I don't have enough FAITH to be an ATHEIST
with Dr. Frank Turek PODCAST

4 Ways Mormons, Muslims, & Jehovah's Witnesses CHANGE the Gospel with Dr. Brady Blevins

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FRANK:
Ladies and gentlemen, after Jesus rose from the dead, He took his disciples up on a mountain in Galilee, and here's how, here's how Matthew records this. So this is the end of the Gospel of Matthew. This is what is commonly referred to as the Great Commission. Beginning here in verse 16, it says, "Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.

When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted." All right, let me stop right here. I got to say this: I can't believe that verse is in the text. Why? Because that is what we call an embarrassing detail. Why would you ever say that some of the disciples doubted if Jesus is standing resurrected right in front of them? They're not making this up, ladies and gentlemen. In fact, in the new edition of I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, which came out last week, the new updated edition, we talk about this as one of the embarrassing details that shows that the writers here are not, Matthew in particular, is not trying to pass off a lie as the truth.

He's including the embarrassing details because they really happened. That some disciples with the resurrected Jesus right in front of them doubted. Anyway, it goes on to say this: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore," he's got all authority. "Therefore, go make disciples." Notice he doesn't say make believers.

There's a difference. A disciple is someone who is following Jesus in every area of life, not just somebody who has fire insurance and then checks out from being an apostle or sorry, being a disciple, not an apostle. Apostle means sent one. The apostles only existed back 2,000 years ago. In any event. A disciple is someone who's fully following Jesus in every area of life.

So he says, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Now that applies to us today, that we're supposed to be making disciples of all nations, and how do we go about doing that?

When we have people coming to us, whether they're atheists or whether they're Muslims or Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses or New Agers or whatever, they're coming to us and they have a different worldview. How do we engage them to move them closer to Jesus? First of all, maybe away from their current worldview and closer to Jesus. Well, my friend Dr. Brady Blevins is an expert at doing that.

And he is about to teach a new course for us called Conversations with the Faiths. Actually, the course has been run before, but we're going to run it in a premium version, which means if you want to take this course in the premium version, you're going to be able to interact with Brady and ask him questions on any of these three major worldviews. Well, particularly Islam that's the most major but then you have Mormonism and you have Jehovah's Witnesses. So here he is, the great Dr. Brady Blevins. No, that's not the right not wrong. Here he is. I hit the wrong button. I hit this button. Wrong. When I meant to hit this button. Here he is.

BRADY:
Thank you. Thank you.

FRANK:
The great Dr. Brady Blevins. Brady, how are you?

BRADY:
I'm doing great. Don't worry. There's plenty who say wrong to me.

FRANK:
That's right, Brady.

BRADY:
I am used to that, but I am doing great. I'm really excited about the course and coming back out. We've updated it. We've added some things. It's going to be really, really good. I'm really looking forward to it.

FRANK:
Okay, and you actually have a new book, and I was privileged to write the foreword to it. The book is called *Trading Questions: 20 Essential Conversations to Have with Your Mormon Friend*. And you know, I've had a fair amount of experience lately with Mormons because of Charlie being murdered in Utah.

I went back to Utah Valley University about six months after the murder, and we did a session. And I remember during the Q&A, I kept having this guy whenever I said the word Mormon, he would say "LDS, LDS," and he was so obnoxious about it that I actually turned to him at one point and I said, "You might be the first Mormon in history to be get thrown out of an event." You know, Mormons are generally nice, polite people.

Why do you keep interrupting me? You know, by saying LDS all the time. What is the deal with first of all, where does the word Mormon come from? And then why is the Mormon Church trying to transition from being referred to as Mormons, the Angel Moroni? Why are they trying to transition to LDS? Where does this all come from?

BRADY:
Well, the word Mormon, I mean, obviously you have the Book of Mormon, and the character Mormon is a hero in the character.

But why they're distancing from it, you know, that's kind of a hard question to answer. I mean, I know what you know the answer is according to the church, but the confusing part of this is that for one, you know, they came out and said, "Listen, we shouldn't take the name of Jesus and cut it out of who we are," and they're really trying to push towards this like evangelical sounding you know, set of words.

But the problem is, is that their church hasn't always been called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In fact, there were times it was just called the Church of Christ. Then it was changed later. But here's the most curious thing as we consider this: from 2010 to 2018, then President Russell M. Nelson had the "I Am Mormon" campaign.

The church spent 6.1 million dollars on this campaign. You might have remembered some of the commercials that were out there. There were billboards, there were newspaper ads, there was social media. It was everywhere. I am Mormon. You had all these, you know, celebrities that are Mormons coming out. I am Mormon and trying to invite people and really embracing that moniker.

And of course, you had the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. You had, there was a big pageant called the Mormon Miracle Pageant in Manti, Utah. Then Russell Nelson dies, and the new president of the church comes out and just does not care for the term Mormon at all?

Kind of a little bit more of the old school, and so here it is. I'm sorry, it was the president prior to Nelson who embraced this word Mormon, but Russell M. Nelson comes out in August 16, 2018, and he calls for the official name of the church to be used.

Now this was a big deal, and I have a lot of I have a lot of Mormon friends who were not real happy about this because if they had little side ministries, they had to change the name to it, like Fair Mormon, which is an apologetic, unofficial apologetic arm for Mormons. You know, they had to change to Fair Latter-Day Saint. They're having to change there.

FRANK:
Wait, wait, wait, wait. But did they change the Book of Mormon to the Book of Latter-day Saints?

BRADY:
No, not at all.

FRANK:
Then what's the point? What are they?

