

Be Worthy of the Bullet That Charlie Kirk Took For You — Why Independence Day? with Steve Deace PLUS Q&A

(June 2, 2026)

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, a mom emailed me, and she says she has an atheist son who says that God must be evil because he created creatures who do horrible things. How would I respond? Michael from Ireland writes in and asks, how can it be that the Bible says that God appoints leaders, but it also says Satan is the God of this world? That-- Doesn't that seem a bit contradictory?

Also, a woman writes in who's planning her wedding, but she wants to get the gospel to unbelievers at the wedding. How can she do that? She's unsure about how to do it. So I'll give my advice. But before we get to all those questions, these apologetic questions, I want to talk a little bit about Independence Day.

It is coming up. You know, we just had a tour by the speaker of the house a couple of podcasts ago. You can watch it on our YouTube channel. One of the guests, in addition to me there was my friend Steve Deace, who does a daily program with Blaze Radio, and of course, it's on YouTube as well.

And he's talking about Independence Day for kids. And I don't know about you, ladies and gentlemen, I'm just going to be honest. Sometimes if I want to learn something and get the essence of it, I read a kid's book because the author is forced to tell the truth in a very simple way.

I'm just going to be honest. Sometimes I do that and I learn from kids' books. And Steve has a great new kids book out called 'Why Independence Day? America is Great Because God is Good.' So here he is, ladies and gentlemen, the great Steve Deace. He's going to tell us a little bit about that.



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He's coming all the way... [Applause] Okay, enough of the crowd and the crowd, your crowd is noisy, Steve, all the way from Des Moines, Iowa where he does his program. Steve, for those people out there who may not know who you are, you're doing a daily program.

It's one of the top programs out there, particularly spiritual religious programs. How did you get to where you are? What's your background?

STEVE:

First of all, good to see you as always, Frank. I started in a mail room. My wife is always threatened that if she's going to write an autobiography, it's going to be titled I Married a Mailroom Clerk, you know?

And so I, I was voted most likely to succeed in high school and teacher's headache at the same in the same yearbook. I was that kid growing up, you know? And but I got by on a lot of just kind of God given ability and not a great work ethic and kind of crashed and burned when I went out there on my own.

Flunked out of college when I found out, you guys don't give out degrees for mastering super tech mobile? Really there's more to it than that, you know? And kind of had to just start my life all over and I moved back to the state where I was born in Iowa. I grew up in Michigan, but I moved back here and lived in my grandma's house rent free, trying to start all over again.

And I worked in the mailroom at Blue Cross Blue Shield. And through there I talked my way into a part-time news assistant job at the Des Moines Register in the sports department. After a year or two there, they finally gave me a chance to start covering minor league hockey because I was from Michigan and I was the only person in the entire sports department that knew anything at all about hockey.

And just from there I kind of worked my way up. I started doing local sports talk radio as a guest host. They gave me a sports talk radio show at that point and then that became so successful here in town that the big Clear Channel Blowtorch WHO here in Des Moines, where Ronald Reagan was our first sports director, came to me and said, hey, do you want to be our afternoon news talk guy?

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And I said sure, you know? And I, I, by this time now I've had a spiritual conversion at age 30. And so I, I still love sports, but I kind of feel like maybe just this prodigious memory I have and this stuff I've just always been able to kind of naturally do and say, maybe there's a purpose behind it more than just breaking down box scores. Right?

So I was getting more interested in and having more of a voice in broader issues anyway. I've always been interested in politics. I was in Young Republicans and all that stuff growing up. Alex P. Keaton was like a role model of mine when I was a kid, you know? And so we make the switch over there, and I have no idea the amount of influence that this show is going to provide me.

I legit thought I was just doing a talk show until the morning after the 2008 Iowa caucuses. And I essentially was on Mike Huckabee super pack during that cycle. And he pulled a big upset. And the next morning, my general manager called me into his office, and on his desk, he had the WHO coverage map that he always had there.

And he took the front page of the Des Moines Register, which had the county by county map results of who won every one of our 99 counties, Romney or Huckabee, and he pulled it out, and he laid it over our coverage map. And with the exception of one county, Frank, it was an exact replica. I mean, there was a complete and total symbiosis.

And he looked at me, he said, congratulations on your big win last night. And that's when I began to see that there was way more possibility for this than just, you know, selling live reads, and widgets, and entertaining people. And so, I turned my show into a vehicle for activism. I had a group of Christian businessmen who looked at how Rush Limbaugh got started nationally, where some successful people went to him and said, hey, we're going to give you the money to go out of Sacramento and see what you can do in bigger markets.

And they thought, well, maybe they could do that with somebody like me. And so they gave me the money to go out and to try to build my own thing. And it took a long time, a lot of stops and starts. It's very hard, Frank, to do this in the for profit world without selling out to somebody frankly. It's really hard. Okay? So you know the quote, the great prophet Sawyer Brown, the country band from when I was a kid, we had to take the dirt road to get here.

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I mean, it took a long winding road Paul McCartney to get this far. But eventually we worked our way up steadily. We didn't-- I mean, I lived paycheck to paycheck for like a decade trying to build this thing. And then luckily, a family that has a lot of renown in our ranks discovered me and took a great amount of interest in me. The Eppersons did. The founders of Salem Media.

FRANK:

Oh, sure. Stu Epperson?

STEVE:

Yep. Stu Jr. reached out to me first, and he said, listen, we've been listening to your stuff, and we kind of think you could do what Glenn Beck does, where you could be on both our religious stations and our topical stations, but from an evangelical perspective.

