

Week 8
2/13/12

James: Thank all of you so much. And thank you for giving us an opportunity to share *LIFE Today* every day. I do hope you encourage your friends to watch because it can be a totally transforming experience as it is literally for thousands of people every day. I'm James Robison. Betty and I are welcoming Frank Turek to *LIFE Today*. He along with Geisler, Norman Geisler, wrote a book titled *I Don't Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist*. I have heard Frank speak. He is truly gifted to communicate truth, and he has written it and it is awesome. Would you welcome Frank Turek to *LIFE Today*? Frank, good to see you.

Frank: Thank you, James. Thank you, Betty.

James: Let me ask you how you targeted this particular subject, *I Don't Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist*. What inspired you to take off in this direction? Because I really do think it takes far more -- a lack of reason, a lack of thoughtfulness. I happen to be an outdoorsman and I happen to be a fisherman, and I know how to catch fish, I actually catch them.

[Laughter]

If you have fishing tackle or if you have a fishing reel, whenever you get rods and reels and tackle together -- like I would normally carry five or six rods and they have a lure on them. Somebody says, "Why do you have all those rods for?" I say, "Well, look in this tackle box. There are a lot of lures in there that don't have a rod on them yet." So people would say, "What is it?" Well, I want to change lures fast enough when I'm looking for bass. But if you get a bunch of rods together with those lures or you drop your tackle box and all those lures get all tangled up, every time it happens, I always say, "Isn't evolution wonderful?"

[Laughter]

It is an absolute fact that a mess does not straighten out by banging it around and dropping it. So it really takes a tremendous amount of faith to think that this creation sort of plopped together or evolved through a process without any intelligent designer or creator involved. It blows my mind.

Frank: In fact, James, the first question I ask atheists is, "If there is no god, why does the universe exist?" Because all the evidence shows now that space, time, and matter had a beginning out of nothing. Once there was no space, once there was no time, once there was no matter, and in the entire space time continuum came into existence. Now if that's true then the cause must be outside of space, time, and matter. In other words, the cause must be spaceless, timeless, and immaterial; also must be personal in order to create a universe out of nothing, in order to make a decision to create, got to be powerful to create out of nothing.

Also, it's got to be intelligent, this being, because the universe is highly designed, as you just pointed out, and there is fine tuning with the universe. So when you add all these attributes up, you get right back to what we call a theistic God. When I ask atheists that question they come up with all sorts convoluted answers. They try to avoid the topic. It takes a lot more faith to be an atheist than it does just to be a Christian.

James: You break out several points. You really -- as a matter of fact, if you want to know how to talk to people and many Christians, they really don't even know why they believe what they believe. "It's just what I believe." But it's really good to be able to explain in a reasonable fashion with some degree of understanding, which is really the essence of wisdom so that you have some understanding, some ability to defend or describe what you believe. This is an incredible text for that. This would be a wonderful seminary or seminar for you to have at your church. It would be a great study and I highly recommend it. You take several points. You touched on four of them when we were talking before we came out here. I would like you to flush that out a little bit for our viewers.

Frank: Sure. There are only four questions you need to answer in the affirmative to say that Christianity is true. The first question is, does truth exist? Because if it is just true for you but not for me then the Bible can't be true. Of course, if there is no truth then any book written by an atheist can't be true either. So when people say "there is no truth" or "all truth is relative" or "it's true for you but not for me" or these types of claims, you can point out that they're self-contradictory. For example, if somebody says, "There is no truth" I always ask them, "Is that true?"

[Laughter]

"Is it true that there is no truth? Because if it's true that there is no truth the claim there is

no truth can't be true, but it claims to be true."

[Laughter]

You see? In other words, relativism is self-defeating; it violates itself. Even people, James, and I know people out there in TV land and here in our studio audience have heard, "You ought not judge." Right? Well, that claim is itself a judgment. Jesus didn't say, "Don't judge." He said, "Judge not lest you be judged. By the same standard you judge others you'll be judged by that standard. So before you try and take the speck out of your brother's eye, take the log out of your own eye first, then you'll be better able to help your brother." So it is not a command not to judge, it is a command on how to judge.