BRADY:
Well—

FRANK:
What do they say is the official reason that they want to get away from the word Mormon when they're claiming there's an angel by the name of Moroni and there's a book that we're supposed to add to the Bible called the Book of Mormon? Why are they trying to get away from the name?

BRADY:
Well, this is what President Nelson said. In October 2018 at the General Conference, he basically said it was a victory for Satan anytime the church or its adherents were not using the name of Jesus, and so the problem is that in that same calendar year, the church was still financially supporting and pushing this "I am Mormon" campaign, but yet they claim to be led by a prophet.

So, which prophet was right? You know, what was it? Was it Nelson saying that we ought not to use this name Mormon, or was it the previous president who, for you know, eight plus years,

and pouring in millions of dollars to do this "I am Mormon" campaign? It doesn't make sense. And out of all the things that we talk about, I think about it's like this is one of the things that I think would bother me the most because if you claim to be following a prophet that is listening to God is essentially the vicar for God, in the sense that he can deliver revelation straight from God to us.

We have two people with diametrically opposed messages. So we went from saying supposed to be saying I am Mormon and championing that name to now all of a sudden it's a victory for Satan.

FRANK:
Well, yeah, you know—

BRADY:
That's a problem.

FRANK:
I'm wondering if it's just the fact that they want to be seen as another Christian denomination, and to take the word Mormon out would help them do that. To say we are the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but of course, their Jesus Christ in their theology is not the Jesus Christ of the Bible. And if they are just another Christian denomination, why are they at my door, Brady?

BRADY:
Exactly.

FRANK:
You know, if they come to my door and I say, "Well, yeah, I'm a Christian," and they say, "Well, we're Christians too," okay, have a nice day. What else do we need to talk about, right? But no, they want to bring in a new book or several books. They want to bring in new theology. They want to bring in a, and by the way, I say all this with respect for Mormons. Most of the Mormons I know are great people.

They're great citizens. But the theology that they're bringing forward is not theism; it's polytheism, and they're adding to the revelation. In fact, you taught me something that I just love when it comes to these what we call aberrant theologies that come off of Christianity. And

ladies and gentlemen, actually, Islam, Mormonism, and Jehovah's Witnesses all fit to be Christian heresies.

You go, Islam's a Christian heresy. We'll get to it. But Brady, you taught you taught me about the functions of math, the plus, the negative, the divide, and the multiply. Can you go over that when with regard to Mormonism?

BRADY:
Yeah. So, I mean, you can pop this on anything. That's what makes it so great. So we want to look: does a group add to the word of God?

Well, the Mormons do. They have the Book of Mormon, the Pearl of Great Price, Doctrine and Covenants. They have, and you could even throw in their prophet. Because he claims to be speaking for God. Does it subtract from the deity of Christ? What we have to understand is in Mormonism, Jesus is just another created being, and the only difference between him and us is he has attained deity, as to where we are still working for it and towards it.

They you multiply the requirements of salvation. So in Mormonism, It's not just enough to say I believe in Jesus. I mean, you got to be temple-worthy, which means you got to be paying your tithes, you got to be wearing your garments, you got to be doing all these things so that you can go into the temple and do works, most of which are for dead people. You have to commit sin so that you can repent from sin.

I mean, there's literally a long list of all these things that you have to do, and if you don't do them, well, you might end up in the second level of, they believe that there's three heavens. The second level is the terrestrial kingdom. Then below that is the telestial kingdom. And here's the thing, and I think this is what a lot of Mormons don't understand, is that—

FRANK:
LDS.

BRADY:
They're—

FRANK:
LDS.

BRADY:
They're teaching. You know what's funny is I've talked to a lot of my Mormon friends, and they're like, "You can say Mormon; it doesn't matter."

FRANK:
All right, okay.

BRADY:
And so it's funny, but it is an item, and I use this as an item of conversation. But anyway, so Mormons teach that God the Father does not visit that second and third kingdom. He's only in the celestial kingdom.

FRANK:
Which is where the Mormons are.

BRADY:
Which is where the good Mormons are, Frank. Not all Mormons make it to the third heaven. And so here's the thing: I, as an evangelical Christian, they like to call us Protestants, whatever. So as an evangelical Christian, I believe that to be separated from God is hell. That's, I mean, that's what hell is: we're being separated from God. And so you can call it a second or third kingdom, but the thing is, is that if I don't get to be in the presence of God for all eternity, that is hell: being separated from God.

FRANK:
That's 2 Thessalonians chapter one, I believe. Talks about being separated from God. Okay, so they multiply requirements for salvation.

BRADY:
Then, then they divide the followers' loyalty in that essentially what they're saying is we are the only, we are the only true church. We are the only way that you can really get to God. Now they may give some lip service to say, well, you know, here's the thing: you believe in God, God's going to honor it, and they're going to say God has a place for you. You know, it's basically—

FRANK:
It's just not with him.

BRADY:
You're going to get to a heaven. You're just not going to get to spend eternity in the presence of the Father.

FRANK:
Now, ladies and gentlemen, you see, I think that's a very good way of looking at these things, Brady. Think about it again, ladies and gentlemen. The plus, the minus, the multiply, divide. They're adding to the Word of God. They're subtracting from the deity of Jesus. They're multiplying requirements for salvation, and they're dividing the loyalty of the believer. Okay, now let's apply this to Islam. Can we do that for a second? And then Jehovah's Witnesses. Okay, so how do they add to the Word of God? What do the Muslims do?

BRADY:
Well, well, with Muslims, what they do is they definitely subtract from, or excuse me, they add to the Word of God in that they have the Quran, and now they will appeal to the Injil. which means gospel so, are they necessarily meaning all four gospels? Are they meaning the gospel message?