And it's funny, at that time I had-- I knew who Glenn was, but I did not know him. Now I've been working with him for the last seven years. And so they took a chance on me and gave me my own time slot. One of the-- One of the last acts that Stu Sr. did as chairman of the board was recommend that they invent a time slot for me.

So they created one, 9 PM to midnight, put me on about 100 stations around the country to see how I would do. And the show grew quite a bit. And eventually, things we went digital with a company called Conservative Review, and then they merged, and that was Mark Levin. And then they merged with Glenn Beck and the Blaze in 2018, and that's where we've been ever since.

FRANK:

And you're doing a daily program. People can find it on YouTube, can find it wherever you get podcasts, Steve Deace Show. And it's very well done. And I love the way you fold in evangelical Christianity to current events and politics and all that.

And you and I have spoken at several Turning Point events together. And one of the last Freedom Nights that Charlie did, Charlie Kirk did out there in Phoenix, he did with you. And I texted him and I said, hey, how did Steve do the other night? And he said, Steve was a 10 out of 10, phenomenal. I don't know what you said. I still got to go back and watch it.

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STEVE:

Maybe I do too.

FRANK:

But he was just gushing about how good that program was. And, just parenthetically, I remember you and I were sitting at a table in August of last year, just a month before Charlie was murdered, and we were at a pastor's event in California. I don't know if you remember this, but we're around the table, and Jack Hibbs was there, and some other...

Charlie was standing right kind of over next to us, and you were talking about the difference between the reformed side of Christianity and the charismatic side of Christianity. Do you remember saying this?

STEVE:

Is this where I said that in Reformed World it's trash day every day?

FRANK:

Yeah. Yeah.

STEVE:

Somebody's getting put on the curb every day.

FRANK:

Explain that to our listeners. Explain it to our listeners. Say it again, because I just, I stepped on you. But explain it. It's a great insight. Go ahead.

STEVE:

In reformed world, every day is trash day. Somebody screwed up, someone messed up. Someone did not get something exactly correct precisely correct to the last syllable. Every single day. Right? It's just-- It's just a daily trash route. Someone's out on the curb in Reform World. Do not ask for who the trash, truck tolls. It tolls for thee, Frank.

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FRANK:

Everybody's a heretic, right?

STEVE:

Yes, everybody is. Okay? Your beard's not the proper size. All right? Your bourbon is not the proper proof. You did it wrong. Reform World is like that great scene in Mr. Mom where he's dropping the kids off for the first time, and the crossing guard gal comes out and says, you're doing it wrong. That's Reformed world, right? Now, Charismatic World, it's never trash day. It's never trash day.

They never take the trash out. Okay? And you're like, what's that stench over there? And you're like... They're like, that's Jesse Duplantis. Like, why is he in here? Well, we just, we're kind of ashamed of him, but you know, we don't want to, you know... Yeah. We don't want to do anything embarrassing, so we just kind of put him back there. Just... Well, don't you have a trash day?

It's never a trash day. It's never a trash day. They don't police their own at all. All the reformed people do is self-police. And the charismatic people never police themselves at all. Is that what you're talking about? Yeah.

FRANK:

That was a great insight. I just thought it was well said. It's a great analogy. Yeah. Everybody's a heretic if you're reformed. Nobody's a heretic if you're charismatic.

STEVE:

Nobody is. Yes. That could be just a fresh wind of the Spirit that hasn't come around to us yet, so we'll just hold out. Let's wait. Yes.

FRANK:

Right. Steve, what was your impression of Speaker Johnson a couple weeks ago when we had that, we had that private tour with him and his whole spiritual heritage tour and his knowledge and his humility and all that. What'd you think?

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STEVE:

I have to tell you, one of the speaker's top consultants is a longtime friend of mine, Hogan Gidley, who I met on that Huckabee campaign back in the day, and we've been good friends ever since. And I'll just tell you. I'll just share with you, Frank, what I texted to Hogan right after I got back from that event. That is a side of the Speaker I had not seen.

You know, covering events day to day, you just kind of see the technocratic stuff. And when you have the smallest majority in the history of the United States House, it's kind of hard to be inspirational, because most days, your messaging is what you can't do as opposed to what you want to do or should do. Right? Okay? And so, a lot of times he's just out there like, yeah, we can't do it.

We don't have the votes, and the Senate won't do it anyway. And it's just very dispassionate and technocratic. And, I mean, the level... I mean, you could feel that there was a level of synapse firing, there was an inspirational...

The serotonin level spiked. Okay? That he got a chance to talk about the deeper truths of America, the metaphysical aspects of our country. And that's one of the things that my children's book is about. The hand of providence on our nation, his understanding of those traditions, his ability to recall them.

I mean, he had charisma, and, I mean, I just saw a completely different side of him than I've seen covering this every day, working in the political arena. And I text and-- You know, a good buddy of mine is a fellow Iowan named Bob Vander Plaats, who's very well known in Christian organization circles.

And so every summer, he puts on this event called the Family Leadership Summit. And when he told me a month ago, hey, I think our keynote speaker is going to be Mike Johnson, I'm like, thoughts and prayers, bro.

Okay? I'm like, pour one out. This will be fascinating. Okay? You know, I didn't see it. All right? He goes, trust me. I just met the guy. I was at an event where he spoke privately. I understand

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what you're thinking, Steve, but I'm telling you, I saw something you didn't see. I'm like, I hope you saw a lot that I don't see.

