

# Being Christian in today's culture Episode 3:

## The power of Christ to change the culture

### TRANSCRIPT

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**NOTE: This transcript was AI-generated and has not been fully edited.**

[00:00:00] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Welcome back to the Denison Forum podcast. I'm Mark Turman, executive director of Denison Forum, sitting down again with Dr. Jim Denison, our cultural apologist and co-founder. Jim, how are you doing today?

[00:00:13] **Dr. Jim Denison:** I'm doing well. How are you today, my friend?

[00:00:16] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Doing great. We are just barely on the backside of a total eclipse and we're still able to function. I'm glad to report that we're still here.

[00:00:26] **Dr. Jim Denison:** Never said those words before, have you?

[00:00:28] **Dr. Mark Turman:** That's right. Not recently, not recently. Well, we want to thank you guys for joining us for another conversation in our newest series called Being Christian in today's culture. And today we're going to talk about another one of what we call the pillars. A biblical flourishing, and I'm going to remind you of what those are.

But this is the third episode in this series. We think there'll probably be eight episodes all total. But we want to talk to you about what it means to flourish God's way biblically and how we see that in scripture and how our ministry is trying to help you think. In those terms so that you could not only live a holy and beautiful life yourself, flourish yourself, but how you might also act redemptively in our culture, using your influence, your gifts, your opportunities to help the world be a better place to help it flourish for everyone until Jesus comes again.

And we're going to pick up that conversation. I want to remind you in this series that every one of our conversations is built on a white paper. A pastoral paper that Dr. Denison has written. You can get to every one of those white papers through the show notes in this episode, and also by going directly to our website, [denisonforum.org](http://denisonforum.org). You'll find all of these papers. We hope you will go there and read these in a prayerful and reflective way. Let them be a way of encouraging and strengthening you. And that way you can keep up and even go deeper in this series. As we like to

say we're here to help you and other believers. Think biblically to live holy, to act redemptively to make the world a better place until Jesus comes again.

So Jim, as we kind of get into this next topic before I remind everybody of what these foundational truths, these pillars are, I wonder if you could, could maybe help us. Frame this up by defining some terms and let me tell you how I got to this. I was sitting in church recently and the pastor was introducing his sermon for the morning and he used a word that just for some reason caught my attention. He said I'm going to share with you today from God's word.

I want to share God's truth with you so that you will be armed For the world that you're going to go out and live in. And that word armed just kind of caught my attention. I thought, well, that's interesting and probably true, but then it was interesting about, oh, I don't know, 12, 14 minutes later in his message, he was talking about something very sensitive.

Cultural topics that we talk about. And he was quick to say we should never use God's word as a baseball bat to harm people. So I thought about those two things out of that pastor's message. And I thought about how you and I talk about all the time, equipping people. equipping the saints for the work of ministry out of the book of Ephesians chapter four.

What do you think of, do you think it's, am I just am I straining the gnat or splitting hairs by worrying about the word armed versus the word equipped the, the those kinds of things take us down a road that is either helpful or not helpful. How would you respond to that?

[00:03:41] **Dr. Jim Denison:** Well, I understand your concern there, and I would share your concern, Mark. I truly would. I'm sure what the pastor meant, and you would understand this, and have said this, of course, is just to be equipped, to be prepared, armed in the sense of being ready for, you know, whatever might come, whatever might be out there.

And I'm glad you came along later. to make the statement that the word of God ought not be used in a weaponized sort of a fashion. That would kind of help us to understand that he wasn't really going the culture warrior route with us. But the reason you and I are so concerned about this, I think, is that so many people that are in our space in ministry really do have this kind of culture warrior mentality of what's seen.

They'll even call themselves culture warriors. I was once asked by somebody whether I saw myself as a culture warrior. Warrior and I immediately wanted to say that I don't mean that a warrior implies there's an enemy here. There's the good guys and the bad guys and there's the good guys have to win the bad guys have to lose So we're gonna have antagonism here.

We're gonna be an opposition We're gonna be in some kind of a conflictual sort of relationship here And there's this sense of winning and losing the zero sum game I as you know like much

better the metaphor of cultural missionaries In the sense of going to people with what we've been given, simply to share what we've received.

Beggars helping beggars find bread. Missionaries love the people they serve, ideally. They don't see them as enemies. They see them as friends they haven't made yet. They see them as brothers and sisters that haven't yet come to Christ. And they see them as people who need what they need. Ground's level at the foot of the cross.

So there's humility there. There's compassion there. That, I think, captures Jesus spirit far more than the cultural warrior sort of taking on the culture, an antagonistic sort of a mindset. That's, I think, Paul's idea. I'd become all things to all men that it might by all means save some. That's the concept that we want to be about.

And so for arming people, it's only in the sense of preparing them to be the kind of missionaries to the culture that God's calling us all to be.

[00:05:29] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah, I think that, yeah. Great insight. You know, I think I just, you know, I know that there are military metaphors within scripture, no doubt. But it seems like we're living in a season where they may be in some ways over emphasized and this idea of cultural missionary being equipped to reach out to people that you, that you love, that you care about deeply maybe at times, at least in some circles, underutilized.

And you know, if maybe the word, maybe the word armed most applies to the way we need to think about the devil and about him as our adversary.

[00:06:01] **Dr. Jim Denison:** what I was going to say. Yes. The military environment scripture applies absolutely to spiritual warfare. Ephesians six, where you have the heart and the armor. Now you've got the military on steroids as it were. Now, this is all military for that right reason. Because as you just said, now, you do have an enemy here.

Now this is a zero sum game. Now we are to attack the gates of hell. As Jesus said in Matthew 16, now we are to be aggressive and take the initiative. Not that we're here to hate the enemy, but to recognize that he hates us. Yes. He's a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. He wants to hurt our father. He can't get to our father.

So he gets to his kids. He hurts us to hurt him. And so you're right. That's where to have this kind of sense of militarism that the scripture speaks of, I think.

[00:06:42] **Dr. Mark Turman:** And, and just makes me think of what the Bible says in the later writings of the, the apostle Paul, where at one point he says to resist the devil to be strong, to stand up to him in the power of the Holy spirit and in the truth of scripture, and he will flee from you. But then in another place, he says, flee, you know, run and get away from the devil.

So in a kind of a wise, militaristic strategy. You have to think about what's the, what's the thing that God would most want you to do in a spiritual battle with the devil at any given point. Sometimes it's, it's right to stand strong. Sometimes it's right to, you know, retreat or get away from that situation.

