

Can We Declare Reality? Manifestation, Affirmation, & Christian Occultism with @phoenix_hayes

September 8, 2026

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, this week is a very busy week. It, first of all, is the one-year anniversary of Charlie Kirk being murdered. Lord willing, I will be out at Utah Valley University this Thursday night, along with Glenn Beck and several other speakers, a worship team to commemorate Charlie one year after the murder on that campus.

Also that day, this could change because these media hits sometimes change, but I'm due to be on Fox and Friends that morning. Also Martha McCallum later that afternoon. Also Sean Hannity's radio program. So please pray for all that. We're commemorating Charlie. We're also talking on those programs about the new book, *The War on Reality*, that comes out today, September 8th, with my co-author Phoenix Hayes, because the first chapter.

Is all about Charlie and what happened leading up to that day, what happened that day and thereafter. And this book is dedicated to Charlie because he was actually fighting on the side of reality against so many bad ideas that were denying reality. And there's been a war on reality, ladies and gentlemen, since the Garden of Eden, when Satan said to Adam and Eve, "Has God really said, you know, you can create your own reality.

You don't need God." And we know that many people have tried to do that in recent years. Whether it's identity, you know, they can create their own biology apparently, like there's an infinite number of genders, or they can claim you're somehow an oppressor because you have certain qualities. They're even non-behavioral, like your race, or whether you're a male or a female, or whether you're a citizen or not, whether you're a Christian.

If you're a Christian, you're automatically considered an oppressor. This is a new reality that people are trying to press on others, and there's so many other aspects in this book that comes out today that we're going to talk about. I want to zero in on one of them, but before I do, I just want to point out that we cover the Charlie Kirk murder. Then we cover: what are the rules of reality, what is the story of reality, how do we discover reality, why is there a war on reality?



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Then we talk about where did we come from, the battle over beginnings. There's been a war on that forever. Who decides what's right and wrong? Who really does decide what's right and wrong? Is it an objective moral law? Is there an objective moral law and if there is, who decides what it is? By the way, I need to brag on my co-author who I'm going to bring in here in a minute, because she wrote a lot of the jokes in this book.

There's plenty of jokes in this book. In one of the sections where we talk about who really decides right and wrong. There's a section in there where people claim that individuals do. You decide what's right and wrong. I decide what's right and wrong. You know, you do you. It's radical relativism. And here's what Phoenix writes in the book *The War on Reality*, critiquing this view that, you know, you just decide you do you.

And she says, "Sure, you do you works when you're picking ice cream flavors, but once you decide to scam your grandma, torch a building, or double park at Costco. Suddenly, we're all wishing that you didn't do you quite so hard." Okay, so there's a lot of humor and levity in the book. Then we talked about are people basically good? You'd be shocked to learn that a majority of Christians think people are basically good, despite the fact that Jeremiah said the heart is deceitful and wicked.

Who can know it? And Jesus said it's not what goes into a person that makes him unclean, but what comes out of a person. All sorts of immorality. Can we declare reality? We're going to talk about that on this program, and we're going to. I'm sorry, some of you Christians are going to hate us. Yeah, yeah, we're just not hammering people who are not Christians in this book. We're hammering Christians. Sorry, because a lot of Christians deny reality.

We're going to cover that. Who is oppressed now? We talked about that last podcast about Marxism and the invention of perpetual victimhood. And then we talk about is your identity up to you, from personal expression to public enforcement. Why is there a war on the family? How about the war on information? How about the war on the mind? And how about the war on politics and law? Can we legislate reality? We talk about why Christians need to be involved, and then the final chapter, ultimate reality, why are you here and where are you going?

Erika Kirk wrote the foreword to it, but I want to drill down with my co-author Phoenix Hayes on a very difficult topic for some Christians to hear, because some Christians are actually denying reality for some sort of theology that actually is not biblical. So here she is, ladies and gentlemen, the great Phoenix Hayes is with me again.

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PHOENIX:

Thank you, thank you.