And then as soon as I got back to my hotel room in D.C. last night, or, last week, I text, I called him and I said, bro, you were right. I mean, I, I definitely saw more than I, than I typically do. And I, I told Hogan that, hey, you know, you guys should have him out there more. He should be doing more long form conversations, more broader worldview conversations appearing frankly on programs like yours and mine.

Get outside the day to day minutiae of cloture votes, and subcommittee hearings, and meetings, and everything else. And demonstrate that he does understand the cosmic battle that's happening here. He understands that we're playing for big stakes here. The worldview cataclysm and steel cage match that is America right now. I could not have been more impressed in that setting, Frank.

FRANK:

Yeah, I know. He was very impressive. And when he said he was an attorney for ADF for at least a decade, I immediately got it. I get, oh, Alliance Defending Freedom. He was one of their attorneys? That's why he's so articulate. That's why he knows the history of the country. That's why I can be confident he's an evangelical Christian because he worked for ADF, which is an organization we've been supporting forever.

They're all about religious freedom, which is one reason we need to be involved politically to protect our ability to preach and live the gospel. So many people don't seem to get that. They take that for granted. But yeah, I thought it was very inspirational what he did. And we're already trying to arrange another tour with him because I want more people to see who he is and also see what goes on in the Capitol and, and, and see the history of the Capitol from the proper perspective.

STEVE:

I will tell you, I came out of that. Over the years, I've had variations of those kinds of trips offered to me. I've always turned them down, either because of schedule or I just kind of

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thought, I want to go to Washington D.C. Listen, the first time I went to Washington D.C. ever, Frank, I got inspired to write a book about a demonic takeover of America. All right?

So I've just, I've kind of stayed away from the place. As much as I love our history and heritage and something just told me this time I had to go. Even my wife was like, you've got to go. My staff was like, you've got to go. And, I have to tell you, I've, I have been, my staff has been like, you know what man? There's a gleam in your eye again.

I mean, I needed to be reminded, I needed to get outside of the minutiae too of what I think one of the reasons why I had that advice for Mike is because I felt the same way myself. I've got to get back again. That was a good reminder. What am I doing this for? What am I fighting for? Why are we trying to save this thing called America?

And to see that history, to touch it, to feel it, it recharged my batteries for sure. So I'm very thankful to the Speaker, Matthew Faraci, Lucas Miles, my good friend there at TPUSA Faith, those who helped put this thing on. I'm just very thankful for the opportunity and, and really what it did to recharge my battery.

FRANK:

And for those of you that want to see the tour, ladies and gentlemen, we actually filmed it at least as much as we could. And so go back a couple of podcasts. You'll see the Capitol Tour. My guest Steve Deace was there and several other folks. And you can see what he said to us and how he said it.

And there were some funny stories he told, too. It was great. Steve, before we get and mention the book here, I do want to ask you, because some of our viewers and listeners might not know, you were the brains behind the movie Nefarious.

I mean, it's your book that was turned into a movie. And for those of you who haven't seen that movie, you need to see it. It's a great film about demonic possession. And it was very well done. Now there's going to be a Nefarious two. Do I understand?

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STEVE:

We are in the process of working on that. We're fine-tuning the script right now. It'll be an adaptation of the sequel book. I wrote a little novella sequel to Nefarious, called A Nefarious Car. And the story of that book is that, on Christmas Eve one night, a young woman who the previous Christmas ran away from home, a dysfunctional Christian home, she was rebelling against her parents, and they kept warning her about this abusive boyfriend.

She doubles down, runs away. Turns out her parents were right, but she doesn't think she can go back home again. They've disowned her. And so a year later, on Christmas Eve, she finally gets up the nerve to run away. She has very little money on her, just enough to get out of town and to find a secluded motel to crash and figure out what her next move is.

And it's in this motel that the devil appears to her and makes her an offer to join with him and to grant him a son. And together they will change the world. And over the course of one night in this motel room, this young woman's going to essentially decide the destiny of mankind, and nobody knows it.

And that's the script, the book that we're adapting into a script now. I've got some very important meetings coming up here in the next couple of weeks in fact. So if folks want to pray for that, if you enjoyed Nefarious and that kind of content, you know, we're aiming to make some more. I figured, you know, that movie, making that, the enemy almost killed me twice making that film. So I figured I've taken his best shot at this point, Frank. So I'm ready to go back for round two.

FRANK:

Yeah, I remember a couple years ago we had a show on it. You kept talking about how so many people were in car accidents and all sorts of crazy stuff happened.

STEVE:

Yeah

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FRANK:

But you kind of... You guys are doing a movie about Satan and about demonic possession, and it seems like Satan was coming after you for doing it. So... But tell us about 'Why Independence Day? America is Great Because God is Good.' I just read the whole book in 10 minutes because it's a kid's book. But I learned something reading it. Tell our listeners about it and why it's important to know what's in this book for kids.

STEVE:

Well, you know, he was speaking in a different context, of course, but I think it's applicable here. The prophet Hosea's famous line, my people perish for a lack of knowledge.

FRANK:

Yep.

STEVE:

And, you know, I'm 52 years old. I'm right dead center of Gen X. We were the last generation that sang, you know, Joy to the World and Silent Night at Christmas programs and government schools. We were the last generation to have Easter break, not spring break. We were the last generation that it was at least allowed to discuss different theories about origins of the earth and the universe.