Because you know, it's just the best strategy for dealing with the devil and how he's trying to work in your life or in your situation at that point. Another. A couple of terms I wanted to see if you could kind of chase out nuance for us. We live in a world where we talk about things like worldview.

Some people probably have heard those terms even from their pastor or in a Bible study lesson, some kind of context. We talk about different worldviews. Sometimes you and I like to talk about what we call metanarratives. Chase those two terms out as a way of setting the context for the rest of our conversation.

What do we mean by worldview, biblical worldview? What's a metanarrative? Are we talking about the same thing or is there a distinction between those two?

[00:08:02] **Dr. Jim Denison:** I think there is a little bit of a distinction. So I'll start with the second first other than that term from George Friedman, who's a geopolitical analyst, as you know, who's made very popular in his book, the next hundred years, or the next 10 years, the idea that nations have a meta narrative by that. He means a North on the compass.

They have a kind of a cultural DNA. They have a thing they're trying to do. And if you can understand that meta narrative, you can better interpret their past and predict their future. For example, Iran is all about rebuilding the Persian empire. Okay. That's their meta narrative. I wouldn't say that's their worldview.

I'll get to that in just a moment, but that's the thing they're trying to do. Putin is trying to rebuild mother Russia. Xi, President Xi is trying to rebuild China into the, the world's greatest superpowers he thinks should be their, their inherited capital. Right. Hamas's metanarrative is to destroy Israel, to reclaim what they would think of as Palestine, perhaps to prepare the way for the coming of their Messiah, their Mahdi, and so a metanarrative is what a nation is ultimately attempting to do.

Now, I think the concept applies to churches or to corporations, even the individuals that may have a, a thing that you're wanting to do. Mind metanarrative would be to help people think biblically so they can respond redemptively like you and I talk about so often. That would be what we're here to try to do.

You could call that a metanarrative. I suppose a worldview is broader than that. A worldview is, as the name implies, as you know, a way of seeing the world, a way of viewing, The world perhaps can be illustrated better than it can be defined. A secularist worldview would perhaps be the, I'm the concept that this world is all there is secular from the Latin word, meaning the world, this, this world is separate from a supernaturalist sort of mindset or a concept of miracles or the concept of religious reality.

So, a secularist worldview sees the world only in this world, As opposed to a supernaturalist worldview that would believe that supernatural realities do exist, God and angels and demons and so forth. And so they're just different ways of seeing the world. It could be a prism through which you see the world.

It could be the glasses you wear by which you're interpreting the reality that you see. A biblical worldview just to conclude is a way of looking at the world through biblical lenses. So we're seeing and interpreting what we experience in the world through what the Bible reveals. Scripture says in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

So now when I look at the Eclipse or anything else out in creation, I'm doing it through that lens of it being created by God. And I'm asking, alright, what does creation say about the Creator? What does the artwork say about God? the painter. What can I learn about God from his fingerprints in creation?

Because I'm seeing creation through Genesis 1. 1. If I'm looking at evidence for Jesus' resurrection, I'm looking at that through the biblical prism that describes his incarnation, his death, his resurrection. So the biblical worldview tries to look through scripture at the world and interpret the world through the lens of biblical authority.

[00:10:55] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. So, a helpful follow up to this. You know, I've been doing some reading together. I think what we're reading together will show up later in this series and in other places of work that we're doing together. But part of what this author in this book that we're reading together points out is.

Just the power of narrative and of storytelling. Can you kind of help us realize and understand in a way that because of technology, because of the internet, because of digital devices that are readily available, That we're just much more in immersed in this idea of various meta narratives, big stories, the story of nations, the story of generations the story of subgroups and sub communities how has technology and the internet, social media, how have they really intensified and magnified our awareness?

Of so many different kinds of stories and agendas or meta narratives, as well as worldviews. What is, what has technology done to that reality?

[00:12:02] **Dr. Jim Denison:** That's a great question. On the first level, it's giving everybody a megaphone. If you have access to the internet and you can use social media on some level, you can tell your story. You can, you can share what the world would call your truth, unfortunately, but that's how people see that. And so you can tell your story regardless of how isolated, you might seem to be in the world.

You no longer need a newspaper writer to publish your story. You don't need an editor and a publishing house to get your word out. You don't need to get on television to get on the radio. If you have access to the internet, somebody is likely to see something that you're publishing out there. So everybody's got a megaphone to begin with.

Second, we're all understanding, I think, that story itself is one of the most powerful ways of cutting through all of the cacophony of information that's out on the internet. There's something about us that's immediately attracted to story, that's immediately attracted to narrative. That's why Jesus taught narrative form so often.

Someone asked, who is my neighbor? And he told the story of the Good Samaritan. Jesus wanted to illustrate the power of sharing God's word, so he sent a sower, went out, There's something about stories that captures us because they're visual. We picture them in our minds, we use all of our senses, not just what we're hearing or the words that we're processing on a page if we're reading them, but we're involved sensorially, and Jesus was a master of using all the senses in order to tell these stories.

Well now, in order to cut through all of the noise, People who are understanding the power of story for themselves. And that's why they're so often using these digital technologies in order to communicate the story. Then the third piece is to say how much more readily available video now is in telling the stories on the digital platforms that we have.

That's why TikTok and YouTube are so massively popular today. Because now anybody can record their story. I don't need a cameraman. You and I can do this. Right now, we can have this conversation in ways that people can watch and hear. There would have been a day not long ago when you and I would both have to be in a studio someplace, have to be a whole lot of equipment, and there'd have to be camera people and directors, and all the, you know, all the taping, and then you'd have to find airtime somehow and get this available in some way somebody could consume.

Now, anybody can tell their visual story. And the visual is much more capturing even than the auditory, as we now know that. And so, you can make your own movie now. And by making your own video, your own movie, you're telling a story, on a digital platform, that gets your word out to the world. This is new for us.

We've not ever been at this place in human history, where this is as readily available as it is now, for good and for evil. Pornography is more addictive and is more dangerous now than it has ever been for the very reasons we're talking about. But the gospel can be shared even in preliterate cultures through video technology in ways it's never been able to be shared before.

And so, it's what the Lord uses, the enemy tries to use to deceive, and that's the good and the bad of the era in which we find ourselves today. Mm hmm.

[00:15:02] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. It makes me think of something I read recently. Rosling, who said in a book he wrote called factfulness that we're addicted to drama, which is, which is why we like reading novels. It's why we like going to the theater or to see something at the movie theater. It's why we like watching television is because we're kind of addicted to drama and every good story usually has some line of conflict in it.