FRANK:

Phoenix, Phoenix, thank you, thank you. Why don't we start with a story that we talk about in chapter 9 of this book that really is going to lead into a conversation about some bad theology Christians have. Take it away.

PHOENIX:

All right. Okay. So this story is not about you know someone who had any religious beliefs, but it has an awful lot to do about where our declarations eventually bump up against reality and how much sway we have over that, and what are the limits on it.

So we open a lot of the chapters with a story because it's just more fun that way. So I found a story about a man named Franz Reichelt. He was a fashion designer in Paris, and he was also a budding aeronautic person. I don't know what the technical term is.

FRANK:

He wanted to fly somehow.

PHOENIX:

He wanted to fly. Wanted to figure out how to fly. So—

FRANK:

And this is when 1800 sometime?

PHOENIX:

1912.

FRANK:

Oh, 1912. Okay.

PHOENIX:

And what's crazy is this footage of him test-running his suit. It's on YouTube and you can actually watch for yourself how it goes. Anyway, not to, you know, give a spoiler, he we open with how he has designed this parachute suit he wants to test out. He has plans to climb to the top, you know, one of the higher levels of the Eiffel Tower.

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He calls all the media. He wants everyone there. He wants photo documentary evidence of this breakthrough in science. Despite the fact the local aeronautical club have warned him this will not work. The wind is not strong enough. You're not high enough. There's not enough, you know uplifting current for you to; he just says it doesn't matter.

I know it's going to work. I've tested it in my own sort of theory, and it's going to work. So we sort of jokingly paraphrased the story about him standing, you know, in his bedroom that morning, staring in front of a mirror, speaking words of affirmation, looking up at his vision board with out of context Bible verses put on pretty, you know, notebook paper and pinned to the wall, and he's affirming himself and reminding himself that he, he just needs to believe that this is his time.

This is the moment. He gets there. Of course, you know, we don't know if any of that part's true. But the part about calling all the media and doing this in front of a lot of cameras is. Unfortunately, he gets up there, turns confidently to the people, the camera crew on the tier with him, and says something like, "See you soon" in French.

FRANK:

This is on the Eiffel Tower.

PHOENIX:

On the Eiffel Tower.

FRANK:

Okay.

PHOENIX:

He's—

FRANK:

Wait, wait, this is 1912, the same year the Titanic went down.

PHOENIX:

Correct.

FRANK:

Okay, all right.

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PHOENIX:

He steps off and he drops like a rock. He does not survive. He's killed instantly. The whole thing is caught on very, very grainy black and white camera footage. The whole point of the story is, it didn't matter ultimately how confident he was.

The fact that he had alerted the media, the fact that he had declared this positive outcome. What mattered was gravity and the rules of aerodynamics. They were not going to bend to accommodate his confidence. And so we take that rather tragic story and lead into, and yet, and we are stuck with the same problem. Where are the limits to our words and where do they actually have some sway?

And we start teasing that out between what's possible and what's not possible. And of course, this is something that touches on the church a little bit because, hey, if we're going to go after gender dysphoric teens who think that they can declare that they're in the wrong body. What are we going to do with church members who have been told that they simply need to declare their health, wealth, and prosperity in order to attain it? And where's that theology coming from? How much of it is true?

FRANK:

Yeah, let's look at that because that is something that most people wouldn't expect us to tackle, but we did tackle it in *The War on Reality*. In fact, let me read a proverb and then a quote from a famous preacher. The proverb is Proverb 8, Proverbs 18:21, which says this: "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit." So the tongue has the power of life and death.

And here's what a famous preacher said related to this verse, sort of exegeting this verse: "Our words have creative power. Anytime you speak something, either good or bad, you give life to what you are saying. Scripture says, 'We will eat the fruit of our words.'" So he's quoting, he's quoting Proverbs 18:21.

"That means you will get exactly what you've been saying. You are prophesying your own future. That's why it's so important to send your words out in the direction you want your life to go. You can't talk defeat and expect to have victory. You can't talk lack and expect to have abundance. You will produce whatever you say." And that preacher was Joel Osteen.