You know, we got to spend time with Stephen Meyer, the guy behind the outstanding film, 'The Story of Everything.' He was on our trip with us as well in D.C. last week. That conversation would have been very common even in public schools in America as recent as the 70s and 80s. But that's all gone now.

And, you know, we are in the midst now of the generation that Reagan used to warn about that one day there may come a generation, because we're always one generation away, he said. And you don't want to be the generation that once has to warn your or tell your children and grandchildren what it was once like in America, when we were free. And so, I'm doing everything I can.

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And I'm firing every bullet I can. And, you know, my publisher came to me shortly after Rush passed away a few years ago, and I had somehow ended up with the number one bestselling book in the country at the time called 'Faucian Bargain', going after the COVID narrative. And he asked me if I was interested in writing children's books to kind of try to fill this void left by Rush's, with his death and his Rush Revere books.

And I'm like, listen man, I can't carry that guy's jockstrap. What are we doing here? But then I got to thinking about it, and I said, what if we, instead of just drafting off of Rush, what if we kind of just charted a path off of what he already trailblazed? What if we did it specifically on America's Christian heritage for kids?

And the publisher loved that. And so, we outlined a trilogy of books. The first one we did was 'Why Thanksgiving?' in 2022. That became a national bestseller. That was one of the bestselling children's books of 2022. In 2024, we came back with 'Why Easter?' And we always planned for the finale to be timed for America's 250th birthday.

'Why independence Day?' And essentially, what you'll see in this book is that this really is an event. Our 250th birthday really is an event 3,000 years in the making. It really does begin at Mount Sinai. There's a reason why Moses is fairly prevalent when you go to Washington, D.C., his teachings, his visage.

There's a reason why. Charlie used to point out all the time that Deuteronomy was the book most quoted, or the second law, or the next giving of the law. That Deuteronomy was the most quoted book by the Founding Fathers. And so we go into all of that history. I think the movie...

There's a scene. I know you have seen the movie 'A Great Awakening', the George Whitfield movie. Have you seen that yet?

FRANK:

I have not yet. I've been told I need to, but I will.

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STEVE:

Oh, you have to. It's great. There's a scene in that film. Now, obviously, we finished this book six months ago to get it drawn. But when I saw this film, I'm like, did they consult with me?

Because there's a scene in the film where Benjamin Franklin is negotiating with the British ambassador, and he says, you have to understand the people, the Englishman in the Colonies across the pond have had a revival. And they think now because they have the Spirit of God within them, that they do not require a heavy hand of a king anymore.

And I set up in my seat in the theater when I saw this, because that's literally, you know, you read the book. That's a line right out of the book, all right? That there's a reason why we had a great awakening first. You know, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Right? From 2 Corinthians, we had a great awakening first, and then we had a war for independence next.

And so, I walked through all of that history, as best I can for kids, connect those dots, at least enough to get you interested to want to learn way more of the details. And the hope is that by inspiring children about the legacy and heritage they're inheriting, that they will be inspired to now go and understand, and accept the responsibility to maintain that heritage and pass it on.

FRANK:

Yeah. You do start way back with Moses in this book. And of course, it's very well illustrated and it's very well written. Even I can understand it, Steve. And that's why I like kids' books, because I go, okay, because, you know, as a kid's book author, you need to...

You need to get to the essence of... You can't flower it up—

STEVE:

I've done four kid's books, Frank. I've written 14 books in total. This is my fourth children's book. The amount of editing in these four children's books eclipses the other 10 books combined. So, yes, it is not the easiest thing to distill this down into ways that children will understand. No, it's not.

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FRANK:

It's like Churchill said. When he did a speech, if you give me an hour, I need five minutes. If you give me five minutes, I need a week to get ready. Right?

STEVE:

Correct. Yes.

FRANK:

Because you've got to economize and you've got to say exactly what needs to be said in a clear way, and kid's books force you to do that. That's why adults learn from it. In fact, we have a logic course called Train Your Brain. It's for sixth to eighth graders, and we tell parents to take it because it's written for sixth to eighth graders. Right?

STEVE:

Many of our founding documents, remember, a lot of the colonial era education ended at the eighth grade.

Public education did. That's why a lot of your founders were Ivy League graduates at like 17. Right? And so a lot of the founding documents... Like when you talk about the Federalist letters that went out to the colonies about the ratification of the Constitution. Those were written for the average American.

The guy doing, you know, the blacksmith, the merchant, you know, the farmer with an eighth grade education. And if you took those to a lot of the law schools today, a lot of our American school children could, or college educated adults could not understand them.

FRANK:

Yeah, it's a sad indictment on our education system. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We don't have much of it anymore because we don't have a fear of the Lord anymore. And we've fallen away from that. But this book, ladies and gentlemen, which is brilliantly illustrated.

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In fact, I gave it to my granddaughter because you gave me a copy in D.C. when we were there a couple weeks ago. And so, I was staying at my son and daughter in law's house and my granddaughter, who's now just like 15 months, the edition you copied, I gave to her. But it's called 'Why Independence Day? America is Great Because God is Good' by Steve Deace.

Steve, tell people your website and where people can learn more about you if they want to hear you, any of your programs, that kind of thing. Where do they go?

STEVE:

Easiest thing to do is go to my X page because I tag everything there. It's centralized there. So it's @SteveDeaceShow on X. That's D, E, A, C, E.

It's spelled like Deese, but it's pronounced Dace, @SteveDeaceShow on X. And everything, links to this book, all our shows. That's kind of where everything is centralized and cataloged there, @SteveDeaceShow on X.