You kind of have to get them to flesh that out. They now, and they'll say, hey, you know, the Torah, the law, the Pentateuch, kind of what, what we think of, the books of Moses. But they're adding to it with the Quran. And of course, if you've ever read the Quran, it's almost like you start reading some of your favorite stories from the Old Testament, but all of a sudden the names are different. All of a sudden it's Abraham is sacrificing not Isaac but Ishmael there on Mount Moriah, and you see these changes all the way through.

It's like, oh yeah, yeah, I remember this. Oh no, whoa, whoa, wait, hold on, that's not quite how I remember it. So they're adding to the word of God. They subtract from the deity of Christ in that they believe in what's called dynamic Monarchianism. It's a Unitarian view of God, and some of their apologists will say if you can taste it, touch it, smell it, feel it, it can't be God.

So since Jesus took on human flesh, guess what? Jesus can't be God. Again, they multiply the requirements to salvation in that, I mean, you have to, I mean, you have to live your life in a very specific way. You have to live your life in a way that's pleasing to Allah. Now, I mean, they have some virtuous things that are in there.

But you know, how much, are you doing the five pillars? You know, have you said the shahada? Have you made the Hajj? Are you paying the zakat? Are you performing the sawm or the prayers

every day? So you have to do all these things, and even then, when you die, this is how some of the hadith describe it: is you stand before Allah, and before you before you get to him, there's a long line of all these people who have ever done you wrong.

Or that you've ever done wrong, and what you do is you got to go to each one, and you take the good works that you had in this life, and you work it out, and you make it right with every single one of them, and then you take whatever good works that you have left, and you put it on this scale, and then, then Allah puts a feather on the other end of the scale, and then He lets it go. If it goes in your favor, you're in.

If it doesn't. Then you can look at you can look at hell, damnation, and I've asked some of my Muslim friends, I said, "How do you think that's going to work for you?" And they all pretty much have the same response. They all kind of look at me and kind of laugh, and they said, "I don't think it's going to work very well at all." I asked one of my Muslim friends, I said, "Well, then, what are you going to do at this moment of judgment?" He goes, "Well, my hope is that Allah will be in a good mood and that He will put His thumb on the scale for my benefit."

FRANK:
You know, I've got to say something about this because it's so ridiculous if you really think about it. That, and this isn't just true of Islam. This is true of Mormonism. It's true of Jehovah's Witnesses. It's true of every other religion except biblical Orthodox Christianity. And it's the idea that your good works, if they outweigh your bad works, somehow get you into heaven. That doesn't even work in our own judicial system. You know, like if you're on trial for murder. And you say, "Yeah, I did it, judge. But think about all the people I didn't murder, and also think about all the good things I've done." The judge isn't going to go, "You know what? I think maybe your good deeds have outweighed your bad deeds. I'm going to let you go." No, you go. The guy still needs to pay for the murder. I still need to pay for what I did wrong. And if you're dealing with an infinitely just being, which you are with regard to God, then none of us are going to make it because if God is infinitely just and we're not, He's got to punish us.

So He doesn't want to. So what does He do? He punishes Himself in our place. That's what the Christian message is. It's all about grace. And yet, the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Muslims they're all adding works to salvation or multiplying works for salvation. They're adding to the plus here adds to the Bible. They're subtracting from the deity of Jesus.

They're multiplying requirements for salvation. How do the Muslims divide? What's the division point here?

BRADY:
This is, man, this is even more sinister than what we see in the Mormon Church, which, by the way, there's a lot of similarities between Mormonism and Islam, and I outline that in the course. I have a whole section in the commentary that that people will definitely want to look at.

But in Islam it's scary in that once you're in, if you try to leave, you're considered an apostate, and it is within the realm for them to take your life. And so it's not just our ways, right, which I mean everybody should believe that their way's right, or why would you believe it? But in this case, they're going to take your life from you, and so therefore your loyalty is divided.

You're not going to have you're not going to go and be friendly with certain people if you're living in a Muslim majority country, you're not going to go make your friends with the unbeliever.

FRANK:
The same thing happens in Mormonism or LDS and Jehovah's Witnesses, not murder. They don't think that the apostate should die, but they do have penalties. You're disfellowshipped in some sense, correct?

BRADY:
Yes.

FRANK:
Like in Mormonism, what happens to you if you leave the Mormon church?

BRADY:
Well, I mean, obviously, you're, that's probably the softest of the three because in some cases, you know, it might be bad enough that they don't want you, you know, they discourage your family from talking and have a relationship with you, but it's not quite to the extreme, like we'll see just in just a few minutes with the Jehovah's Witnesses, but yeah, you're gonna. Even though it's not like an edict, you're gonna lose, you're gonna lose those relationships.

FRANK:
And you're gonna lose business probably because Mormons are very tight business-wise.

BRADY:
Yeah, yeah. I mean, if you're you know if you're like you know if you're like me living in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, you'll probably be okay. But if you're living in a place like Utah or Idaho, or some places in Arizona, yeah, you're probably gonna lose your business over it because it won't take long for the community to know that you have left the church and yeah, they're not going to be there. Your spouse may very well divorce you. It's not a guarantee, but it could definitely happen.

FRANK:
By the way, these points are made in much more depth in the course Conversations with the Faiths. To sign up for the course, go to crossexamined.org. Click on online courses. You'll see it there. Let's do the plus, minus, multiply, divide for Jehovah's Witnesses. How do they add to the Bible?