PHOENIX:

That's right.

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FRANK:

Is he exegeting Proverbs 18:21 accurately here, Phoenix?

PHOENIX:

No.

FRANK:

Why not? Now you're a graduate of Southern Evangelical Seminary. You're not a nobody. You've gone through the courses. What is he getting wrong here?

PHOENIX:

I am a nobody, but I've learned from some very intelligent people. So, what is he doing? He's taking a proverb, which of course is a statement of wisdom. It's a teaching about general principles of how you ought to live your life, and he's treating them as though it is referencing physical law. So, what is wisdom that, yes, your words will make people feel awful or lift them up. And of course, proverbs are a bit more compelling and end up engraved on, you know jewelry and cross, you know, woven into pillows because we tend to use hyperbolic language and make them a bit more dressy.

So he's talking about life and death being in the power of the tongue. He is not saying that using your words is going to strike someone down dead or raise them up from the dead, unless of course you're Jesus Christ, which none of us are. So he's taking the proverb and using—

FRANK:

Joel Osteen is taking the proverb, but the proverb writer isn't saying what Joel Osteen thinks the proverb writer is saying.

PHOENIX:

Exactly, and you get that not only by reading around it, reading the rest of the passage, but also cross-referencing it to other places in the Bible where there are more passages talking about the power of the tongue. For example—

FRANK:

Yeah, go ahead. What is it?

PHOENIX:

I was going to say in James.

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FRANK:

What does James say?

PHOENIX:

Well, of course, now that you've asked me, I know.

FRANK:

It's James 3:6. Let me see if I have it here. I thought I had it here. What did I do with it?

PHOENIX:

I have it.

FRANK:

Go ahead. James 3:6. Here it is.

PHOENIX:

Yeah, he says the tongue also "is a fire, the world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell." That's very James, isn't it? Very fire and brimstone.

FRANK:

Well, James does talk about the fact that our words do affect people, and you know, you talk down to people; you discourage people; they might actually be discouraged. If you, on the other hand, encourage people, they might actually be encouraged. But that's not a physical law.

That's just a law of human emotion and human motivation. It's not, it's not, you're not physically changing reality when you do it. And this is what Joel Osteen and others say. Now there's another famous preacher here who said this: "Words are also seeds, and when dropped into the invisible substance, they grow and bring forth after their kind.

To have prosperity in your home, you will have to exercise the same intelligent discrimination in the choice of your seed words." Who said that?

PHOENIX:

Well, it's funny you should mention it. He is a preacher, but he's not a Christian preacher. It was Charles Fillmore. Charles Fillmore, a New Thought teacher. That is someone who basically took the word of metaphysics and sprinkled some Jesus dust on it and made it a bit more acceptable

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to Word of Faith preachers, which is ultimately where a lot of these passages got their twisting from by taking these new-agey metaphysical concepts about our words literally creating and attracting things like that.

Well, they added a spiritual dynamic to it, and of course, new, Word of Faith preachers introduced Jesus and the devil. And basically, your language has the ability to honestly make Jesus do things that you want him to do. I know I'm oversimplifying it, and people will object to that, but that's kind of the crux of it. And same thing with the devil.

If you say the wrong thing, you're giving the devil access or power in a way that he ought not have.

FRANK:

Yeah, I know people who literally have cancer, but since they believe that if they admit they have cancer, they're somehow damning their health by admitting it, will say instead of saying I have cancer, they'll say I'm being treated for cancer.

PHOENIX:

That's exactly right.

FRANK:

Because they misunderstand the proper theology of what the Bible is saying. Admitting you have cancer is wise if you have cancer. It's not. You're not bringing more cancer on yourself or somehow preventing your healing if you admit it. Yet people actually believe this. And one of the problems is, ladies and gentlemen, we've talked about this on this program before, is that there are no verses in the Bible.

And what do I mean by that? In order for you to understand what a passage means, you have to read around the passage to get the context of the passage, because if you don't know that, you can pull out a phrase or a verse, and make it basically say almost whatever you want. That's called eisegesis, reading into the passage rather than exegesis, which is reading out of the passage what it actually means.