Right. And even the stories that you mentioned, the good Samaritan and the, and other, even the whole biblical story has, it has conflict in it. It has it, it has brokenness in it and it has reconciliation in it. And we're drawn to that. We're really kind of addicted to that. And also made me think, you know, we grew up in the era before we had the internet, when we, you, you got your news about the world through a newspaper.

And I can remember, I grew up in a. A small town. And every morning I got up, my mom and my dad were at the breakfast table, reading the newspaper. That's how they caught up. And then I remember moving to a big city and thinking, wow, the newspaper is four times the size. But you still were limited and they were limited by how many pages they could print, how many stories they could tell.

And so there was a limitation on just how aware you were going to be about the world. It was limited by page and by word count. And I know you were a typesetter at one point. You're very familiar with these kinds of realities. But now it's like, it's an endless newspaper. It's an endless magazine where they're just all of these different stories, all of these different narratives that are being laid out for us in a lot of different worldviews.

And so there's a lot for us to manage and a lot for us to think through. And that's where. So, coming with these seven ideas, these key pillars as a way of looking at every issue in the world, seven ideas that are grounded in God's word. And let me just remind our audience of what we mean by being.

Christian in today's culture around these seven ideas. We talked about last time embracing biblical truth and authority as really the foundation. If you, if you don't believe in that idea, then the rest of these are somewhat irrelevant. But we start with embracing biblical truth and authority. Today we're going to talk about necessity.

of faith in Christ. Then we're going to talk later about sanctity of life, all life, biblical sexuality, biblical righteousness, which, which will include ideas like justice and racial harmony and reconciliation and immigration and biblical equality. We'll talk about political civility. And we'll also talk about cultural engagement.

And those are the framework, the lens, as you talked about a moment ago, that we want to help people learn to look at everything that they're encountering and every opportunity or a situation to see it through these foundational ideas. These biblical. Pillars of understanding. So let me take this back around to the necessity of faith in Christ.

Jim, we normally think of that, or at least I do. In a very personal, individual way. But you talk about that, but you also talk about this as a corporate reality of flourishing together, not just flourishing as an individual. Why is faith in Christ necessary for both personal and corporate flourishing?

[00:18:33] **Dr. Jim Denison:** My wife often tells people, it's kind of one of her famous statements that you want to live a life God is able to bless because God loves us because he is. I do too. Yeah. One of many wise statements. You should be talking to my wife, not me right now, but a lot of people would agree with that. I, you may know the time that I had her speak at the church.

I pastored and they sold more copies of that sermon tape than any in the history of the church. So then because I'm a really smart guy, I asked her to speak to the men's Bible study on Thursday. And when I got up the next week, the men booed and hissed. One of them shouted, we want Janet. So I've been trailing in her wake a long time and understanding and kind of quoting her as, as whenever I can really.

And that's kind of one of her famous statements is live a life. God is able to bless, not just, not just a life. God can bless, but is able to bless. And the point she wants to make there is because God is love because God is our father. He wants to bless his kids. Even more than I want to bless my grandkids.

And trust me, I really want to bless my grandkids.

[00:19:25] **Dr. Mark Turman:** that's a lot.

[00:19:26] **Dr. Jim Denison:** God wants to, that's a lot. Yeah, that's a lot. And God wants to bless us even more than that. But because he's holy, he can't bless that, which is unholy. And because he's a father, he can't bless what hurts his kids. And so living in a way he is able to bless positions us to experience his best.



It's not legalism. It's not earning this. It's positioning ourselves to receive grace. It's like being in position to hear this conversation. We're not charging for it. No one had to buy a ticket to do this, but you have to be close enough to a device to be able to hear this. Well, that's what we're talking about is positioning ourselves to receive God's best.

Well, trusting in Christ as Lord and Savior positions us to to experience God's best individually, because now we get to have our sins forgiven. We get to have our past redeemed. We get to have our future secure. We get to have eternal life with the God of the universe made possible for us by the death of a son on our cross to pay our debt and purchase our salvation and give us the eternal life that he wants all of us to have.

And so by far the best way to live a flourishing life individually is to receive that grace you Through which we're saved. It's as though we all have cancer and now here's this one chemotherapy that can cure us of our disease. Wouldn't we wanna take that and then live your entire life so much differently than you would've if you were still struggling with that dread disease?

Well, that's the gift, as you know, of eternal life in Christ for us individually. Well, the Bible also speaks of us as the body of Christ, as as a, a body with many members, a vying with many branches. God loves each of us as if there were only one of us. God says as a collective. It says in Genesis 2, it's not good for the man to be alone.

So when we trust Christ together, we experience Christ differently than we trust Him only as an individual. Now we're hands and feet and eyes and ears, and we experience the entirety of God's work through His body together. We're blessed in that way. We're blessed to be a blessing in that way. We experience the fullness of what God has for us because now we're in the family of faith.

Amen. Revelation seven points to a day when people from every tribe and language and people in tongue will be gathered in front of the throne before the lamb. That's God's best for us. So trusting him individually, yes, is the means by which we experience eternal life. Now, trusting him collectively is the means by which we experience his best as the family.

And it's in that family that we experience God in ways we can't experience Him alone. So that's why the necessity of faith in Christ is the key to flourishing for individuals and for society as well.

[00:22:06] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Let me get you to chase it out a little bit further, because as I was thinking about this, you know, like I said, you, you call this out, you know, how, how can we make this claim? And, and here's the way I got to thinking about it is there, obviously there are many people who are not Christian in their faith.

And many of those people get married. Many of those would say that they have marriages that last and some of them last for decades. And some of those would perhaps even many of them would say, That they're satisfied in their marriage, that they had a help. They have a healthy marriage. So to come along and to say to them, well, you can only truly have a flourishing marriage if it is a biblical marriage, if it is grounded in Christ, if it is built around the person of Christ and the truth of Christ, they might say that about.

on a larger scale biblical flourishing. Well, that, that makes me wonder when we, you know, when we come at this topic and we say that, that there can only truly be biblically, there can only have the truest, biggest expression of flourishing if it is grounded in the person of Christ, wouldn't somebody say, well, I'm, I'm, what about that person who says, I'm pretty happy with my life.

I feel like I'm doing fine. I feel like I'm flourishing. At least by my standards what would we say to that person?