BRADY:
Absolutely, Jehovah's Witnesses they're a little bit different in that they add to God's word in a very unique way, in that they have their own translation, and this is, we talk about this in the course; we go through it, but it's very unique because they have the New World Translation, and they are making subtle little changes, like for example, in John 1:1, it says, "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was 'A' God."

FRANK:
They add "a", even though that there's no article like that in the Greek. They add it.

BRADY:
Yeah.

FRANK:
So how do they translate it that way if it's not in there?

BRADY:
So in the New World Translation in John 1:1, we have this issue with "a God". So here's the question that you want to ask the Jehovah's Witness. You say, okay, there's one true God, right? And every other God is a false God. And they'll say, "Yeah, that's true." And you say, "Okay, well then, in John 1:1, is Jesus the one true God, or is he a false God?

Because it says Jesus is a God." And then, you know, they'll sit there and think, "Well, he's a mighty God." Okay, well, is he a mighty true God, or is he a mighty false God? Because if there's only one true God, then Jesus is either the one true God or a false God. And so this puts them in a really tough spot because, I mean, they don't want to call Jesus a false god, but also at the same time, it's very evident that John 1:1 is calling Jesus God.

And so now this isn't the moment where you go, "Ha ha, I got you." This is where you use the tools that we teach in the class to be able to step in and show them what you know, not just what the Bible says, but really kind of what the Watchtower Bible Track Society has taught them, so that's one of the ways that they add to God's word. But another way that they add to God's word is through their magazines.

So you know, for our older viewers and listeners, you remember that you know, for years they'd come to your house and they got this magazine, the Watchtower magazine. They're trying to give you one and want you to get involved with it. And this is their primary tool of teaching, is trying to go through this magazine.

In fact, in the course, we go through many articles that were in the Watchtower over the years, over the last hundred-plus years of all the different ways that they've taught a doctrine, and then they've come back, and they've changed it. And so that's one of the ways that they add to scripture. But we also see that they subtract from the deity of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus and Jehovah's Witnesses they're, they're just like Muslims in the sense that they hold to this Unitarian view of God, and so, therefore, God is not a Trinity.

In fact, they say that the Trinity is this freakish three-head God-looking monster and other things like that. But here's the issue with that. They'll say Jesus is actually the archangel Michael. And he didn't die on a cross. He died on a torture stake.

FRANK:
Where do they come up with this stuff? I mean, this is just out of left field. It starts in the 1800s, and I don't know why so many of these aberrant views come out in the 1800s. You got that. You got Christian Science. You got Mormonism. I don't know.

BRADY:
Oh, the Restoration Movement.

FRANK:
The what?

BRADY:
The Restoration Movement. That's what drove so many of these, and that's where you, you know, you start to see your, like your Seventh-day Adventists, and you see Mormonism is, well, Mormonism really starts in 1830, but it's but it's really a byproduct of everything that started.

Then you have Jehovah's Witnesses, which is a little bit later in the 1800s, but many groups are coming out, and they're all coming out with this same kind of hey, the world's coming to an end bit, many of them, and what's interesting though about Jehovah's Witnesses is that they taught that Jesus died on the cross. In fact, I actually show the pictures of this in the course about how they believed that Jesus died on a cross. In fact, they put out one of the very first motion pictures that, that's ever put out on religion, and it has Jesus dying on the cross. Then what happens is, golly, I think it's early 1900s—

FRANK:
1914 they said he was coming back, right?

BRADY:
Yeah, 1914, the kind of the second big date. The first date actually comes in 1888, but 1914 was when he was supposed to come back the first time, then 1919, then they were supposed to come back 1925, then. So forth.

FRANK:
Jesus is late, man. What's going on?

BRADY:
Yeah, well, well, it was just spiritual, Frank. It was—

FRANK:
Oh, it's a spiritual return.

BRADY:
Yeah, and it's your fault that he was that you thought he was coming back physically, even though you got that from reading the Watchtower.

FRANK:
But let me just say a couple of things about what you said so far. First of all, let's go back to John 1 for a second. If Jesus is just a God, that implies polytheism, right?

BRADY:
Yes.

FRANK:
Okay, but He's obviously, they think there's just one God, so you sort of caught them on that one, right? And then when Jesus claims to be God in several places, John 8:58 is one of them, "Before Abraham was born, I am." Paul calls him God.

He calls himself God before Caiaphas in Mark chapter 14 when he says, "I am the Messiah. I am the Son of Man. The Son of Man's going to come with power on the clouds," and Caiaphas tears his robe and says, "This is blasphemy." You know, it amazes me. There are people out there who say Jesus never claimed to be God, yet that's all the Jews think he's doing, right? They keep picking up stones to stone him, and that's why they killed him ultimately.

So you have these groups coming later that try and say Jesus never claimed to be God. The Muslims, the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and yet it's so clear in the scriptures that the Jews thought he was claiming to be God. And that's why they wanted to kill him. All right, let me go back to the four multiply or add. They're adding to the Bible in this way.

The Jehovah's Witnesses are, they're altering it. What are they? They're subtracting from Jesus. They think he died on the cross, but he hasn't risen from the dead?

BRADY:
Well, they say he was crucified on a torture stake. Then he went back as Michael the archangel.

FRANK:
Oh, so his physical body didn't come out of the tomb.

BRADY:
Well, let's not get involved in all that, shall we?

FRANK:
What do they do? What do they do with Paul saying, "If Jesus hasn't risen from the dead, your faith's in vain." What? What?

BRADY:
To be honest, Frank, they, they'll give a lot of different answers, but it's usually dodging and if you were to ask that question, they would probably say something like, "Well, you probably think it's okay to celebrate birthdays, don't you?"

FRANK:
What does that have to do with anything?

BRADY:
They just change the subject.