And we've talked about this before with regard to Jeremiah 29:11, right? Jeremiah 29:11 is not a promise to people today, you know, where it says, "Oh, I have plans for you, plans to prosper you, plans to give you hope in the future." Because in context, that's a promise to people that lived 2600 years ago, who were taken in exile to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian

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dictator, and God through the prophet Jeremiah was telling them that 70 years later he was going to bring them back into the land and prosper them.

And that's exactly what happened. When people say I'm claiming Jeremiah 29:11 as a promise to them today, I say, "Why don't you claim Jeremiah 44:11 as a promise to you," which was God's promise to the exiles that went to Egypt, and He told them. Don't go to Egypt. So Jeremiah 44:11 says, "I will destroy you and all Judah." You don't see that stitched into a pillow. You don't see that on a birthday card, right?

You don't see that on a coffee mug because people don't like that. But it's pulled out of context. So you need to know the context of a passage to know what it means. So when Joel Osteen is pulling from Proverbs 18:21, the idea that your tongue can literally bring someone to life or put them to death, he's misunderstanding what the passage means.

Again, I'll read the passage: "the tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit." This is not a physical law. This is a metaphor, even a hyperbole to try and say that your words can affect other people, not that you can literally raise people from the dead.

You know, if you tell your son enough that he's worth nothing, or your child that she's worth nothing, eventually the kid'll believe it. Okay, that's more the issue here.

PHOENIX:

Yeah, and one of the things that I notice again and again, not only in the Christian community, but in the New Age community that is very big on manifestation and affirmation and things. Is they'll slip between a psychological definition of manifestation and a spiritual one.

FRANK:

What do you mean by that?

PHOENIX:

Whenever it, what I mean by that is, manifestation will be applied in just a very common sense way. For example, as Joel actually slips in and out here, he says, "You can't talk lack and expect to have abundance. You can't talk defeat and expect to have victory." That's true from a psychological perspective. If you're constantly saying to yourself "I can't do what I can't do it," Chances are you can't do it.

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You do need to attain a you need to get yourself into a place mentally, and I don't mean manifesting something. This is just common sense. You need to tell yourself, "Well, if I'm going to have a shot at doing this, I need to create a plan and work toward it and set goals and have a system in place that increases the likelihood of me achieving something that I'm out to achieve." Now, in the psychological world and in the self-help world, they will call that manifesting.

It's nothing spiritual about it. It's just common sense. It's life planning. It's discipline. It's structure. New Age and the Christian occasionally will use that definition because it is common sense and it's true. And then they will casually slip it into the spiritual realm, as though the things that you speak can come about because you simply spoke them, not because you adjusted your, Your optimism over just being focused and getting the job done. There is a distinction.

FRANK:

That's an important distinction. Make that distinction again. The psychological and the spiritual. PHONEIX: All right. So there's no question that simply, that talking to yourself negatively again and again and again is going to affect your output and your success in life. Not because your words have magic, but because we're holistic beings with brains that are connected to emotion and as we've probably all heard it, there's that saying, whether you believe you can or believe you can't, either way you're right.

There is a sense of confidence that goes into whether or not we're prepared to even not only set a goal but then set steps to achieving that goal. There has to be some sort of a belief that you can achieve it, but it's not the belief that caused you to achieve it. It's the belief that made you put in the work and the discipline to get there. That's not a spiritual manifestation. That's just how the world works, but slipping into a spiritual dimension of that and saying, "No, this came about because I kept repeating mantras and I had enough belief and I had enough faith" in a very vague sense, "that's what produced it." Well, the atheist will say, "Well, that makes no sense because I achieved the things I set out to, and I have no faith."

FRANK:

Yeah, that's an interesting insight. You know, it reminds me, I don't get to play golf very much. I don't have time. There's three things you got to be good if you want to play golf. You got to have time, you got to have money, and you also gotta have some skill. And that's why it's not a perfect sport for me because I have none of that. Okay, but—

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PHOENIX:

You're three for oh, oh for oh.