Atheists make judgments, Christians make judgments, Buddhists make judgments, everybody makes judgments. The only question is are your judgments true? So the first question is, does truth exist? And of course, the answer is question. It is self-defeating to say "no."

The second question is does God exist? And in the book we give three arguments for a spaceless, timeless, immaterial, powerful, moral, personal intelligent creator. Two arguments are scientific; one argument is more philosophical in nature but you arrive at this theistic god, a god consistent with the Bible by these arguments. Now these arguments are taught in the Bible but you don't need the Bible to know them.

The third question after truth and God is are miracles possible? Because you always hear people say, "Miracles don't occur." "Miracles have been disproven." And my question to people is, "What's the greatest miracle in the Bible?" And usually people will say, "Well, it's the resurrection." To which I respond, "No. The resurrection is an easy miracle compared to the greatest miracle. The greatest miracle in the Bible is the first verse. 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.' If that verse is true, every other verse is believable." Well, the interesting thing is we now have scientific evidence that it appears that the first verse is true; that the entire space time continuum leapt into existence. So if Genesis 1:1 is true and it appears like it is, maybe the other verses are true. Then you get to question number four.

By the way, what I just said there was that this anti-supernatural bias you hear about is false. When they say, "Miracles don't occur." When people say, "I don't believe in miracles." I'd say, "Look around, you're living in one. This universe is a miracle. It came into existence out of nothing."

Now the fourth question, after truth, God, and miracles is, is the New Testament historically reliable? Is it true basically?

I think you can give several good arguments to show that those individuals who wrote the New Testament down wrote down early testimony, they filled it with eyewitness testimony. There was embarrassing testimony in there which we can talk about here in a minute. There was excruciating testimony, you're getting the drift, this is an alliteration thing here. All of these factors show that the individuals who wrote down the New Testament were telling the truth very early. They went to their deaths for saying it was true and they could have saved themselves for saying it was false, if they said it was false. They put in embarrassing details in there that they wouldn't have made up. If that's true, then I think the entire Old Testament is true as well because Jesus who is in the New Testament and claims to be God, if he proves to be God by rising from the dead as the documents say he did and the eyewitnesses say he did, then whatever he teaches is true, Jesus taught the entire Old Testament as the word of God so if the New Testament is reliable, you get the Old Testament thrown in.

Now that's the book in like three minutes.

[Laughter]

That's the whole thing: *I Don't Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist*.

James: Are you curious?

Betty: Wow!

James: Are you no longer an atheist?

Betty: Why do you think some people come to the idea or the conclusion within themselves that there is no god? What causes them to get to that place?

Frank: That's a great question, Betty. A lot of times it's Christians, we're the problem. We get in the way of people who are trying to seek God. We don't carry his coat well -- we don't wear his coat well. We're not good ambassadors. That's one reason.

I think another reason too is that people suppress the truth in unrighteousness as Paul says in Romans 1 because they want to go their own way. It's been put this way, either the

Bible will inform your view of morality or your morality will inform your view of the Bible. There are a lot of people that don't want there to be a god.

In fact, I've been on several college campuses where I do most of my work and we go to college campuses and in a couple of recent campuses I had atheists during the Q and A who were very antagonistic and so I stopped and I said, "Hey, before I try and answer your question because you don't appear to be answering or listening to the answer I'm trying to give you, do you mind if I ask you a serious question? Will you give me a brutally honest answer?"

And the atheist said, "Well, sure. Go ahead."

I said, "If Christianity were true would you become a Christian?"

And the atheist immediately yelled, "No!"

I said, "No? You claim to be an atheist, a beacon of reason"

-- not you, Betty --

"-- but you claim to be an atheist, a beacon of reason, and you're claiming that if I show you that Christianity is true you wouldn't believe it? How is that reasonable?" That's not reasonable.

The problem for them is not here, it is here. They don't want it to be true. We all know people out there who don't want Christianity to be true because they don't want to think they want to live a certain way. They don't want to give up certain things they're doing. They don't want to put their hair in a bun and go to Africa and play a piano and play hymns; they have this false idea of what Christianity is. I've got to be a missionary and go to Africa! No, you don't necessarily have to do that, you can give money to *LIFE Today* and they'll go there and dig those wells and help them. You don't have to go.