FRANK:

Great stuff, Steve. Thanks so much. Thanks for what you're doing every day and showing people that Christians have to be Christians 24/7, 365, 360 degrees everywhere.

We have to apply our Christian faith to every area of society. And it's amazing that so many Christians don't think that's the case. But we have to, we have to do what we can to show them that a disciple is somebody that follows Jesus in every area of life.

STEVE:

Amen. Same to you, my friend. Thank you, brother. You're an inspiration as well.

FRANK:

Hey, before you go, I want you to give us the title and just a quick overview of the talk you gave at the pastor's conference in Dallas in April. Do you remember the title of your talk?

STEVE:

The title was 'Be Worthy of the Bullet Charlie Kirk Took for You.' Yeah.

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FRANK:

And what did you mean by that?

STEVE:

That I think one of the reasons why you're seeing people like Donald Trump, and you know, Charlie, of course, his theology is way more orthodox. His standing with his faith was without question, if you knew him at all, as you did.

But the reason why those kinds of men are getting shot is because, frankly, and shot at is they're just way more of a threat to the spirit of the age than too many of the men in our pulpits are. And I had someone who actually just passed away, about a week ago, James Robinson, said to me once that the problem with America is that there aren't enough pastors worthy of being shot at or imprisoned.

And that's the issue. We've spent too much time in the last generation, Frank, building brands and not kingdoms. And I think that ultimately you can tell who the enemy thinks is a threat by who he goes after. And, you know, Charlie's—

There were so many pastors that would tell me, over the last couple of years, they didn't want to get involved with Charlie or TPUSA Faith because, well, he's using the gospel for politics.

And then a lot of those pastors, I know they, you know, from talking to Lucas, and Sloan, and the team over there, a lot of those same pastors, after Charlie's murder, and especially after seeing his memorial, which might have been the most viewed proclamation of the gospel in the history of this planet, it is quite possible that until the return of Christ, not more people will hear a proclamation of the gospel than was at that memorial. It is possible.

And a lot of those same pastors then said, I had it backwards, man. I'm sorry. Charlie was using politics for the gospel. I had it backwards. Right? And I think that's why it's not a coincidence, and you were there, that he was struck down spreading the gospel in those den of iniquities called...

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Den of iniquities called college university campuses. And he was... You know, all this talk of being seeker sensitive all these years, he was the one actually going with the seeker. The seekers are not... It's funny, the seekers always seem to be in these really posh suburbs like I live in.

That's always where the seekers seem to be. They always seem to be in these really posh, upscale suburbs where people can tithe a lot. No, he went to the campuses where seekers really were, got his hands really dirty, and he was murdered for that. And I think that that sacrifice cannot be in vain. And I hope that it inspires an entire generation of pastors to say we're here for more than Hawaiian shirts and sweater vests. Okay?

We're not here to build a brand. We're here to build a kingdom. And that's why we have to be worthy of that sacrifice. And you have to be, as a pastor, worthy of the bullet that Charlie took for you.

FRANK:

Yeah. Well said. Yeah. If skinny jeans and fog machines could get people saved and sanctified and made disciples, we'd have done it a long time ago. But—

STEVE:

Preach.

FRANK:

Yeah, that's not the, it's not the case. And we're not inviting people to a halfhearted commitment. You know, follow Jesus over here, but do what you want over there, no.

STEVE:

Yeah. Discipleship is not creating functional deists. That's not what discipleship is. Yeah.

FRANK:

That's right. That's right. Well, brother, thank you so much. And we're going to keep track of what you're doing and keep track of this book as well. Again, ladies and gentlemen, the book is called 'Why Independence Day? America is Great Because God is Good' by Steve Deace.

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And check him out. Steve Deace, D, E, A, C, E. And he does a great show every day as well. Thank you, brother.

FRANK:

God bless you, brother. Thank you. That's the great Steve Deace, ladies and gentlemen. Check him out. And now we're going to get to your questions. Thanks, Steve.

STEVE:

Thank you.

FRANK:

Check out Steve's book. It's a really clear presentation, especially for kids. And as I say, as an adult, you can learn a lot from that too. And coming up this weekend, we're going to have the great Eric Metaxas on. If you want the adult version of the American Revolution and how we got to where we are and all the sacrifices that those founders had to make in order to give us the freedoms to secure the freedoms that we have, you need to get Eric's book.

It came out today, June 2nd. It's called 'Revolution.' And we're going to talk about it this weekend, but you want to pick it up as soon as you can. It is really well done. You're going to learn a lot and you're going to feel like, you know, I need to get involved because these founders pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

Read the Declaration of Independence for the freedoms that I enjoy now. And those freedoms are going to go away unless we get reengaged in protecting them. I want to mention also some things coming up. I'm going to be this weekend at The Last Stand, particularly Friday night.

That's going to be June 5th, out in Denver, Colorado, Brave Church. I'll be there with my friend Seth Gruber, and Allie Beth Stuckey, and Victor Marx and several others. Check our website for more. Then coming up on the 8th and 9th, I'll be with my friend Pastor Chip Bennett and several other apologists down at the Apologetics Conference at Grace Church in Sarasota, Florida.

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That's the 8th and the 9th. And then the following weekend, Sunday the 14th, Lord willing, I'll be with my friend Jack Graham down at Prestonwood Church. I'm doing the two services, Jack and I. Jack's going to interview me during the services at Prestonwood Church there at Dallas.