FRANK:

Yeah, people sometimes invite me to play, you know, maybe I play like eight times a year, right? And to show you how good I am, I had to have my ball retriever regripped. I mean, that's the club I use the most. But anyway, it is true. I heard Tiger Woods once saying this. You know, I can't remember the context, but it was something like somebody asked him, like, okay, why did you commit to that shot? And he said, why would I ever take a shot I wasn't committed to? Right. I mean, psychologically, and guys, you know this.

If you play golf, ladies, you play golf. Like, suppose you got to go over water, right? And you're thinking, oh man, I don't know if I can make it over. I don't know if I can do this, right? Well, if you keep telling yourself that, you're probably gonna, you know, duff it, and it's gonna go in the lake, right? But if you step up there and you say, "I'm gonna be committed to this shot. I'm gonna go for it. I think I can do it," right? Chances are not always, but because golf is hard, but chances are you'll do it, right?

Now that's not a spiritual thing. That's a psychological thing. And as you say, too often people will in the spiritual world try and take that psychological and put some spiritual meaning behind it. Like somehow you're doing this by your words because they're taking certain words or verses out of context.

Let me ask you this, Phoenix. In the book, *The War on Reality*, this is all we're just talking about one chapter of this book right now, ladies and gentlemen. Just give you a flavor of what's going on in there. We use the phrase "Christian occultism," which is obviously provocative. But what's the difference between trusting God through prayer and trying to manipulate reality through declarations or formulas?

PHOENIX:

Right. First off, for some clarification, people often assume occult simply means satanic. It's not what it means. Occult means hidden or secret, secret knowledge. So what we're talking about is. Christian occultism being the idea that you, like we said, you can declare things and wish things into being through your own strength rather than through the full reliance and submission and surrender to God.

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And this is an important distinction because, of course, there is a spiritual component to things that we get if you're a believer, and yet we have no influence over that. God. Well, I shouldn't say it quite like that. We pray, and yet we remain completely surrendered to our Creator. It is up to Him whether He gives what we had asked for, or if He answers it in a different way from what, what we expected.

Either way, it's entirely up to Him. We pray, we submit, we leave the results to God. Word of Faith and this kind of Christian occultism really does believe that the words you say matter. The amount of emotion you put into it, the amount of confidence you put into it, the words you choose to exclude, the, your personal thoughts, like these are all going to counteract God's ability to give you what you've asked for.

If you then walk away in doubt, as if your mental state is going to control God's ability to deliver what you've asked for.

FRANK:

Oh, that's interesting. Also, if you think about it, ladies and gentlemen, in the Lord's Prayer, he doesn't say pray according to your will. Pray according to God's will. Even Jesus, in his human nature, defers to God when he says, "Lord, take this cup from me, but not my will, your will." If there's any other way, Lord, I don't want to go through this.

If there is another way, then give me that other way, but not my will, but your will. We're supposed to pray according to God's will, and yet the Word of Faith movement is more about the will of the Christian. It's our will. And that's completely against what Jesus tells us to do. Also, it would seem odd if Jesus says that you're promised persecution, and yet you could avoid persecution by just manifesting prosperity through your words or through your thoughts or through your prayers or whatever.

Paul famously said, "Anyone who lives a faithful life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." In fact, I I've always pointed out that it seems to me the word of faith movement is completely debunked by one particular fact, and that is, if they'll say, "Well, if you're not healthy and wealthy, it's kind of your fault." You know, "you just don't have enough faith." To which I respond, "Are you telling me that the apostles didn't have enough faith?" Because they were the ones that were beaten, tortured, and killed, and yet you're saying that they could have avoided that if they just had enough faith.

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They have more faith than any of us, right? They trusted in Jesus more than anyone. They went to their deaths because of this. So I just find it quite strange that this kind of theology persists. I guess it persists because people want to believe it's true. They want to believe that they can really control the world, right?