[Applause]

So people have the wrong idea of what Christianity is and so they want to go the right way. In other words, a lot of times it is volitional.

But let me point out one other thing. I got an e-mail not long ago from a father who was a United States Marine so I knew he was no sissy. But he was not writing me as a tough guy, he was writing me as a distraught father. Because he said, "My daughter was the

number one student in her high school. She was the leader of the youth group. She won several Christian scholarships to go off to college. So we sent her to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She was ready to win the campus for Christ." And it needs to be won for Christ. He said, "I got a phone call from her six weeks later." And he said, "Her words devastated me."

She said, "Dad, I don't believe in God anymore."

He said, "You don't believe in God anymore? What do you mean?" He drove four hours that weekend from Hickory, North Carolina to Chapel Hill.

He said, "I sat down with her and I got nowhere."

I said, "Why the change of heart? What happened here?"

She said, "Well, I have a New Testament professor now who has said that we can't even trust what the New Testament documents said. And you know he went to an Ivy League school so he must know the truth." Now she is an atheist.

Every objection that she brought up would have been easily answered by this book or any basic book in apologetics. What we fail to do as a church is we fail to adhere to the greatest commandment: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. We fail to do what Peter said, "Always be ready to give an answer for the hope that we have." Or Paul said to demolish arguments and take every thought captive to Christ. So now this poor guy, he doesn't know what to do.

He said, "What I can do?"

I said -- he actually told me, "I wanted to send her to a Christian worldview camp like Summit out in Colorado," -- which is a phenomenal Christian worldview camp, I teach there on occasion. "I wanted to get her some apologetic training," he said, "but I never got around to it." Now she went off to college and now she is an atheist.

But she is not alone; 75% of kids who were brought up in the church, across denominations, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, everywhere in-between walk away from the church once they leave the home. And one of the major reasons is intellectually they don't know why Christianity is true because we haven't told them why it's true. We simply say, "Go believe."

James: Josh McDowell, who had a powerful affect, profound affect on you was here not

too long ago and he said he believed that that was one of the greatest problems in the Christian community. Of course, it would be coupled with Dallas Willard's emphasis on The Divine Conspiracy, on really being disciples of Christ, and not just people who are part of a religious organization. Josh said, "People do not know how to defend what they believe or explain what they believe." It's as though they've experienced some kind of an association or affiliation without a relationship. I really do believe that -- I honestly think there are a lot of people who claim to be atheists because they've seen people affiliating with some religious group but don't really seem to define life or demonstrate it in fullness.

I have said many times and I believe this, if you've ever met someone or been around someone for an extended period of time who are really in love with Jesus, who really know Jesus, it is an unforgettable experience, it is an high impact experience. And yet we have churches filled with people, and when you're around them you don't see that. I'm not being critical; it breaks my heart but so many people can be in church and not know Christ and not demonstrate what that relationship does. I think this is one reason people are comfortable denying, I think it is one reason some people when they leave church they leave God because they only knew about people who had said they knew God but didn't really seem to know God in a way that it was transforming. And this is the reason I think that people are turning away from God is because of what they've seen in the lives of people who say they know God but it's likely they don't.

Frank: Well, a lot of times the people who say they know God don't really know God because they've doubted God their whole life anyway. It's very hard for the heart to rejoice in what the mind doubts. So that's one of the reasons we wrote the book; not just to go after the skeptic and give the skeptic reasons why he or she ought to believe, but to encourage Christians that what they actually believe is true. And we try and do it in a very lighthearted way in many cases.

James: One of the things you talk about is if the New Testament were not written by God, and not true, the people who were contributing to it, who writing and giving their own stories certainly never would have said all the embarrassing things said about us.

Frank: Oh, there's so many embarrassing things in there, James. It is funny; Peter is called "Satan" by Jesus. Do you think Mark who was making that up said, "Hey Pete, I've got a really good story here. I'm going to have the Lord call you 'Satan.' What do you say?" What do you think Peter would have said? "Have him call you Satan! I'm the leader here."