[00:23:24] **Dr. Jim Denison:** Well, the first thing we want to do is be gracious to them. People don't know what they don't know. Again, to quote my wife, lost people act like lost people. So did I. So did you. You literally can't know what you don't know. No, if you, I don't mean this in a majority sense at all, Mark, but if you've been blind your entire life and everybody, you know, is blind, then the category of seeing doesn't exist for you. And you're living in a world where you're making the best you can of your life. You know, you've all learned how to read by Braille. You've all learned how to get along in auditory fashion. You've learned how to make your way through a house. And perhaps you've had a seeing eye animals to help you to do that.

And you're certainly making the best of life as you can make it with your limitations. But if somebody were to come along and enable you somehow to be able to see all at once, The world would take on a completely different experience than it could have before. It's not that you were a bad person before.

It's not that you made some choice here in some way. You literally didn't know what you didn't know. That's true for all of us. You can't really know what it's like to be married until you're married. You can study marriage. You can talk to people who are married, but you can't really know it until you experience it.

Can't really know what it's like to be a father or a mother until you have children. You can study it. You can learn about it vicariously. You can go to movies of how do you take classes. But as you know, as a father and grandfather, you can't really know till you experience it. All relationships are like that.

No relationship can be proven only experienced. All relationships require commitment that transcends the evidence and becomes self validating. You can't really know you should take that job until you take that job. You can't really know you should go to that school until you go to that school. Check the evidence for sure.

Absolutely. This is not intellectual suicide here. Do your best to check the evidence, but then you have to always step beyond that evidence into a relationship that becomes self validating. You can't really know what it's like to go to that school until you go to that school. So what I'd respectfully say To somebody who would say, well, look, God, my marriage is terrific.

I don't need a better marriage than I have. I'd want to say, boy, if you only knew the difference Jesus could make in your marriage. If you only knew how much more power you would receive to forgive each other, to be gracious to each other, to support each other, to be patient with each other. Imagine a marriage in which love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control were always present, were always empowering you.

Imagine the difference. Well, you can't really, unless you experience it. So the step of faith is to say, well, I'm experiencing a terrific marriage as best I know it, but why wouldn't I want to try even more? Why wouldn't I want to be an even better husband than I am? Why wouldn't I want to be an even better spouse than I am?

And doesn't it just make sense? If God is real, If Jesus really is the Son of God, if the Bible really is true, then if the Holy Spirit really can live in your life, as the Bible says, and manifest as fruit of the Spirit, then, by definition, God would have to be able to make your marriage better than it could otherwise be.

He would have to be able to make you a better father, a better parent, a better son, a better daughter. He would have to be able to make you to flourish in relationships more fully if he's God, if he truly is who he says he is. So take that step of faith. that moves into that relationship, and you'll discover that you thought your marriage was great, and I'm sure it was in its own terms, but here's how much better it can be.

Once your eyes are open and you can see a reality you just couldn't imagine. See otherwise. Quick illustration. One time my wife and I were able to use frequent flyer miles and pinch together pennies and make our way out to Hawaii back years ago. Stayed in a tiny little hotel a long ways away from the beach and ate McDonald's for lunch.

We kind of barely made it through but we got to go out there. My first time ever to go snorkeling and the difference when they took us out to this reef and I got the snorkel on the mask and for the first time I was able to get down below the water and see those fish in that tropical paradise around that reef.

It was a world I had never seen before. If my eyes are above the water, y'all couldn't see them. I can maybe get a glimpse of them just a little bit, maybe a reflection. But once you're actually able to see under the water, it's a whole new world. You literally couldn't see before. Well, the fish are the same way.

They have no idea there's this world above air here. Just like we can't see the world below water. There's a whole world available to those who really do experience God in Christ and discover what the abundant life.

[00:28:07] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. Yeah. So well stated, it makes me think about the first time I ever looked through a telescope and, you know, you can see the moon from millions of miles away and then somebody gives you a telescope and you can actually see the surface of the moon, or you can look at one of the other planets and, and just the difference that that makes it, it also made me think of, of you know, when, when I was growing up and I, I thought I wanted to be a husband, I thought I wanted to be a parent, I grew up in a great loving home.

And you can, you can quote unquote practice, I guess, at being a parent by babysitting somebody else's kids. Right. You, you know, I baby, I babysat first time I ever babysat was my sister's twin children and me and my brother were taking care of them. It did not go well. And those babies started

[00:28:52] **Dr. Jim Denison:** How old were you at the time?

[00:28:54] **Dr. Mark Turman:** I was 14, I was 14 and my brother was, was 15, I guess, well, 15 and 13, he and I, and my sister had twins.

And she decided that she would trust us to babysit. So she and her husband could go to dinner. They made it all the way to ordering. And then we had to call them because those babies were crying so loud. So I could practice. I was pretty convinced after that night, maybe I didn't want to be a parent. But the difference between babysitting somebody's other children and then having your own child.

Is the kind of quantitative difference that you're talking about, right?

[00:29:29] **Dr. Jim Denison:** Yeah.

[00:29:29] **Dr. Mark Turman:** And

[00:29:30] **Dr. Jim Denison:** You can't know. You literally can't know otherwise.

[00:29:33] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah, you just, you can't know, you can't know what you don't know until you, you know, until you go underwater and see the fish or you hold your own child. You just can't appreciate what that difference is like.

Let me

[00:29:46] **Dr. Jim Denison:** I don't mean that in a pejorative sense at all. Just to say that quickly, I don't mean that at all to be pejorative. I wouldn't want that at all to be heard as elitism. I didn't know either. This is grace. This is all just grace. I was, I was just like anybody else was before Christ changed my life.

And so we would never, you and I, for a moment, want to say we're better than other people, or we have some elitist sort of claim to something that somebody else doesn't. We're just beggars helping beggars find bread. It's all we're wanting to do is offer that invitation today. I think, and I'm so glad to be able to do it in that spirit with you.

[00:30:18] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. And you know, and something we talked about. Last time when we were, we're having our conversation and have talked about before is just, you know, I wouldn't have described my life before Christ as bad. I, like I said, I had this loving family and I had friends and. There was, there was a lot of great things that I enjoyed about my life, but I didn't know what I didn't know until somebody explained who Jesus was and somebody helped me to understand the the purpose of Jesus's life, what the cross and the resurrection were like, that there was there was a whole bigger, there was a whole bigger way of looking at life.

whole different kind of way of looking at life and understanding where where I came from and where those problems in my life were coming from, cause they were real. It's just, like I said, I didn't know what I didn't know. Which, which leads me to the next question. This pillar is very simply stated the necessity, the requirement, the necessity of faith in Christ and, A lot of words that we use, particularly the word faith, gets tossed around in a lot of different contexts.