FRANK:
Oh, change the subject. Okay, all right, all right. So, so this came out of William, or is it William Taze Russell?

BRADY:
Charles Taze Russell.

FRANK:
Charles Taze Russell. Yeah, I had the first name wrong. Okay, 1800s, Jehovah's Witnesses, Watchtower, Brooklyn, New York. All right. So, Mormonism's come out, or the Mormons come out of allegedly Palmyra, New York.

BRADY:
Yes.

FRANK:
Correct? Wound up migrating to Utah. Muslims obviously come out of Mecca, at least that's what we've been told. And all of them violate something. Well, certainly the Mormons and the Muslims do. They violate Galatians 1:8. In fact, if people had taken Galatians 1:8 seriously, you wouldn't have Islam.

You certainly wouldn't have Mormonism. Here's Galatians 1:8. This is Paul saying to the church, "Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preach to you, let them be under God's curse." So he even puts himself in that in that category, Brady. He says, "If I come and preach another gospel to you, even if an angel," notice both Muhammad and Joseph Smith think they got another gospel from an angel that only they see—

BRADY:
Yeah.

FRANK:
And they're violating here what Paul says, who has been confirmed as an apostle through miracles. Yet they are ignoring that, and they're saying, "No, I've got this new gospel." So these are Christian heresies, ladies and gentlemen. They're violating the Bible. They're adding to the Bible. They're subtracting from Jesus. They're multiplying requirements for salvation. And they're dividing the lawyer to the believer. The Jehovah's Witnesses divide the lawyer to the believer through the Watchtower. How do they do this?

BRADY:
This is really wild how they do it. When you really start thinking about like how this impacts the individual. So, let's say for example that you're a Jehovah's Witness and you're thinking, you know what, this Christmas, I'm gonna put up a tree.

That seems kind of cool, man. I think that'd be fun, you know. We're not gonna really celebrate Christmas, but I want to put up a tree. We'll decorate it, whatever. So you do it, and then one of your Jehovah's Witness buddies comes over to your house and goes, "Whoa, what's that over there?" Hey, man, I got me one of those Christmas trees this year. It's been kind of fun having it in the house. I mean, you got to take that down. Come on, it's not really a big deal. I'm not worshiping it or anything.

And like, but you can't have that. Well, their friend's going to go back to the Kingdom Hall and tell the elders, "Hey, man, Frank over here, he put up a Christmas tree," and then they're going to call you in, and they're going to say, "Frank, is this true?" And you're going to say, "Yeah, I thought I'd do a Christmas tree this year." Like, you got to take that down. You say, "I'm not going to really worry about that," and so you say, "No, I'm not going to do it." So now they're going to subpoena you—

FRANK:
Subpoena?

BRADY:
And probably your friend, yeah, and they're gonna—

FRANK:
You mean in their own, like sort of Sharia court for the Jehovah's Witnesses?

BRADY:
Absolutely.

FRANK:
Wow, I never knew that.

BRADY:
They're gonna have a trial. You'll be found guilty because you're not denying it and you're not gonna take it down. And then at this point, you become disfellowshipped. Now, what does this mean? This means that no active Jehovah's Witness can interact with you.

So you just lost probably all your friends. Your spouse may divorce you. Now they don't have to divorce you, but let's just say your marriage is not going to be all that it could be. Hey, if you have grown kids, guess what? They're not going to have a relationship with you, which means now you're probably not going to get to see or really be around your grandkids.

This is, I mean, you can just see how this begins to pile on people. If you're, hey, if you're employed by a Jehovah's Witness in a Jehovah's Witness business you're losing your job, man. You're not, you're not sticking around there. So you can see how emotionally, you know, they really got you to where even if you don't think it's true, you may lose what you think of as your entire life by walking away from the faith because you get disfellowshipped. It's all over.

FRANK:
Ladies and gentlemen, unless you're living in the Old Testament theocracy where God was visible in so many ways through all sorts of miracles and acts of God, where He demanded allegiance, this kind of blasphemy here whether it's from the Muslims, whether it's from the Jehovah's Witnesses, or the Mormons obviously, the Muslim situation is the most severe.

You can be murdered. It's called an honor killing. This just goes to show that in a free society, that these people are really insecure about what they believe, because why would you punish someone for freely saying, "Look, I don't believe this anymore"? Why not try and convince them that it's actually true, rather than putting all these punitive penalties on them?

And that's what these Christian heresies do. In fact, Islam is really the Arian heresy, meaning that God is a rigid monotheistic being, and there's no plurality in Him. Well, if there's no plurality in God, there's no way God can be love, because prior to creation, there was nobody to love. And so the Trinity actually solves problems rather than creates them.

But the Muslims, as you know, Brady, I'm just talking to our audience now, the Muslims actually have something that is eternal other than God, and that's the Quran, according to them. So in Christianity, God became a man. In Islam, God became a book. Okay, and in any event, it, we want to reach out to people who are in these Christian heresies, and one of the ways that you can talk about these or understand these is in the way that Dr. Blevins here has given us, ladies and gentlemen, to think in terms of these, these math functions, add, subtract, multiply, divide, and it's taught more in the course, Conversations With the Faiths, that you can take. And if you don't want to take it now, you can actually take the self-paced version anytime you want. But let me ask you a question about Mormons, if I can, Brady.