So if you're anywhere in that area, I hope to see you there. Check out our website for more. All right, let me go to some of the questions that you guys have sent in. And one comes from a mother whose atheist son says that God must be evil because he created creatures to do such horrible things.

Well, as we've talked about several times on this program before, borrowing on my friend Greg Koukl's book 'Tactics', you should always ask questions when people make a statement. It's not your job to refute the statement, it's their job to support the statement.

So someone says, well, there's too much evil in the world. This so-called God created evil. Or He must be evil if He created all these evil things. What's your first question? Your first question should be, what do you mean by evil? What do you mean by evil?

Because he's going to figure out that you can't define evil unless you reference good. And you can't reference good in an objective way unless you're talking about a standard outside of ourselves that is good that we're all obligated to obey. And what we mean by that is God's nature.

If God doesn't exist, nothing's good, which means nothing's evil. So if you're going to complain about evil, you're presupposing there's good. But if you're presupposing there's good, you're presupposing a being like God with a good nature that we're obligated to obey. So evil doesn't disprove God.

Evil may prove there's a devil out there, but it can't disprove God because there'd be no such thing as evil unless there was good. And there'd be no such thing as good unless God existed. So evil is a lack in a good thing. It's a parasite in a good thing. It doesn't exist on its own.

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Evil is like cancer. If you take all the cancer out of a good body, you got a better body. What happens if you take all the body out of the cancer? You got nothing. Cancer needs goodness to degrade. In fact, we could say that evil is a degradation of good.

God creates something good, and then an evil act is something that degrades that good. Or we might say, evil is like rust in a car. If you take all the rust out of a car, you got a better car. What happens if you take all the car out of the rust? You got a Pinto.

Now, you got to be old enough to know that joke, all right? Yeah, that car was worse than having no car. Okay? But no, if you take all the rust out of the car, you got a better car. If you take all the car out of the rust, you don't have anything. All right? And so, evil is a lack in a good thing.

It doesn't exist on its own. C.S. Lewis is very profound on so many things, and, especially on this issue as well. In fact, he pointed out... Let me find the quote from Lewis. This is from 'Mere Christianity' about how Satan is a fallen angel.

He says this. To be bad, Satan must exist and have intelligence and will. But existence, intelligence, and will are in themselves good. Therefore, Satan must be getting them from the good power.

Even to be bad, he must borrow or steal from his opponent. Let me stop right here. This is one of the inspirations for the book that I wrote called 'Stealing from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case.' In order to say something's evil, you have to steal a standard of good in order to say that something is evil.

But good, again, only exists if God exists in an objective way. So here's Lewis saying that even an evil person or force like Satan to be bad must borrow or steal from his opponent.

He goes on to say, and do you now begin to see why Christianity has always said that the devil is a fallen angel? That is not a mere story for children. It is a real recognition of the fact that evil is a parasite, not an original thing.

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The powers which enable evil to carry on are powers given to it by goodness. All the things which enable a bad man to be effectively bad are in themselves good things. Resolution, cleverness, good looks, existence itself.

That is why dualism, in a strict sense, will not work. What does he mean by dualism? Oh, there's an equal good force and an equal bad force, and they fight. No, there's no such thing as an equal, equal bad force. Bad is a parasite in good. It must get good qualities in order to be bad.

And you and I have good qualities that we often use to do evil. We have mind, emotion, and will. But we often use our minds, or emotion, and will to do evil, to enrich ourselves at the expense of others, or to get something good from others in an illicit way.

Whenever you do evil, you're doing it to get something good. And so for your son, ma'am, to say that, well, there can't be a good God because he created all these evil creatures... First of all, that presupposes a standard of good.

And secondly, it couldn't mean that God was inherently evil because that wouldn't be what we would call God. That would be what we would call Satan. And Satan himself has to get these good qualities from God in order to exist or do anything himself.

Now, you might say, well, okay, but why does God allow these horrible things to occur? That's something I'm going to address in the next question, which is related to this. And this question comes from Michael from Ireland, who writes in and asks, how can it be that the Bible says that God appoints leaders, say leaders of nations, but it also says that Satan is the God of this world?

And for example, some of the passages where the biblical writers and even Jesus himself talk about Satan being the God of this world. Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:4 says he refers to Satan as the God of this world. Jesus refers to Satan as the ruler, or some translations might say the prince of this world.

Paul in Ephesians 2 says of Satan, the prince of the power of the air, and John writes in 1 John 5:19, that the whole world is in the power of the evil one. Now what do these verses mean? Does it mean that Satan has all the power and God has no power?

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No, it doesn't mean that. These verses are usually understood to mean that Satan has influence over the fallen world order, not that he owns the earth absolutely, or is equal to God in power. That would be impossible. So in other words, the Bible presents Satan as a real spiritual enemy with broad influence, but that influence is still under God's ultimate authority.

God still gives Satan some power, but not ultimate power. He has him on a leash, sort of like us, right? He gives us power to make choices. He could stop us if he wanted to, but he doesn't choose to stop us because if he does stop us, then we're not moral creatures, and this isn't a morally relevant world.

What he does instead is he ultimately quarantines us, usually in a place called hell. And that is where we ultimately wind up. So Michael, when it's—

The Bible says that God appoints leaders, and he does. But Satan is the power of this world. Satan can influence, obviously, but he doesn't have the same power as God. He still is subordinate to the power of God. God allows him freedom like he allows us freedom. Now why would he allow us freedom?

