angeles Basin.

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If you are in our city and you cross the street, you're probably going to be in LAPD's jurisdiction, or Hawthorne PD's jurisdiction, but you may not notice it because they're also wearing the same color uniform, except they either have no patch, or the patch is slightly different.

So there's a sense in which, uniformed police officers are seen as a large group, even though the rules of engagement, your pursuit policy, all of these things are often individualized to the specific agency. And in our city, there's no space between cities.

It's just, if you're on this side of Hawthorne, you're in one city. If you're on the other side of Hawthorne, you're in another city. You don't even know. As a matter of fact, when we have an accident, the first thing the accident investigator gets there is to figure out what side of the center line is the accident actually on, because it's gonna belong to that jurisdiction. So I think because we are seen as this large body of cops, but actually, we are very different local agencies.

And you want that because, again, those small cities, although they're right up against each other, they have a very different ethos. And you want an agency that reflects the ethos of your city. We talked a little bit about Romans 13. This is the one passage in which the word that's used for those who kind of enforce the law is the same word that is used for ministers of the gospel.

It is that that's very unusual. And most cops you meet, they will say, yeah. Like, I was an artist. I wasn't going to be a cop. My dad was a cop. He didn't raise me. I mean, he was my dad. But my parents divorced when I was three.

I have a bachelor's degree in fine arts and a master's degree in architecture. And then I end up, at 27, becoming a cop. Nobody could be in a different headspace, a more different headspace than I was before I became a cop, both politically, socially, all of it, because my mom is very different than my dad in the way they think.

And I remember I was in the academy, and my drill instructors just thought, who the heck is this artist doing in the group? You know, I got, I remember them assailing me over that issue. And so I think in the end, that view, the view that I held was so different than law enforcement.

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But this is the complexity of law enforcement. We're humans. We're humans just like everybody else. And we have a very broad-- Do you realize we've done a survey, for example, on cops and how they vote. Only one survey I've seen, interviewed 99 out of the top 100 law enforcement agencies, ends up being like a third of all police officers. Only 32% are registered Republicans. Interesting, right?

FRANK:

Yeah.

JIM:

Now it's interesting to me that we actually pretty much reflect the culture, whatever the culture is, brings to us. And you want your city to reflect that. And that's why I think if you look at cops, they are seen as this block, but they aren't. They are every agency. Every one of those agencies is different. And you want it that way to effectively police your community.

FRANK:

Again friends, when you see a police officer, thank that police officer for their service because they do not get the kind of respect and gratitude, that they deserve because they are on the ground floor of civilization.

Without them, no other profession could be safe, which means no other profession could execute what it needs to execute. You couldn't make a living, you couldn't be secure in your home, you couldn't put capital out at risk, you couldn't do any of those things. You couldn't, your kids couldn't walk the streets.

It's so critical. And yet, we malign these people because we think there's some sort of conspiracy behind what they're doing. And we think they're all crooked. They're not. Just like every other profession, there are bad apples in all of them, and they need to be weeded out. But we can't look at them with such cynicism.

Jim, I want to ask one other thing because a lot of the cynicism that's come up lately, you know, we had it with Floyd, now we have it with the Charlie Kirk situation, goes back to the fact that

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people think that during a prosecution like this, there ought to be a nonstop, a nonstop flow of evidence and communication from the prosecution.

And when you and I did that show, just two weeks after Charlie was murdered, you made this point, but I want you to reiterate it, that the prosecution's job is to get the real killer convicted. Why don't they reveal everything they have, Jim? Can you just tell us that again, so people finally get it?

JIM:

Well, okay, a couple things, and I wish we had-- We spent an hour talking about that, several months ago, so it's kind of hard to cover it all again. But, yeah, you want privacy. And I think part of what happened here, Frank, is that this is why you want local agencies to handle local crimes.

You don't want the federal government coming in, because often the federal government comes in and it reflects the view of whoever's leading the federal government at the time. And look, I'm a pro police guy, but I'll tell you that the level of transparency that occurred early in the Charlie Kirk investigation, I'm not somebody who says we should be more transparent.