It gets talked around in flippant ways. We kind of all intuitively know that it just means to trust. But if, if you were trying to explain to somebody what a biblical definition of faith is, how would you unpack that word?

[00:31:37] **Dr. Jim Denison:** This is where Latin is actually a little helpful. Not always is it, but on occasion, all the years of Latin I studied can be helpful. And so in Latin, there's this distinction between assensus, which is assenting that something is true, and fiducia, which is trusting it personally. I can assent that the chair I'm sitting in right now would probably hold me up.

I could even do some kind of measurements of it, I suppose, or stress testing or stress testing or something like that, but the fiducious wouldn't actually sit in it. It's a census to say the plane will probably get me home. It's fiduciary to get on the plane, which is a little more of a faith step these days, isn't it?

It seems like that has been in the past. It's a, it's a census to say those goggles that they gave us to look at the eclipse will probably protect my eyes, but I didn't make them. I don't know the people I got them from. I'm trusting that they knew what they were doing when they gave us, they gave them to us.

But it's fiducia to actually put them on and actually risk your eyesight by using them. Well, that's what the Bible speaks of as faith. It's the sense of trust, the sense of dependence, the sense of leaning entirely onto. It's Proverbs 3, trust not, trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding.

That's a binary choice. You can't lean on both at the same time. In all your ways, acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths. He will direct your paths. And so this idea of necessity of faith in Christ isn't just believing Jesus existed. Scripture says the devils believe in tremble. I mean, the demons regularly encountered Jesus and clearly knew who he was.

In fact, they often knew more about him than the people standing around knew, but they certainly had trusted him in a personal saving way. And so what we're after here is the necessity of actually depending on him as your Savior and Lord. It's that day when you ask him to forgive your mistakes and be your Lord.

It's when you're trusting him to take you to heaven. It's the idea that when I die and I am totally helpless, And I have no ability to help myself at that point. When I take my last breath, I am trusting that Jesus will enable me to take my first breath on the other side. And if he doesn't, I am lost. I am going to completely trust in him.

I'm not going to trust in Buddhism. I'm not going to trust in Islam. I'm not going to trust in Hinduism. I'm not going to trust in Zoroastrianism or anything else. I'm going to place my trust in Jesus. And him and not just for eternity when I die, but for now as well I'm going to trust my life to him as my lord.

I'm going to live for him as my king I'm going to believe his word is true. I'm going to believe that he loves me I'm going to believe his will is best and i'm going to do my best to follow him and trust him completely That's what we're after here That's what we're speaking of as the necessity of, of, of fiducia, of absolute submission to Christ as your Lord.

[00:34:21] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Oh, okay. That, that helps me. That helps me. So, let me take a turn that I didn't anticipate taking, which is talk for a minute about Jesus's promise, about the Bible's promise of the Holy Spirit, the very presence of Jesus coming to live in us and enable this in us. So I, Again, heard a Bible teacher recently say, Hey, the devil knows the Bible better than you do.

And as you just referenced that, you know, the demons, the demons know who Jesus is. The followers of Satan, those spirits, they know who Jesus is. They probably know how to quote scripture themselves, but what we learn in the early life of Jesus or in the early ministry of Jesus, when he is led out into the wilderness he has these three different encounters with the devil and the devil is quoting scripture to him.

And, and as this Bible teacher was picking up that, Hey, the Bible knows, or the devil knows the Bible better than you know your Bible. But what's the difference? And it is this difference of the Holy Spirit living in each believer. And obviously he doesn't live in the devil. How does that energize us? How does that cause that equipping to become?

Activated in our lives as we walk by faith. Talk about that for a minute.

[00:35:38] **Dr. Jim Denison:** I'm so glad you asked that. That's really the, the miracle that makes all of this really work in our lives. This is not try hard to do better. This isn't go to a seminary someplace and learn Greek and Hebrew and just hope that you'll get better at this stuff. What makes it unique, the Christian faith, is that you have the Holy Spirit living in you to enable you and empower you to do all that the Lord, your Father, is asking you to do while God the Son is praying for you.

So the Father is leading you, the Son is praying for you, and the Spirit is empowering you. This miracle of Trinity, all that happening in our lives right now. Now, as we work, God works. As we give our best, we experience God's best. This isn't sit in a corner and wait on God just to do miracles. Although he does do miracles, but it's us giving our best not to earn his best, but out of gratitude for his grace.

And because that works positioned us to experience his best. When I was growing up and starting to drive our family didn't have a lot of money And so we had old cars that my dad and I had to work on together to keep running Dad had a very serious heart condition. He couldn't throw a ball around he couldn't play sports with us But we could work on cars plus we needed to work on cars And one of the some of my fondest memories of my dad the first car they ever gave me It was a 67 Mercury Cougar that we dropped a 351 Cleveland in, which was a Windsor, rather, which was not a great engine.

And we had to work on the thing all the time. Well, dad was much better at working on this thing than I was, but he wanted me to learn as well. And there were times it took both of us. There were things he could do, but he needed my hands to hold this pulley while he tightened it. He needed me to hold this thing in place while he put it where it needed to be.

And there was a partnership here. Well, the, the, my best days were the days I followed his lead. For the days that I, I am, I followed his example, the days when he was helping me to be my best mechanic and I was so much better than I would have been had I been doing it on my own. I'm still working. There's a mystery here.

But as I work, God works. As I give my best God experience, I experience God's work. That is the spirit that enables me. Romans 8. 29 says that God wants us to be more like Christ. The Holy Spirit is actually molding us into the character of Christ. But we have to choose for that to be the case. He gives us freedom of will.

He honors our freedom. We can quench the spirit, the Bible says, we can grieve the spirit. Scripture says we can block his work in our lives with unconfessed sin. And so if we're wanting to be made like Christ, the spirit will help us to be like Christ. If we're wanting to understand scripture, the spirit will help us to understand scripture as we work.

God works and this divine human partnership, this mysterious, miraculous thing helps us to experience the abundant life now in preparation for eternal life on the other side.

[00:38:14] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah, that that sounds like what your wife is saying when she says live a life. God can bless live a life that the holy spirit can partner with there's certain things that he simply can't and won't partner with you know, I and You know, we, you and I come from a tradition where there's a high, high focus on scripture and rightly so, maybe not as much focus on the Holy Spirit.