Well, he allows Satan freedom, and us freedom, and demons freedom, and angels freedom, because without freedom, this couldn't be a world of love. We wouldn't have the opportunity to love. The problem is when we have that opportunity to love, we can use that free will to do evil. You say, okay, well, why doesn't God just stop it?

Well, as I mentioned a minute ago, he might influence certain events to not occur, but a lot of times he lets them occur and he could redeem those events. I mean, if you, if you think about the fact that God has to give us free will to allow love, which allows us to make moral or immoral choices, God can bring good from those evil choices.

Good that sometimes we can see, and good sometimes that we can't see. One of the things we've talked about, and I talk about this a lot in the book 'Stealing from God', is the idea that you can learn good things from pain and suffering. It's called like a soul building theodicy.

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Explaining why God allows certain evils. For example, it's hard to learn courage unless there's danger. It's hard to learn compassion unless somebody's suffering. It's hard to really think about others if you get everything you want all the time. You know, what do we call children who get everything they want? Spoiled.

What's spoiled about them? Their character. You give a kid everything he wants, you're going to ruin that kid. A kid needs people to say no. He needs people to put boundaries on him. He needs difficulty, like we all need difficulty in our lives if we're going to become more like Jesus rather than more like Satan.

If you keep getting everything you want all the time, you're going to become a complete me monster. I know I would. More of a, I'd be more of a me monster than I already am. There has to be difficulty. There has to be pushback. There have to be problems in this life in order to mold you into what Jesus wants to mold you into.

In fact, the famous passage in Romans 8, people stop reading. But it starts this way. It says, we know that all things work together for good to those that love God and are called according to his purpose. Now it doesn't say all things are good, work together for good. But then it goes on to say, in order to be conformed to the image of his Son. God allows certain evils so we can be conformed to the image of His Son.

That's one reason that God allows certain evils. In fact, Jesus himself, it says in the book of Hebrews, it says he learned suffering through obedience. Or let me put it another way, he learned obedience through suffering. Let me get it right. He learned obedience through suffering. If Jesus, who didn't have a sin nature had to learn obedience through suffering, what about us that do have a sin nature? Yes.

And God can redeem evil. God can bring good from evil, even when we can't see it. This is known as, you know, the ripple effect. We've talked about this on several occasions here on this program. Why does a certain evil occur? Sometimes we don't know. In fact, I was meeting with a friend of mine who lost his 20 year old daughter to an illness that came out of nowhere.

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And this is a couple years after this happened. So he's asking questions. I wouldn't say this the day it happened obviously, but we were, we got talking about it and he's seeking answers. And I said, well, when I see something like this happen, I don't know why it happened, but I know why I don't know why it happened. Because I'm finite.

I don't know the end from the beginning, but a being outside of this universe, who knows eternity is coming and can see how all these interacting choices ripple forward to affect so many other choices, and so many other people, and so many other events.

I can see that I might not, I might not. I don't have adequate information to say there's no reason that, say his daughter died, or a baby died, or some terrible event like Charlie being murdered, that there's no reason downstream that this could bring great good.

Steve just talked about the fact that that memorial service for Charlie was the greatest evangelical event in history in terms of people hearing the gospel. It was. Over a billion people have seen some of that memorial service. That's a great good that came from a great evil.

We can't see how all the ripples will wind up, but God can. That's why we can trust God even when we can't see. I mean, it seems inexplicable to us. Why did my 20 year old daughter die? Why did a baby die? Why did this evil thing happen? I don't know why. Well, I know why generally it happened, because we live in a fallen world.

I mean, if everyone was indestructible till age 70 or 80, we'd be completely reckless till then, especially in our fallen state. Now when we get to heaven, we won't have the fallen state, we won't have the sin nature. So that issue does not apply. But here it does. But I know why in general bad things happen, because we live in a fallen world.

But if you're going to ask me why did this bad thing happen? I don't know why. But I know why I don't know why. I'm inside of time. I know very little of the past, very little of the present, nothing of the future except what God tells me. How do I know where this is going? I don't.

I have to trust God. And the other point that needs to be made with regard to evil is that Christianity is the answer to the problem of evil. If we had never sinned, Jesus would have no

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reason to add humanity to his deity and come to earth and allow the creatures that rebelled against him to torture and kill him so he could then take our punishment upon Himself.

And then by trusting in him, we're not only forgiven, but given his righteousness, he would have no reason to do that if we had never sinned. So God entered the bloodstream of humanity in order to be the perfect man. So the infinite justice of the Father came down on him rather than us.

That way, God remains just and is the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus, as Paul explains in Romans 3:26. So Christianity is the answer to the problem of evil. Now I would ask your son, ma'am, and Michael, who also wrote in, if someone is not a Christian, I think you should ask them the question, if Christianity were true, would you become a Christian? And see what they say.

Or if you want to leave Christianity out of it because it might have a negative connotation in somebody's mind. You might say, if Jesus really predicted and accomplished his own resurrection from the dead to prove he was God, would you follow him? And see what they say? If they hesitate or say, no, it's not a head problem.

It's a heart problem. You can move on from there. All right, let me go to the final question. A woman writes in a long email. I won't read the whole thing, but she basically is a shy person. But she wants her friends and relatives who don't know Jesus to know Jesus through her wedding.

So what kind of advice could I give her? She said, what should I ask the officiant to say? And I'll say this. I think a wedding is a beautiful opportunity to demonstrate what's really going on in heaven and why we're really here.