PHOENIX:

Yeah, and there's a reason why this kind of doctrine does. There's a reason why Benny Hinn is a real big hit in Africa. Let me put it that way. Because he's promising a gospel where you're going to have health and wealth, and of course people want that. So what I find so distasteful about it, among many things, is that it's drawing people in under not only a false gospel but a false bargaining chip. They're coming in it not necessarily for salvation, but they're being drawn in because they want health, wealth.

They want material things. They want earthly success. But what if they were just simply told the truth that you're a sinner, you need a savior, and accepting this reality might actually make your life a whole lot worse, but your eternity a whole lot better? That would be real converts. And then, of course, the downside, the dark side of this coin, if you flip it over, when you're telling people that it's faith that gives you these wonderful things.

When you don't get the wonderful things, because let's face it, we all have hardships in our life, the natural conclusion is, I failed, because all of this hinges on me, not on God, not on God's ultimate plan for me. It all hinges on me. So, what have I done wrong? Why hasn't God shown up and delivered all the things that were promised to me? And people do deconstruct when the faith doesn't work out the way it was promised.

FRANK:

I had a question at a church last week, guy got up to the microphone and said, you know, if I lose my job, I know God's going to provide another job. But like, why does God allow Christians and others to die in earthquakes? And I looked at him, I said, "I'm not confident God's going to give you another job. He may have a reason not to give you another job. Maybe because maybe to cause you to depend more on Him or something you can't see because there's always a ripple effect," right?

Just because you pray for safety, I mean, we. We were going to UVU a year ago, and pulling in there, Charlie looks back at me. He's in the front seat. He looks back at me. He goes, "Okay, Frank, pray." So we prayed for the event and prayed for safety. Thirty minutes later, a bullet went through his neck and killed him. I mean, did we not have enough faith?

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Or is it the fact that this is a fallen world and God allows free choices to be made? If he interrupted free choices all the time, this wouldn't be a moral universe. We would never learn from evil if evil was always prevented. This isn't the end of the story, friends. It's not prosperity here that you're promised. It's prosperity on the other side of eternity that you're promised because of what Christ has done, not what you've done. But Phoenix, toward the back of this chapter, can we declare reality? And this is the chapter, by the way, that goes after Christians.

PHOENIX:

Yeah, it does.

FRANK:

You know, we're trying to be fair to everyone here, pointing out that it'll —

PHOENIX:

To give you some context, this is the theology I was personally raised under.

FRANK:

Really? What brought you out of this?

PHOENIX:

Apologetics. Yeah.

FRANK:

Really?

PHOENIX:

Yeah.

FRANK:

So when you came when you came to America, this was your theology? Was kind of Word of Faith?

PHOENIX:

It was lite, Word of Faith lite. So the fact of the matter was, I was raised in a home where there was a lot of deliverance ministry and a lot of prosperity gospel messaging. I had to listen to a lot of that because that's just what my parents listened to. And I'll give you two personal examples.

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One would be the fact that I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at the age of 12. So I had juvenile onset diabetes. My dad and his theology was convinced this was something demonic. Now, of course, it didn't. He didn't take it so far as to say, "Therefore, don't go to a doctor, don't get treated." Not at all. But he would have dreams, and he had concluded that perhaps there was some kind of generational curse in our family.

The fact that I wasn't being healed, and frankly, I just got sick of hearing about it. I was like, "Listen, I've been told that this is a lifelong condition. There isn't a cure for it. Maybe there will be by the time I'm older. Maybe, God willing, there'll be a cure before this gets passed on to, unlikely my children, it usually skips a generation, but say my grandchildren, and if that's what it is, I'm okay with it." But to be constantly going into prayer like it was this battlefield to claim health and cast away demons was exhausting, and-

FRANK:

Hey, hey, we're not denying that you should pray for healing.

PHOENIX:

For sure, for sure.

FRANK:

We should. Yeah but what we're saying is that that's up to God. If He wanted to heal you, He could have. It's not up to us. It's not your fault that you weren't healed because you didn't pray hard enough or manifest the right words or—

PHOENIX:

Or we didn't identify which ancestor might have been I don't know in some kind of witchcraft.