But it made me think of what the author and speaker counselor, Paul David Tripp said one time, he said, what most people hear when they come to church is God's good. You're bad. Try harder. And, and that is, unfortunately the way it goes too many times, just this idea that. That the very presence of Christ can live in you by faith as you trust in Christ and energize your life, energize your faith so that you can actually partner with him and live a way, live in a way that's different and that it is the Holy Spirit who, you Enables us to think differently and think biblically and then turn that from thinking into living and from living into serving and acting in redemptive ways.

As you said, all of that is contingent upon being in partnership with the Holy Spirit on a daily basis. That's the way that this works. And that's the way that it works in in a corporate setting, in



a community, in a church, in a family, in a country. One of the things you call out in this white paper.

On the essential nature of faith in Christ is you, you talk about the connection between faith, religion, we'll use the word religion as a synonym for faith here, and how that leads us to a place of morality and virtue. And so I guess my question, first question is, is are you saying that morality and virtue are the same thing?

And how is morality and virtue rightly related to religion or faith? How does all that link up

[00:40:02] **Dr. Jim Denison:** Yeah, a lot of ways to define those terms. Some use them synonymously, I suppose, that virtues are an expression of morality and vice versa. That would make a little bit of difference, I think, between the two. I typically think of more morality as my acts and virtues as my, I, as my attitudes, as it were, as my character that gets expressed in my moral acts.

A virtuous person acts in moral ways. would be a way to say that. I wouldn't want to be dogmatic about that. There's no way to say that's the only way to see that, but that's just kind of what makes sense to me. And so virtues have to do with who I am and morality as it would be how I, how I live that out, how I act those in those ways.

Well, the founders believed that their democratic experiment depended On a virtuous or moral people. Virtuous people acting in moral ways because it's consensual democracy. At the end of the day, you can't make enough laws for everything, and you can't hire enough police to enforce enough laws to make everybody act in moral ways.

And not to mention the fact that laws can't make you a virtuous person. If I don't want to drive the speed limit, no law can make me want To drive the speed limit. Now, if I know there's a policeman around someplace, they can make me drive the speed limit for that period of time. I think that make me want, as soon as I think there isn't a policeman around and nobody's near me, or I can justify my behavior because I'm late for something or whatever, I'm sure enough off speeding again, and I'm breaking the speed limit laws here because I just think they don't matter to me.

They're not relevant to me somehow. And so I'm somehow breaking that law because I don't think it's relevant in this moment. And so laws can't change the heart. And they really can't enforce behavior, not fully, not the way that they would need to for democracy to function apart from a moral and virtuous people.

That's why in his farewell discourse, George Washington made it very clear that virtue and morality are indispensable pillars of democracy. That's why John Adams said our Constitution is

made only for moral and religious people and wholly unsuited to the governance of any other. Plato, I believe, said that democracy would never work because citizens would inevitably discover that they could cast ballots based on personal preference rather than the collective good.

And democracy would be imperiled. And so there has to be a consensual morality for there to be a consensual governance. At the end of the day, it's the only way a consensual mor democracy really can, by definition function. And the founders understood that.

[00:42:28] **Dr. Mark Turman:** much to think about? And maybe question, you know, we, we talk at different times about how in the founding of our country, some of those founders were. Very committed believers, very committed followers of Christ. Some were not Christian at all, and others fell on a spectrum kind of between those two poles.

But, but there was, and as your article calls out so well, there was a general kind of pervasive awareness of the Judeo Christian ethic. But, but in the sense that democracy requires. a virtuous and moral people. Why is it faith in Christ that's so essential? Wouldn't, wouldn't any faith system do if you could argue that that faith system was creating a shared sense of consensual morality?

What would any other faith system do?

[00:43:22] **Dr. Jim Denison:** It's a great question. Not everyone would. There's some faith systems that really don't lead to what we think of as consensual morality. But most do when you're thinking, for instance, of the five pillars of Islam and what it is to live by Sharia law. A great deal of that could be seen as making a person act in more consensually moral ways.

Certainly the 613 laws of Judaism would move that direction, the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, the Eightfold Noble Path all of that could, on some level, help you to be a a more moral person than you would have been otherwise. I think that's absolutely true. The difference is, Christianity alone, as we said earlier, provides a mechanism, a means by which the heart can be changed, not just the hands. by which the character can be changed, the virtue can be changed, not just the external morality. And so unique to Christianity, as we said before, is this whole idea of a living Lord Jesus, not a, in the past prophet, not a teacher from millennia ago, but someone who's alive right now, who in the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives in believers right now, makes us into people we couldn't be otherwise.

So that as the heart changes, the hands. inevitably will reflect that change in character. That's something unique to Christianity, and I'm not saying that in a way that is intended to be pejorative of other faiths, nor is it really ignorant of other faiths. I've taught world religions on four seminary campuses for a very long time, been a student of world religions a long time, and I can categorically say no other religion offers that possibility of a living God living in the

adherent and living by the power of a Holy Spirit in a way that changes you as a person individually. Religions are our efforts to climb up to God. Christianity is God uniquely climbing down to us. And that's the difference. That's what I would argue makes Christianity a uniquely most empowering means by which democracy can thrive. I don't mean that, again, to be pejorative. I'm certainly not here to try to enforce a theocratic state in the United States.

That's not true Christianity anyway. If a person doesn't choose of their own free will to trust in Christ, not really becoming a Christian anyway. I'm not here to enforce some external theocratic set of so called Christian laws. That isn't Christianity anyway. Christianity doesn't have 613 laws like Judaism.

It doesn't have the five pillars of Islam. It's a personal relationship. With a personal redeemer. But that's the difference is that Christianity will change the heart. And when the heart changes, the head, the hands change and the head changes as a result. Yes. Yes. That's

[00:46:02] **Dr. Mark Turman:** that, that idea seems from history to be very much the mindset of where most, if not all of the founding fathers came from was this idea of that Christianity was unique. And and there's other reasons why that was pervasive, but does that lead us to the place that, you know, even though our country is founded on this idea of religious liberty for everyone, not just to Not just religious freedom for some, or for Christians, but there are those today making the argument that Christianity is privileged in our culture.

There are some that say that it should be privileged in our culture because of the context out of which our country emerged. Even though The Bible, nothing about the Bible says that in this country or any country, it should be privileged more. And we, we would say, I think we would say very vehemently that the only way that faith can be genuine is that it has to be free.