I think they were too transparent in the first two weeks. We would never have revealed what the federal agencies revealed of the local investigation. All it does is open the door to all kinds of questions that don't need to be addressed. And by the way, the defense attorney yesterday did the exact same thing.

They're like, we want to keep this in, and we don't want this being publicized because they know what a mess it can create, even for the defense. It creates a mess for both sides. I think the reason why it felt to a lot of people like, what's all the secrecy about, is because it started off feeling like, I'm going to have a new revelation every day.

There's going to be a press release from the national, at the national level every day about this case. That would never be the case if that had not been such a high profile murder. And it shouldn't have been the case here. It should have been, you know, defer to the local agency, they're handling the investigation.

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The local agency should not bend their knee to the pressure of the press. Why? Because it's all going to come out eventually. It has to come out. It's all going to come out at the trial. And you want to protect the trial now. That's the last thing you can protect is the trial. So you keep these things incredibly close to the cuff. Why? If I mention, oh, he talked to so and so, you don't think so and so is going to be contacted by both sides and the pressure is going to be--?

No, don't even tell anybody there is a so and so. Just keep it close to the cuff and you'll protect all of your witnesses, you'll protect all of the evidence, locations, all kinds of things. Now, I think the most, for example, of the conspiracy theories on any case typically come from the little bit of information you do give. And they will be much harder to build that kind of theory if you just kept everything private until you get to the first public trial.

And then it'll all be out in its most robust form. You don't trickle out bits and pieces. You let it all come out in its most robust form. Because all of the questions and theories that people develop are in the little trickle, in the unanswered questions that are going to come out robustly in the trial.

Just wait till the trial then. But it does mean you're going to have to resist. And I think this is one of those examples of why locals should do local things. And federal, because you know what? They have no political horse in the race. Like, they don't. They don't care how the administration looks. They don't care.

FRANK:

Right.

JIM:

It's not their concern. And you want it that way. You want local mayors, and local city councils, to pick local chiefs to do local work with local police officers, because that's the best way for us to police.

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And the founders of the nation knew this. And this is why this is the way we started and the way we should continue. And I think every time you see a mess up, typically it's because somebody's got their hands in the batter that shouldn't be baking the cake at all.

FRANK:

How do you get a fair trial with an untainted jury if you put out too much information, Jim? Is that a problem?

JIM:

Well, it often is a problem. But what's worse a problem is then you have like, you have a body of evidence, and sometimes that odd body of evidence is a witness. And if you just say something as simple as, yeah, he told a friend. Well, now you're going to have an entire body of people who are going to investigate everyone who could be a friend.

Eventually they're going to find that friend and the pressure is going to be on that friend. What you want to do is protect all of your-- Sometimes the evidence you have is a human, and it's not something you can collect and keep in the property room. It's something that's living and breathing. And by the way, that human does not want it known either.

That human just wants to get through this, and get to the trial, and testify, and move on with life. So because some of the evidence we have in trials are human pieces of evidence, you want to be very careful about what you reveal early, because you're trying to protect that testimony.

FRANK:

Hey Jim, tell us the website where people can go if they want to be a part of the ministry you do in the summer.

JIM:

Yes, it's called the thinbluelife.com. Either thinbluelife.com or thethinbluelife.com, that is our ministry to cops. It's part of what we do at coldcasechristianity.com. But if you go to thinbluelife.com, the upper banner, we're taking applications right now for law enforcement officers who have been involved in critical incidents who need some help in their marriage.

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And that link we are looking for, believe it or not, those places where we feel like officers have been largely ignored. And that for the most part is really pronounced in the Pacific Northwest. Interestingly, in the first five years, we're pretty well represented everywhere in the country except the Pacific Northwest. So if you're in that area, please apply.

FRANK:

Check that out. Jim, thanks so much for so much light on an issue that needs a lot of light on it. Appreciate it brother.

JIM:

Thank you. Appreciate you.

FRANK:

That's a great J. Warner Wallace, coldcasechristianity.com, also that website we'll put in the show notes that he just mentioned. And friends, let's not accuse people of wrongdoing without really good evidence. No slander. Let's just follow the evidence where it leads. That's the way forward. Thanks to Jim. Don't forget to tell police officers you see, thank you for your service. God bless. Merry Christmas. See you next week.

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