James: He wouldn't have said, "Put that down," if God hadn't told him to put it down because it's the truth.

Frank: And then Peter denies Christ three times. And then all the disciples run away while the women are the brave ones. Now who wrote the Bible down? Men!

Now what man is going to say that he was hiding for fear of the Jews while the women went down and discovered the empty tomb? Would any man in here say that? Nobody would.

If I was making it up I would say, "Look, we marched right down there and overpowered that elite Roman guard." Yeah, that sounds good. "Then we saw Jesus who congratulated us on our great faith. And then we went and comforted the trembling women." No man would say that he was hiding while the women were the brave ones. And nobody would admit that the women were the first witnesses because in that culture, a woman's testimony was not considered on par of that of a man. So there are so many embarrassing details that they wouldn't have made up.

Look, Jesus' blood line has two prostitutes in it. You think they made that up? No, this is a true account.

One woman, after a seminar once said to me, "I know why Jesus appeared to the women first."

I said, "Why?"

She said, "Because he wanted to get the story out."

[Laughter]

I said, "That's a really good point!" Because you know men don't say much when they don't come home from work; do they?

[Laughter]

James: Do you appreciate Frank and what he shares? Let me just say this, if you really want to have answers to a lot of the questions, not just that an atheist may be throwing out or the accusations or assumptions that they present, that they present that is so foolish but

they present it with such confidence and such depth of conviction. If you really want to see truth, this is a fantastic book. As a matter of fact, Betty, I want to send it to all of our viewers who actually would do what you just referenced a while ago. Betty lived her life really thinking when she was a young girl, in her Baptist church, that God was some day going to send her to the mission field in Africa.

[Laughter]

Frank: Put a bun in your hair and play the piano?

James: She didn't have the bun but she certainly did go. And married a preacher, which she thought that would never happen. I thought I'd never be a preacher. God has a wonderful sense of humor.

But if you really, really want to bless someone, we want to send you the book. But we're going to ask you to do something. I want you to do what he alluded to. You don't have to go to the mission field, you can have the joy of sending people to the mission field who are literally called by God, and they really don't feel like they're sacrificing. They feel like they're on the greatest journey and the greatest pilgrimage and the greatest adventure you could go on.

You know what the missionaries have said to us over and over? Because we've asked them, "Do you want us to stay here with you?" I think they like us; I don't think they said, "No. Go back home." They said, "We don't want you to stay here, we want you to go back home, tell the people what we're doing so we can stay here, and so we can be effective."

The missionaries have said when they hear me comment, the missionaries we've met on the foreign field are the greatest Christians we've ever met and every one of them said, "No, no. The people who enable us to be here, they're the greatest Christians." Well, I have come to agree. Those of you who see the need and say, "I can be a part sharing the heart of God extending his hands," I want you to watch. I want you to consider helping us give water to the desperately thirsty.

On the mission field:

Translator: I have 12 children here from age 6 to 14. Sometimes the children say, "Teacher, we are thirsty." So I go to the river to bring the water for the children. Children are often sick with diarrhea and fever. I think the river is contaminated and becomes worse because of the waste from the cows. Our only option is to go to the river because

we cannot afford to buy water. My dream is that we can have clean water and no one will get sick.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Betty, when you see those beautiful little children -- that little girl a moment ago, beautiful eyes and turn that little cup up -- precious! All the little children are precious in the eyes of God. And then you hear a teacher, of course Jesus was a great teacher, you hear a teacher pleading the cause and the need of those children, what do you sense in your heart because I know many viewers would certainly identify.

Betty: Well, the fact is the teacher realizes and knows that every time she offers a cup of water to any one of those children, she is opening their little bodies up to possible diseases from that water, the contamination of it. That must break her heart because she is there because she cares about the children, teaching them and loving on them. So that really touches me, James, that there, as an individual, her heart goes out to those children.

And I feel that when I watch. I think, why did you give that water to them? That's all they have. We have to have water for our bodies so regardless of what she knows that that can do to her precious little students there, she has to give it to them.