It cannot be forced. But what would, what should we as Christians say to those who say, well, Christianity has always been privileged and, and some who would say it should be privileged against any other religious system in our country?

[00:47:19] **Dr. Jim Denison:** I understand the thinking, and especially in this day and time, when more than at any time in my lifetime, and I think you could argue more than at any time in American history, Christianity is being seen as dangerous to society. We're seeing a growing rhetoric that would say that Christian morals and values are not just outdated, they're not just irrelevant, but they're actually dangerous.

To society. And so as we're seeing more and more of that, you could see, you could, why there'd be a growing sentiment that would say, well, now, wait a minute. Historically, it was the opposite. Historically, we have this privileged position. They would claim in society and Judeo

Christian foundation for the, for the country, and so we'll only be a great country if we get back to that Judeo Christian foundation and some privilege sense for the faith.

I just don't believe that's true. I don't believe, first of all, that that's true historically. Well, I think it is the case, as you said, that the founders didn't have familiarity with other faith systems, really. I mean, they had some concept of Islam, what they called Mohammedanism. I don't know what kind of understanding that they really had of Judaism.

There, that was a limited exposure to Judaism or a Buddhism or of Hinduism. And so what they really, in that day and didn't have the same exposure to the cacophony of world religions that we have today, there was a sense of a consensual Judeo Christian worldview. But they also understood that that worldview requires freedom for all faiths.

That it's endemic to the Christian mindset that you give to Caesar, what a Caesar and to God, what is God's. It's endemic to the Christian mindset that faith is a free expression of a free individual. It's our belief that if you give us an opportunity, if we can defend our faith freely, we'll win. Because we really do believe in the logic of the Christian faith.

We really do believe in the rationality of Scripture. We really do believe in the evidence for the faith that we embrace, and that's why we're supposed to be ready always to present a reason for the hope that's in us. But even the early Christians didn't seek to legislate that in some sort of a privileged sense in their culture.

That's endemic to Christian faith. I would say we're misunderstanding the faith when we want Christianity to be privileged in a secular sense. I would say that's really contradictory to what the Christian faith itself is all about. Then I would second come along and ask, all right, if you want to privilege the Christian faith, which one?

Do you mean Catholic or Protestant? If it's Protestant, do you mean mainline or do you mean the radical reformation? Are we talking about the evangelical? If it's evangelical, is it white evangelical, black evangelical? Is it charismatic or is it not charismatic? Is it dispensational cessationist or is it a charismatic sort of free expression here?

And now we're in a full gospel expression. I mean, we get pretty quickly into a place where we understand Christianity is a category. It's like leaves. Okay. Do you mean oak leaves or pecan leaves? And so it's like cacti, which kind of cactus are you talking about? And so if we want to come along and privilege Christianity, usually what we mean is my Christianity.

Christianity as I experience it, as I understand it. Well, Mormons consider themselves Christians, even though most Christians would say they're not. Do they get included or not? Catholics

certainly think they're believers, although some Protestants think they're not. And pre Vatican II, a lot of Catholics weren't sure Protestants were.

And so are we pre Vatican II Catholic or post Vatican II Catholic? And so, Very quickly, we begin saying, all right, what do you mean here? One of the strongest arguments to illustrate very quickly in my mind against state sponsored school prayers is who gets to choose the prayer. If it's going to be the majority religion, well, in Hawaii, that's going to be a Buddhist prayer.

In Utah, that's going to be a Mormon prayer. In New York, that's likely to be a Catholic prayer. In Texas, that's likely to be a Baptist prayer. And so really once we start trying to pick faith in a generic sense, we have to understand, well, it's a whole lot more complex than that. All that to say, I think we're making a mistake.

I think we're misunderstanding the Christian faith when we try to give it a privileged position. And even if we try to do that, I don't know on a practical level how you actually do that. Third thing to say quickly, what do you mean by privileged? Okay. What are we talking about when we say privileging?

Even if we can decide what sliver of Christianity we're talking about, and even if we somehow defend the idea that we're not violating Christianity by doing it, what do we mean by privileged? Does that mean that Christians get two votes compared to others? Does that mean that that our position on some particular moral issue gets to prevail in some imposed way on society?

Well, take the abortion issue, Mark. I myself believe life begins at conception. I believe every life from conception forward is sacred. Am I talking about fertilization or implantation? If I'm talking about fertilization, well then birth control methods that prevent implantation ought to be illegal. What about those that you can't know?

They can prevent fertilization, they can also prevent implantation. Should they be illegal as well just because they might prevent implantation? Is that what privileging my Christian faith means? What about the life of the mother? I would say yes. There's some Catholic theologians that would say no. What about non viability?

Is ending voluntary termination of pregnancy, a non viable fetus, an act of kindness to the family, or is that a requirement to bring that non viable or even stillborn infant to birth? There's some that would argue that. Which of those positions should be privileged? Once we're going to start privileging the fetus.

Christianity and it goes on and on and on all that to say I think we're Misunderstanding the Christian faith if we're trying to privilege the Christian faith in a secular environment Plus you have to pick the faith and you have to ask what you mean by privileged

[00:52:57] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. And it kind of gets mind boggling when you start putting it in those terms. And it almost makes me wonder, Jim is, well, is there anything cohesive about the Christian faith that we can say? You know, and I was again in a setting not long ago where we, we recited the apostles creed together, which is an ancient expression of Christian faith.

You just like, okay, well, there, there are. There is at least some way of talking about Christianity as a cohesive body of truth that can be identified, even with all of the distinctions that you just called out. My, my question, we just have time maybe for a couple of more, but One of my questions is, is, well, what do you do if you're a Christian or a group of Christians and you find yourself in a community or a country, which seems to be very much the reality that's emerging in front of us, in which there is not an agreement or a consensus of a shared morality that's based on the Bible or based on anything else?

When, when, you know, you called it out a few minutes ago this shared idea of morality and virtue of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, self control. What do Christians do? What do communities of Christians and churches of Christians do when they find themselves in a culture or in an environment where those things.

are no longer called and agreed upon as good. Where does that take us?

[00:54:24] **Dr. Jim Denison:** Takes us back to the first century. Takes us back to where we started. And where we started, for all the challenges early Christians faced, was a pretty remarkable place. By Acts 17. 6, they turned the world upside down, as the Bible says. So the first thing we do is we double down on what we know the Bible does teach.