Because that's what your new book is about, and I'm running into a lot more Mormons lately. Maybe it's just because I travel out west a lot. In fact, on the fourth that's tomorrow night, ladies and gentlemen if you're listening to this on Tuesday, I'll be out in Arizona at Dream City Church with Lucas Miles. We're doing a Freedom Night. That's the one that Charlie Kirk started, and now Lucas is hosting. That's going to be, I think, at 6:30 p.m.

on the, that's local time in Phoenix. That's going to be on the fourth, and then on the seventh, they'll be at the Maven Conference in San Antonio. With my friend Brett Kunkle, that's on our website as well. And then on the ninth, we'll be doing the third edition of the War on Reality. We'll be talking about how reality does not have pronouns, and we'll also be talking about how do you really know what right and wrong is?

What's the standard of rightness out there? And then the following week, I'm going to be out at the Make Heaven Crowded event, just to the northwest of Colorado Springs. That's the 13th. Then the 15th, I'll be at Calvary Fellowship in Miami, near Miami, Miramar, California, Miramar, Florida, I should say.

All the details are on our website. But Brady, let me ask you this question about Mormonism. And because I'm running into this a lot, Mormons or LDS will ask you, "Why are Protestants so quick to accept the eyewitnesses to Jesus's resurrection, but they won't accept the eyewitness testimony for the Book of Mormon?" And then Mormons will go even further to say there are more eyewitnesses to the Book of Mormon than the resurrection. So how would you answer that?

BRADY:
Yeah, first, I think that this is a fair question because they probably haven't spent the time to really delve deeply into the eyewitnesses for the Book of Mormon and contrast that with the eyewitnesses of the resurrection. But let me just start like this. Frank, I'm going to read to you. There were 11 witnesses to the gold plates. All right—

FRANK:
Okay. And first of all, what are the gold plates for people who don't know?

BRADY:
So Joseph Smith, when he was just a boy, was visited by the angel Moroni, who told him about some gold plates that were buried not too far from his home, that told the story of an ancient peoples who Christ had visited after he had left Jerusalem, after he ascended from Israel.

And so this was the story about him coming to the Americas. But so after a few years, each he went to go find them a couple of years in a row, but for whatever reason, he wasn't worthy. Finally, he was worthy, and he opened up this box, and he and within it are the plates. There's some like seer stones, some other kind of paraphernalia in the box, and he's able to take it, and within there are these gold plates that have the stories that comprise the Book of Mormon. It has essentially the Book of Mormon is contained within it, allegedly.

FRANK:
And allegedly, this took place in, say, 1830-ish.

BRADY:
Well, 1830 is when the Book of Mormon was published, so this would have been like in the 1820s.

FRANK:
Okay, all right.

BRADY:
And so here's the 11 people who claim to see it, and I'm gonna I'm just gonna read these names, and you tell me if anything, you know, comes to mind.

So you have a fellow by the name of Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, David Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, John Whitmer, Hiram Page, Joseph Smith Sr., Hyrum Smith, and Samuel H. Smith.

FRANK:
A lot of those people are in the family, aren't they?

BRADY:
Yes.

FRANK:
Right. Okay.

BRADY:
So, let me just so—

FRANK:
Is that two or three families? What is that?

BRADY:
It's actually, it's, it's three families technically. Well, it's really two families plus one guy. So Oliver Cowdery, he's a close associate of Joseph Smith. He actually, he was a principal scribe during, and participant, during the translation of the Book of Mormon.

You have Martin Harris. He was an early financial backer. Did a little bit of the transcribing of the Book of Mormon. But then you have David Whitmer, who was a close associate. Often welcomed Joseph and his family to his home to stay there. These are what they call the three witnesses, and they claim to have had this angelic visitation where they're able to see the gold plates from the angel. And, that's as far as it goes. It's not someone handling it.

FRANK:
These main three people who are who again?

BRADY:
Oliver Cowdery—

FRANK:
Okay, financial backer.

BRADY:
Yeah, Martin Harris is the financial backer.

FRANK:
Martin Harris, okay.

BRADY:
Oliver Cowdery was the primary scribe, if you will, for Joseph Smith. Then you have David Whitmer. Again, he became involved through Oliver Cowdery. Their farms were close to each other. He hosted Joseph Smith during much of the translation process of the Book of Mormon.

FRANK:
Okay, so Joseph Smith alone has this encounter with an angel who gives him golden plates?

BRADY:
Not golden.

FRANK:
Gold plates.

BRADY:
We'll talk about that in a second.

FRANK:
Okay, all right.

BRADY:
Who tells him where the gold plates are. And then he goes, he goes, and he digs up, and he and he finds the gold plates. But now here's where it gets interesting. When you get to Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, and Peter Whitmer were all David Whitmer's sons. Hiram Page was

David Whitmer's son-in-law. So you have five of the eleven witnesses are all within one family. And then obviously you have Joseph Smith Sr., Hyrum Smith, and Samuel Smith, all, you know—

FRANK:
Is Joseph Smith Sr., the Joseph Smith or the father?

BRADY:
No, Joseph Smith Jr. Yeah, Joseph Smith Sr. is the father to Joseph Smith Jr., aka the Joseph Smith of Mormonism.

FRANK:
And who are the other Smiths? Are they brothers of Joseph Smith?

BRADY:
Yeah, Hyrum and Samuel are his, are Joseph Smith Jr's brothers.

FRANK:
Okay, all right, all right. So this is all in the family now, pretty much. And—

BRADY:
Who was it? Mark Twain said, "If there was just another member of the Whitmer family that could attest to the Book of Mormon, I might could believe it."

FRANK:
Okay, all right. So they then, after Joseph says he's dug up these gold plates, three of these eleven say that they have an angelic encounter as well, but are they brought into the presence of these gold plates, and then they see the angel, or how does this work?