Who knows? Who knows? But you people end up going on these detective quests to try and figure out what it was that resulted in this outcome rather than just saying, well, we're in a fallen world and people get sick and some people get healed and some people don't, and that's just. Honestly surrender like Erika says in the foreword of our book was peace. So, that's just one of many examples, and so I just didn't see the logic, and I thought, yeah, I thought no it's kind of up to God and I'm comfortable with that I was at a place thankfully where I think I had a healthy enough perspective and confidence in God's goodness, that I didn't feel jipped if He didn't heal me. I still had a sense of, but He's still good. He's still trustworthy. It's going to be okay.

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

with Dr. Frank Turek

PODCAST

FRANK:

You know, one of the great values of *The War on Reality* book, Phoenix, is usually in the back of every chapter we kind of summarize what's been said in the chapter and also put some questions in there. I mean, we have a whole section in there on what if your kid comes to you and says they're trans? Like, what do you do? Well, we've got questions you can ask, and in this section, can we declare reality?

We ask a bunch of questions. So, why don't we go through these? I'll read one. You read one. Here's the first one we ask, and ladies and gentlemen, these are questions you can ask people who believe in this kind of Christian occultism. Just ask questions like this: "If our words create reality, why didn't Jesus tell Paul to declare his thorn in the flesh gone instead of accepting it?" Which is 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.

PHOENIX:

Yeah, that's right. Because what the Word of Faith teacher would say, "No, there's compromise. Where's your lack of faith? Why don't you believe God can do it? Why?" Etcetera, etcetera.

FRANK:

Okay, next one says, "Why did Jesus teach us to pray, your will be done, instead of my words be activated?"

PHOENIX:

Exactly, exactly. We're supposed to be surrendered to Him, right? The power comes from Him, not us. The third one, "If sickness equals a lack of faith, why did Jesus heal some people and not others and praise the faith of sufferers?"

FRANK:

Praise the faith of sufferers. Yeah, that's a good, you know, and promise suffering, by the way. You know, if he promises suffering, if Jesus and the apostles promised suffering, but they also gave you a way of avoiding all suffering, what would we have done? We'd have always chosen not to suffer, and therefore we'd never grow. Jesus actually learned obedience through suffering. He didn't have a sin nature. We do. I guess we could learn through suffering too, can't we?

PHOENIX:

Yeah, unfortunately, it's a pretty good sanctification process: suffering. Not my favorite.

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FRANK:

How about this? Here's a question: "Did Paul lack faith when he told Timothy to take medicine," like a little wine for his stomach, for example? Did he just lack? Why didn't he? Why didn't he just tell Timothy, "Have more faith, Timothy. You don't need medicine. You don't need wine for your stomach."

PHOENIX:

That's right. That's right. How about "if negative words empower Satan, why does Scripture command honest confession and lament?" That's an interesting one I have seen trip up some people where they don't even want to admit that they're struggling with something, a kind of addictive behavior, a repeated sin in their lives, because simply giving it voice gives it air, gives it oxygen, gives it a chance to manifest itself and take root even further. Well, that's exactly what Satan would want, wouldn't he?

FRANK:

Yeah, you want to confess your sins. You want to admit that you're doing something wrong, so that doesn't make any sense either. Yet people believe it. How about this? "If faith guarantees health and wealth, then why did nearly all the apostles die broke as martyrs? Are you implying they didn't have enough faith?" Okay, we already talked about that. How about the next one? Why does Paul say, "Those who want to get rich fall into temptation instead of those who want to get rich need better declarations."

PHOENIX:

That's right. Well, it's a little bit like what we talked about with, you know, this doctrine being particularly popular in impoverished countries. It's drawing people to a Jesus genie who will give you all the desires of your earthly heart. And when in fact that's not the purpose of this life at all. Ladies and gentlemen, we're reading from *The War on Reality*, the book that came out today. We think it's a good book. A lot of people have read it and like it, so we're just reading a section from it here dealing with the Word of Faith movement and kind of the New Thought movement. Here's one, Phoenix. "Why does Isaiah say God's plans cannot be thwarted if humans can derail them with bad phrasing?"