What we do believe is true. We ask the Holy Spirit to help us live in the light of that biblical truth and express that biblical truth. And then third, we decide we want to be the change we wish to see. And we know that our changed lives. Are going to be the most attractive apologetic for the change possibly in the gospel.

I often quote a gypsy smith statement There were five gospels matthew mark luke john and the christian But most people don't read the first four they see our lives and they see the difference Jesus makes the living lord jesus makes in our lives They're going to be attracted to them the darker the room the more powerful the light the more attractive the light the more Necessary the light and that's where we are The scripture is very clear in John, that the light came into the dark and the dark has never overcome it.

Dark cannot defeat light by definition. So let's be hopeful. Let's be encouraged. Let's understand that in a world like you've described, which is so much our culture, where tolerance is the only value we can agree on unless we think someone's intolerant, in which case we're not even tolerant. of that.

We're intolerant of those who don't agree with tolerance, and we don't see somehow the illogic in all of that. It's like claiming there's no such thing as truth, and I'm sure of it, which is again a truth claim of our culture today. That's how confused we are. But the more confused we are, the more we're in a first century environment, and the more positive and powerful our witness can be if we'll demonstrate the difference Jesus Quick example of that.

When Paul's at Mars Hill in Acts 17, we know about the Epicureans that are up there, and we know about the Stoics that are up there. Well, they're also Platonists. There are Aristotelians in that day. There are mystery cult followers. There are people worshipping Zeus and Apollo and the gods. There are those that are following Judaism.

There is this absolute smorgasbord of ideas. That's why in Athens, they had all these statues to these various gods. And then Paul found one to the unknown God, in case he left one out. They had statues to every God they could think of, but they didn't want to offend anybody. So they gave one to even the unknown God.

And Paul starts right there and starts with what they do believe and leads them to what they need to believe. That's what we can do. Start it with common cause. Start with the, if you're at the well, start with water. If the woman comes for water, start with water. Start with what somebody does believe.

They do believe something in this crazy mixed up confused world. They believe something is true. Start there and work from there to the difference Christ makes in my life so that they can see the difference he might make. Their life and know you're back in the first century. I think the 21st century looks more like the first century than any in between, and that's actually a pretty good place for Christians to be,

[00:57:19] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Is that, Jim, is that a way of saying if I, if I hear you correctly, again, none of us will live perfectly in our faith and in our, in our

[00:57:29] **Dr. Jim Denison:** except my granddaughter,

[00:57:30] **Dr. Mark Turman:** except your

[00:57:31] **Dr. Jim Denison:** except my grandkids. Mm-Hmm.

[00:57:32] **Dr. Mark Turman:** except those two young ladies. But the rest of us, the rest of us are, are not going to live this exactly.

Right. But if I'm hearing you correctly, it's to ask God to help you to live and walk and serve with him in such a way that the credibility of Jesus and the credibility of the good news that Jesus's life is become self validating. Is, is that where you're, is that what you're trying to tell me?

[00:58:00] **Dr. Jim Denison:** think that's exactly right. I think that's exactly right. Go back to the me marriage metaphor very quickly. If I were an an evangelist for marriage. If I were living in a culture where more and more people are giving up on marriage, refusing marriage, not wanting to be married turning the back on marriage, saying marriage is an outdated, irrelevant institution and who wants to live in an institution, you know, all that sort of rhetoric out there, the most powerful apologetic I can give for marriage is to demonstrate the power of my marriage. If people saw the difference Janet and I make by being married to each other, if they saw our love for each other, if they saw the difference Jesus makes in to people who are committed to Christ and therefore to each other, I think there would be an attraction that our lived marriage could offer that no rational apologetic ever could.

I can offer evidence and the evidence can be helpful. I can show how married couples are happier in all sorts of different measurables, how even their sexual lives are happier than is the case for those that are not married, how they live longer lives, how they say they live more satisfied lives, how they're better off financially.

There are all sorts of metrics today by which people are demonstrating the difference marriage makes in your life. So I could use evidential apologetics and rational apologetics, but at the end of the day, It's going to be the actual marriage they seek that I think is going to be the most appealing to them.

And so that's why I double down. I say, Lord, help me to be the best husband I can be. Help me to be the best marriage partner I can be. And by the power of your Holy Spirit. Help our marriage to flourish in such a way that others will be drawn to that marriage. I think that's a metaphor. In fact, scripture uses marriage as a metaphor for our relationship with Christ.

I think that's a way, in fact, maybe the most powerful way in our post Christian culture, how people can see the relevance of Christianity in our world.

[00:59:43] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah, so good. And, and when we do that, and when we do that in communities of other believers then that even strengthens the, the testimony. It strengthens the brightness of our light into the other people around us and becomes the thing, kind of brings us full circle, kind of becomes the thing that not only honors God, but helps our communities flourish.

It helps our country to flourish because. It becomes it becomes the foundation upon which we can learn to live together in peaceable ways, even if there are those among us who don't yet or don't choose to believe we're still creating an environment of flourishing. That can include people and actually include those who don't believe in the Jesus that we're following.



They can still live in a way that they're blessed. It's kind of like the blessings spill over out of those who are walking with Christ. It spills out onto people who don't yet even believe in Him. And that creates an expanded sense of flourishing in many ways. And I think history bears that out. And yes, there, and we could, if we had longer, we could talk about how yes, there have been lots of bad things done in the name of Jesus and done in the name of the Bible.

Those things do not cancel out the overwhelming amount of blessing and flourishing that Christianity has brought to the world for centuries, for millennia. And all over the world. And we, we, we would, maybe we'll chase that out in a future conversation somewhere, but let's land the plane plane for today, Jim, thank you for the conversation and thank you to our audience for listening to us.

What does it mean? How can we be. Christian in our world today. What does it mean to be Christian in the culture today? Having the necessity of faith in Christ clearly in view is something that we need to hold on to and be equipped with as we make our way through the world in all the ways that we make it, whether it's in our marriages, in our parenting, our self, our, our serving, even in our suffering.

That all of those are places where we can demonstrate the presence of Christ in our life and live differently and make choices that will make the world better for everyone. Want to thank our audience for listening. If you liked our conversation today, please rate, review us and recommend us to your family and friends.

We want to thank you as well for your prayers as also, and also for your ongoing support. Of our ministry because of you were able to provide biblical resources that are relevant for today That are accessible because they are digital and because they are offered freely and your donations make that possible We're grateful for your support and your help in that way And we'll see you next time as we continue continue this series being christian in today's world.

We'll talk to you next time.