BRADY:
So the angel reveals it to them, but you say, okay, well, weren't they part of the translation process? Weren't they able to see it when Joseph was translating? Well, here's the interesting part, and we get all this from the church. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We're not, I'm not making this up, or it's—

FRANK:
This is their story.

BRADY:
This is their story, that oftentimes the plates were like on a table with a, you know, with a cover over them, like a, you know like a towel or something.

And so, therefore, and they were told these guys, the scribes, Oliver Cowdery was told, hey, if you lift that up, and you look at it, you're gonna be, God's gonna put you to death. And so you say, well, how is Joseph Smith doing this? He had a seer stone in his hat, and he would put his head in the hat, and then that seer stone would glow and show him the words to say.

So it wasn't like the translation, Frank, that you and I had to do when we were in seminary of Greek and Hebrew. That's not the way the Book of Mormon is—

FRANK:
Okay, so this is this is an occult activity—

BRADY:
Absolutely.

FRANK:
Going on. Okay, and Joseph Smith admits this. The church admits this.

BRADY:
Yes, absolutely. They have a replica in the Church History Museum in Salt Lake City, just right there next to Temple Square.

FRANK:
I've been there. The replica of the gold plates.

BRADY:
Well, they have a replica of that, but they also have the replica of the seer stone.

FRANK:
Oh, okay, and they're admitting all this.

BRADY:
Yeah, they still have the seer stone, they just, you know, don't have it out.

FRANK:
So they don't believe in Deuteronomy 18. They don't believe to stay away from the occult.

BRADY:
Well, if they do, they're not doing a very good job.

FRANK:
Okay, so all right, so here's a question that I've asked several times and I haven't gotten a good answer. Why do they think the gold plates are a miracle? Because gold plates, I could make if I had the right materials in my garage. Right. So it's not like the resurrection that's predicted, and then a guy comes back from the dead, which is our central problem as human beings, ladies and gentlemen, is that we die. Okay. Someone put it this way: death is philosophy's only problem. Right. Okay. So you can have all the philosophies you want, ladies and gentlemen, but you're going to die at some point.

Then what happens, if anything? Right. You got to figure that out. A resurrection is obviously one of our biggest, solves our biggest problem, and that is death. Why does anyone think golden plates or gold plates, whatever this distinction is required to make, I'm happy to make it. Why do they think that somehow proves that Joseph Smith was a prophet?

BRADY:
I don't know if any of them would say that the gold plates themselves was a miracle. I mean, I'm sure somebody out there probably would, but what they're claiming is that this was the revelation that God sent. This was—

FRANK:
But how is that proven by what? What?

BRADY:
That's the problem.

FRANK:
Yeah.

BRADY:
I mean, I mean, it's not like the Bible where I mean, we have nearly six thousand, you know, manuscripts of the New Testament, some of them dating back as early as the second century, just, you know, just a hundred years or so after the time of Christ, or after the original writings.

FRANK:
Yeah, but we wouldn't even say that manuscripts are miraculous.

BRADY:
They're not a miracle.

FRANK:
They're not. Okay. What the manuscripts say about what happened is what shows us that Christianity is true, that there's evidence that not only are these manuscripts reliable, but what they say about miracles actually occurred. And just to mention again that the new book, the new update, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be An Atheist, is out.

We include a lot of new material. In fact, we'll put a link to the updated version in the show notes as to what is unique about Christianity and the miracles that confirm it. You don't find these things in Mormonism. So why would, this question that Mormons bring up, why do they even think it's a good question? You can have eyewitnesses. Muhammad had eyewitnesses, but that doesn't mean that Muhammad is a prophet because he had eyewitnesses. So what?

BRADY:
Exactly. So here, here's the thing that's interesting. And you know, you make the statement, you know, I can make these plates in my garage. Now I talked to you about the three witnesses, but we didn't spend very much time on the eight witnesses because it was the eight witnesses who claimed to actually see the plates. Now, what did they see? Now, we don't have time to get into the long little story on this, but Joseph had access to tin, you know, the metal tin, and I firmly believe that he did create some plates with, and I don't mean to be disrespectful when I say this, but with like squiggles or markings on them.
And so that when they got a chance to look at them, they could actually, okay, yeah, yeah, we've seen, we've seen, we've seen plates, and so, yeah, I kind of think that he did do that, because of the simple fact that these eight witnesses they claim that they saw something, but yet it wasn't anything that could be really verified in any real way.

But here's the interesting thing. What we, who we don't see on this list is we don't see his mom's not on this list. We don't see anywhere else. There's one story that says that David Whitmer's wife, I believe her name was Elizabeth, I might be wrong on that, did receive a vision of the plates before anybody else got to see them.

So it's like, okay, so all these other people get to see the plates, but his mom and his wife never actually get to see them. Although they do say that Emma would pick them up and clean underneath it, which if they're gold plates, they're 200 pounds.

FRANK:
If the occult is involved, there could be all sorts of crazy stuff going on, but that doesn't affirm that these things are from God. Quite the contrary, they could come from the other side.

And this is why Deuteronomy 18 is, you know, stay away from this kind of thing. And so, I mean, there's so much more to cover. We're running out of time here, Brady. Let me just ask you one other question. And the course is going to go into not just Mormonism, but Islam and Jehovah's Witnesses. The question that often is asked by Mormons to non-believers is, you know, pray that you get the burning in the bosom, and it'll tell you if Christianity is or if Mormonism is true.

It's a very subjective test, but, do we do the same thing when we refer to the witness of the Holy Spirit? Like, what would you say to that?

BRADY:
Yeah, I think that's a great question, and I think it links perfectly to our conversation about the gold plates, because as we think about the witnesses, and let me just say this.