PHOENIX:

Exactly. So the Word of Faith gospel again limits God's power because it's contingent on how well you phrased a prayer, whether or not you avoided saying something that might slow it down or act as a block or activate Satan, all these different things. It preaches a weaker God.

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FRANK:

How about the next one?

PHOENIX:

"If God is bound by our words, who is actually sovereign, God or us?" And this is the key because this is the lie that goes right back again to the garden. Every single human has a battle over authority.

FRANK:

Friends, we probably annoyed many people.

PHOENIX:

And the next one, you want to read it?

FRANK:

Well, no, there's many more. We can't go on. Just get the book. There's so much more in the book. But these are questions that you can help people. Okay, you got one more. Good. Let's do one more. Go ahead. What do you got? What do you got? Do one more.

PHOENIX:

"Why does Hebrews 11 praise faithful people who were tortured, imprisoned, and killed?" Yeah, why would you praise that if that's a sign of not actually having enough faith?

FRANK:

Yeah, they didn't have enough faith. They didn't declare rightfully. That's why they were beaten, tortured, and killed. Yeah. Yeah, it just doesn't work, ladies and gentlemen. It doesn't work. It's not true. Now I know there's a lot of questions that people might have. We haven't covered this completely thoroughly here in this podcast, but there's much more in the book. I also saw a podcast. I haven't watched it completely yet. But Alisa Childers just had a show with John and Corey Cooper of Skillet, and they were involved in apparently the NAR movement, the New Apostolic Reformation, which believes in a lot of this. So we'll put Alisa eh, Alisa's show with the Coopers in the show notes. That might be helpful too. But anything you want to wrap up with regard to the book, Phoenix, before we go?

PHOENIX:

Yeah, like when we first were talking about this particular chapter, I said to Frank, Frank, we have a little bit of a problem because we do know that words do have a certain impact on

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reality. So we I can't write You know, we can't work on a whole chapter that says they don't. So really, this chapter teases out the distinctions: where our words have power in reality, and they should, where our words have power and really ought not, and where are the limits of that power that God places on it. So we do make those distinctions.

FRANK:

Great. Well, it's great work that you really put a lot of work in on that chapter. That's not my specialty, but you really did a good job on it, Phoenix.

PHOENIX:

Thank you.

FRANK:

And friends, there's so much more in the book as we mentioned, *The War on Reality*. Thanks for buying it if you have already. And I think there's also a workbook that comes with it. So if you want to bring your kids through it, in fact, I just did Britt Mayer's show. She's a big homeschooling podcaster, and she said this book should be in every homeschooler's house and they ought to use it. Their kids ought to read it, because it's really helping them not only with apologetic arguments, but how to deal with the cultural issues that are raging like hurricanes through these kids' lives.

So, check out *The War on Reality*, ladies and gentlemen, and also please pray that this week with all this travel, that especially out to UVU that it goes well as I said. I'm scheduled. This could change, but I'm scheduled to be on Fox and Friends, Martha McCallum, and Sean Hannity's radio program on Thursday, just before the event at UVU, in honor of Charlie Kirk.

And as we say, this book is dedicated to Charlie. This is a lot in there about him. So, friends, thank you so much. Thanks for being with us. Oh, one last thing. Don't forget about the course with the great Norman L. Geisler, the legend in philosophy. He passed away in 2019, but we're able to get video of his ancient and medieval philosophy course. Go to crossexamined.org, click on online courses.

You will see it there. You want to be a part of it. It starts September 14th, and that's the day, by the way, we're going to be at the University of Georgia, which is on our website as well. In any event, friends, thanks for being with us. There is a war on reality, but you've been drafted by God to be on His side fighting for reality. So get the book; it'll help you, and we'll see you here next time. God bless.

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