James: Can you imagine heartache when you hear a child say, "I'm thirsty" and then you know you need to give them water but you also know I'm giving them something that likely will make them sick and I've seen it actually take their lives.

The thing is that that teacher is hoping and expressing her heart's desire, but you and I together, you the viewers, joining with us and the missionaries that see the need, we can be an answer to that appeal for those children. We can put a freshwater well right there. Betty, we've had so many people over the years tell us this is the greatest joy, the experience. This year because we feel the economic pinch, it's felt around the world. I don't care if you're in Australia, the United Kingdom, or Canada or here in the U.S., we've felt it.

We've had a number of people say, "You know we're not going to be able to do what we normally do." And boy, it breaks my heart but I think about that prayer request, that need, that heart cry of that teacher and so many missionaries and so many children. And you may have heard me recently say, "I pray God will raise up a hundred people in a single day, 'I can give a well.'" That would really be a miracle! But that miracle can only happen one at a time. We say, "I can do it." "We can do it as a couple." Prayer can be

answered if every person watching, yes you, would just do something to provide the water.

Let me give you an example. \$48 -- the wells are \$4800 -- that's what it cost. That's the average cost; some a little more, some a little less but that's the average; \$48, 10 people water the rest of their life. That's how it breaks out; \$144, 30 people. Could you give that \$144? Could you give the \$48 and pray others will join until we have another well? That's how we get most wells.

But I'm praying that God will touch your heart and you'll say, "Okay, I will do my part sharing the heart of God, being an answer to that teacher's plea." We want to send you a book, *Believe This Not That*. It will bless you. We want to send you the Water for Life coffee mugs. It will remind you to pray for people who need water. And we would love to send you the "Lion and the Lamb" bronze, it's a collectible. You can tell your friends, "I helped give water to the desperately thirsty." And it oftentimes inspires others to say, "How can I help?" And many times they do.

Would you go to the phone right now? Take your bankcard and use it like a check. Would you do that please? Or write a check and make it to *LIFE* but call us and tell us you're mailing it. You can if you like go online to *LifeToday.org* and make your gift. Thank you for doing that! Please do it now and may God direct you in what you give.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: Every day millions of children are forced to make a dreadful choice, drink filthy, polluted water filled with deadly disease or die from thirst. No child should ever be faced with this decision.

The good news is that there is a solution -- Mission: Water for Life is one of the most exciting and viable demonstrations of God's love in the world today. The suffering can end because clean water changes everything!

With your gift today we will begin drilling 350 new water wells for remote villages in 12 different nations. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five people! A gift of \$48 will help provide for 10 people! \$72 will reach 15 people. And \$144 will help provide fresh clean disease-free water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift be sure to request, *Believe This Not That* a brand-new topical Bible promise book that will encourage you in every area of life.

With your gift of \$100 or more you may request our newly released *Water for Life* mug set, a daily reminder of the clean water you make possible to those who thirst.

Also please prayerfully consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And be sure to request the 2012 commemorative bronze sculpture, "The Lamb and the Lion."

Please call, write, or make your secure gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio:

James: We are going to send you *Believe This Not That*. What an incredible book!

And today, if you'll respond for any gift, we will gladly send *I Don't Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist*. It is a tremendous book. If you've enjoyed Frank Turek today you're going to enjoy what he shared in this book. It will be very, very meaningful. It will be something after you read it, you'll not only express what you've learned but you'll want to pass the book on.

Would you join us in saying thanks to Frank Turek?

Frank, thank you so much!

Frank's actually going to be back with us later in the week. He's going to join our son, Randy Robison, and I hope you won't miss it.

Encourage your friends to watch *LIFE Today*. And again, thank you so much for your help!

Announcer: Faith, family, and freedom are under attack. James Robison and Jay Richards encourage a divided America to stand together before it's too late. *Indivisible* -- coming soon to online and retail bookstores.

Announcer: Tomorrow, James and Betty's son, Randy reveals how God wants us all to be happy.

>> And yet, we in America who have so much, so many people are unhappy.