You know, we mentioned gold versus golden. I want to mention that because I know somebody out there is going mention it. They're screaming into their phone or radio. These plates would weigh 200 pounds. There's a story in church history about Joseph, who actually kind of had a bum leg, fighting off grown men, running a great distance with these plates tucked under his arm.

FRANK:
Two-hundred pounds.

BRADY:
If they're gold, they're about 200 pounds.

FRANK:
Yeah, forget about it. Nobody's done it.

BRADY:
So what they'll say is they Some Mormon apologists will say, "Well, they weren't gold; they were golden, or they were gold color," and so they were some kind of gold-copper alloy like tumbaga, which would weigh somewhere maybe as light as 30 pounds, but most likely between 50 to 60 pounds, which even then, I don't care how strong you are, how do you fight somebody off holding something that's 50, 60 pounds?

But here's the thing. As you think about all this, it goes back to the witnesses, why then do we trust the eyewitnesses of Jesus? Well, we're not seeing, we're not seeing eleven witnesses. We're seeing, well, and really we're seeing hundreds of witnesses. Now, if we want to go just with the people whose names we have, we have well over well over eleven, and they were willing to die for it.

They weren't, it wasn't a bunch of people who were related or had who had a financial stake on the line. These are people who really believed it. But even more, as you're praying for this, this is the whole enterprise. Moroni 10:4, you pray and you ask that God will give you this understanding of the world, rather the Book of Mormon.

And then you'll get it. So, like, if you understand it, if you pray sincerely, then God's going to give you this message. So they're looking at, they'll turn back to the passage in Luke chapter 24, verses 13 through 35, where we see the guys going on the road to Emmaus, and then it says after they realize it's Jesus, and you know he's gone, they look at each other and say, "Doesn't our hearts, didn't our hearts burn within us while he spoke to us?" But notice the difference in the Book of Mormon you have to pray with a sincere heart and really believe it.

As to where the biblical witnesses, they didn't believe it. I mean, even like you mentioned at the very beginning, they still had their doubts even after, you know, even after everything. And so what happens is no, this isn't the same. That when we're looking at this whole, you know burning of the bosom versus the witness of the Holy Spirit, how do we do it?

We test the Spirit. 1 John 4:1 and listen if what we're receiving from a spirit if it matches with the Word of God, then we know it's the Holy Spirit. If it doesn't match with the Bible, then we know that it's a deceiving spirit.

FRANK:
Yeah, absolutely. It is, and there's a difference between knowing Christianity is true and showing Christianity is true.

You can know it through the witness of the Holy Spirit, but you can't see my witness of the Holy Spirit or sense it, right? Except if my faith is lived out through good works, which is what James is talking about. But, you can show Christianity is true by evidence. You can't do that with Mormonism. They don't have this kind of evidence. They have an occult thing going on here, and they think that gold plates or golden plates, whatever they are, is some kind of miracle.

And I would ask this question too, Brady. This allegedly happened about 200 years ago. And if these gold plates or golden plates really existed, you would think that they would keep those things and have them as a testimony to their faith. Why don't they have these? We have manuscripts, as you said, go back to the second century that are 1800, 1900 years old. They don't, and those things perish because they're written on papyrus. They don't have the gold plates from just 200 years ago. Why not?

BRADY:
Well, they'll say that the gold plates were taken back to heaven.

FRANK:
Oh, okay, that's convenient.

BRADY:
Then they'll come back and say, "Well, you don't have the originals." Okay, fair enough. So let's do this. Let's start with the 1830 Book of Mormon that Joseph Smith wrote, and let's compare it to our Book of Mormon that we have today.

Frank, there's been over 4,000 changes, and while a lot of those have been, you know, it's just some grammatical changes, there have been significant changes. Like we have, you know, King Mosiah. He's alive. He dies early on in one chapter, and then a couple chapters later, he's alive again. And they saw that, and so they fixed it. In a later version they changed it, and so you can compare today's Book of Mormon with the 1830 Book of Mormon, and you see that there are a lot of significant issues, and we go over several of those in our course.

FRANK:
In the course, ladies and gentlemen, and there's a similar situation with the Quran. There are changes that Jehovah's Witnesses make that are obvious false changes. All this will be covered in the course. Go to crossexamined.org, click on online courses, you'll see Conversation With the Faiths. Also, want to mention Brady's book is now out. I wrote the foreword for it. It's called Trading Questions: 20 Essential Conversations to Have with Your Mormon Friends.

There it is, right there, ladies and gentlemen. We'll put the link in the show notes and check out Watchman Fellowship. They have some great stuff you can get for free up there. What is the website there, Brady?

BRADY:
It is Watchman. That's W-A-T-C-H-M-A-N dot O-R-G. Watchman.org. If you want to get the book straight from us, you can go to watchman.org /questions, and we'd be happy to help you with that as well. But yeah, we have a lot of free resources, a lot of great things. We do profiles six times a year. We put out a four-page scholarly quality profile. We've covered everything from acupuncture to Zoroastrianism.

FRANK:
All right, that's great. Check it out, ladies and gentlemen. Also, don't forget if you're listening to this on the third and you haven't voted yet, get out and vote. 50% of Christians don't vote. 90% of Muslims do. Go to voteyourfaith.net. Voteyourfaith.net if you want to get registered, or you want to know where the candidates stand. Nonpartisan site will show you where all the candidates stand. Voteyourfaith.net. Don't forget tomorrow night, Lord willing, I'll be out in Phoenix at Dream City Church for Freedom Night. Check all that out. Brady, great having you on. Go to crossexamined.org for more, ladies and gentlemen. Lord willing, we'll see you here next time. God bless.