And so if the officiant could say something like, do you know that the Bible starts and ends with a wedding? It does. It starts with Adam and Eve, and it ends with a great wedding. And everybody's invited to the wedding. And who is the bride?

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We are, if we choose to be. And who is the bridegroom? Jesus. In fact, if you want to sum up the entire purpose of why we're here and sum up what the Bible, the central message is, it's five words.

Jesus wants to marry you, but he's not going to force you into a marriage against your will. He wants to marry you. And the marriage that we see here on earth is an illustration of our marriage to Jesus.

In fact, the whole wedding ceremony is patterned after the ancient practice of a covenant. If you go back to the covenant that Abraham had with God, I don't know if you remember this, probably it's Genesis 12 or 15.

I'm trying to remember exactly where this happened. But there is an aisle and there are animals that are slain on each side of the aisle. And the covenant partners would pass through the center, this aisle of these slain animals, saying that if they failed to keep up their end of the covenant, they would become like these slain animals.

Now, in Abraham's case, Abraham is asleep when God as depicted by a flaming torch, goes through the aisle of the two animal or the animals being slain, the aisle between them, he is demonstrating this is a one way covenant.

Abraham, it doesn't matter what you do, I'm going to keep the covenant. But this is where we get the idea that there's an aisle in the center and that the people who are witnessing a wedding are there not just to witness the wedding, but to help the two people in the marriage before God, keep the covenant.

This is why, of course, you can't go to a same-sex wedding, because you can't affirm, as a Christian, you want to keep them in that relationship that will keep them out of the kingdom. It's a sinful relationship. But I digress. The point here is, is that the two people standing there at the altar are in a covenant with one another before God.

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And the people in the pews are there to not only witness but help that couple in the future keep the covenant. Not to encourage them to get divorced when things go badly, but to encourage them to keep the covenant.

And if you read the scriptures, particularly Ephesians 5 on this, what is the bridegroom, the groom, what is he supposed to do for his wife? He is supposed to love the wife to the point that he will sacrifice himself to save her.

What does that make you think of? Jesus. He's the Jesus figure. The groom in a wedding is the Jesus figure. He's supposed to sacrifice himself in order to save the life of his wife.

And what is the wife supposed to do? Respect her husband. And what are we supposed to do? And of course she's to love her husband as well, but what are we supposed to do in our relationship with God? God has sacrificed himself for us.

We're to respect him and love him. And so the wedding is a beautiful illustration of what Christ did for us. That he sacrificed himself to save us. And we freely then love him back and respect him back. And that really is what a wedding is illustrating. It's illustrating our ultimate union to Jesus.

And everyone is invited to this. And of course, it's also important to point out, if you can, that love is not about feelings. This is not a feeling based relationship. This is a covenant relationship. This is a love relationship. You can't feel or you can't vow to feel a certain way for the next 50 or 60 years. All you can avow is your behavior. That's why you have vows. If the relationship was completely based on feelings, you wouldn't have a vow.

You'd say, well, as long as I feel this way, I'll stay in it. No, it's not about feelings. It's about a commitment to seek what's best for the other person according to God's will, regardless of what happens, for better or worse. And that's what Jesus does for us.

Even when we're unfaithful, He's faithful. But we are commanded to love, and we are vowing to love. You don't need that when you're lovey dovey. You need that 10 years into the

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relationship, when you wake up in the morning and you look over at your spouse, when you wake up and you go, you again?

Why did it have to be you again, right? I mean, we're both. We're all impossible to live with sometimes, right? That's when you need the vow. And this is why God views divorce as such a great tragedy. Because God won't divorce us and he doesn't want us to divorce him.

He doesn't want us to divorce one another. So the wedding is an illustration of the Gospel. And oh, by the way, notice that traditionally when a husband and wife get married, what does the wife do in terms of her name?

She takes the name of her husband. What do we do when we become Christians? We take the name of our bridegroom, Jesus. We're Christians now. So you can illustrate all this right through the ceremony and point out these truths that what they are witnessing is a covenant before God.

And everyone is invited to marry God himself. And the bridegroom is Jesus. And it's up to you whether or not you want to accept his invitation. He's not going to force you into a marriage against your will. But if you don't want his love and his sacrifice, then you're going to have to pay for your own sins and you're going to be judged by an infinitely just God.

As we said before, there's only two possibilities in the end. You're either going to get justice from an infinitely just God, or you're going to get grace by the God who sacrificed himself to take your punishment upon himself.

Those are the two possibilities. It's up to you. So, ma'am, I would encourage the officiant to talk about some of these things and make the explicit mention of the gospel, so beautifully illustrated by the wedding ceremony.

Make an explicit pitch, an explicit call for the repentance of people. If you don't know Jesus, here's the time to know him, and then to follow him, and be with him forever. So it's a beautiful opportunity and thank you for wanting your loved ones who don't know the Lord to know him

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through the ceremony. It's a beautiful opportunity. All right, friends, if you want to send a question, send it to hello@crossexamine.org, hello@crossexamined.org.

I'm sorry we can't get to all the questions, but we try and get to as many as we can. And don't forget that this weekend, we're going to have Eric Metaxas on to talk about his amazing book 'Revolution', which you're going to want to be a part of. You're going to want to get that book. It's so good. I've already read some of it, and it's a wonderful, wonderful recounting of the spiritual heritage of our country that you should know and your kids should know. All right, great being with you and see you here next time. Lord willing. God bless.

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