

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

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

## **Progressive Powerbrokers & Corruption in the American Church with Megan Basham**

(July 30, 2024)

### **FRANK:**

Many years ago in 1929, there was a New Testament scholar by the name of Gresham Machen, and he was teaching at Princeton and his college there, Princeton had gone so liberal that he decided to start a new seminary called Westminster Theological Seminary. And he wrote a book in 1923 just prior to this called 'Christianity and Liberalism', in which he said this. "The type of religion which shrinks from controversial matters will never stand amid the shocks of life.

In the sphere of religion, as in other spheres, the things about which men are agreed are apt to be the things that are least worth holding. The really important things are the things about which men will fight." That is a quote that my friend Megan Basham starts off her book with called 'Shepherds for Sale: How Evangelical Leaders Traded the Truth for a Leftist Agenda.'

Now, some of you listening to this and maybe listening to our previous podcast meant, wow, you guys were really aggressive. You named names and went after people. That's not very Christ like. Nonsense, it's not very Christ like. Start reading. Go read Matthew 23 and see how Jesus went after the false teachers of His day. He called them hypocrites, and fools, and blind guides.

Read how Paul named at least five or six false teachers in his writings. He even went after the Apostle Peter at one point who wasn't living up to the truth. He had to dope slap the first pope, apparently. Why? Because that's what we're supposed to do. If we're going to be shepherds and we're going to take care of the sheep, we have to call out the wolves. And that's what Megan does so well in her book 'Shepherds for Sale.' We have to fight about things that are really worth fighting for.

So, that's what we're doing. And friends, if you're just listening to this podcast, you really got to go back and listen to the one we did on Friday with Megan because we're just going to pick up where we left off. Megan, we started talking, or at least I mentioned it, that there is a

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curriculum that leftist money has funded to put in evangelical churches to get evangelicals to vote left. What is this particular curriculum?

**MEGAN:**

Yeah. So, in the book, you know, I start way back in really the 1930's and 40's to show that this has always been going on with Marxists and communists. And then I bring you up to the early 20's to show, 2000's, to show how it got started. And then up to today. It's going on right this second, right now. The most immediate thing that's happening is this curriculum called The After Party. It's a political Bible study that was developed by Russell Moore.

So, a well-known never Trumper, David French, well known also as a never Trumper and for his constant attacks on evangelicals, and Democrat Duke Divinity professor Curtis Chang. And so, this curriculum is supposedly, the way it's packaged is it's going to teach you how to be less politically polarized as an evangelical during this election season. But in fact, when I started to dig into it, what I found was, no Christians funded this.

It was, in fact, funded by hard left secular foundations, Rockefeller philanthropy advisors. Which if you're not familiar with them, they support things like protecting gender transitions for youth. They promise to protect what they would call reproductive rights, which is, of course, abortion. And the Hewlett foundation, which, if you're not familiar with them, are the second largest funders of Planned Parenthood in the country.

So, that's who bankrolled this curriculum. And so, it is being promoted once again by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. Back in August, they sent an email to their 185 member schools and said, hey, be sure to bring this on your campuses. You should use it in your student ministries, in your pastoral classes.

And so, what this curriculum does is it teaches that politics are extremely complex, and we don't always know how we should vote on particular issues. Most of it is Pablum, Frank. There's no really deep exploration of Scripture and how we should apply it to our civic life. What we do with passages like that in Jeremiah about working for the good of the cities we live in, nothing like that.

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What it really just does is say politics are super complex. And in particular, there was this scene that stood out to me so crystal clear as they're making this argument. David French is saying, if someone tells you that they know how you should vote on a particular issue, you should run from that person. And as he's saying that, you see a pro-life protester on the screen holding up a pro-life sign.

Now, there is one episode in the curriculum, though, that explores an issue that they do not feel is complex, and that is systemic racism. And that particular episode says that Christians have an obligation to vote to address systemic racism. So, while it claims to be nonpartisan, if issues like abortion are so complex, we don't know how we should vote on them, but we must vote to address systemic racism as Christians. Well, who does it seem like they want you to vote for there?

**FRANK:**

Yeah. Isn't it interesting that these people, again, are flipping the complex issues with the clear issues: life, marriage, sexuality, taking care of children, not mutilating them. These are clear teachings of Scripture and yet they want to make those the complex, nuanced issues. And there are pet projects that we can debate over. If you don't agree with them, you're not a real Christian. If you don't vote just the way we tell you, you're not a real Christian.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is actually a front for atheistic, leftist organizations to try and get you to be less effective, to be not salt and light, to not, as Jesus said, they want us to neglect the more important matters of the law. Jesus scolded the politicians of his day, the Pharisees, for neglecting the more important, easy for me to say. The more important matters of the law. But this group wants you to neglect the more important matters of the law and just go along with whatever they say politically. And it's called After Party? Is that the curriculum?

**MEGAN:**

Yeah, yeah. And you know, it was so fascinating about it. It's called The After Party. What was so fascinating about it was that when Rockefeller philanthropy advisors announced it, they said it will be unrolling in the battleground state of Ohio. They use the word battleground.

Rockefeller at least was very clear about the purpose of this curriculum and why it was rolling out to Christian campuses and really large Christian churches.

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I just saw, I think it was Central Christian in Phoenix that had a big conference with Russell Moore and Curtis Chang to talk about the issues in this curriculum. So, you could very well see it at your church. Maybe your pastor doesn't really understand what it is and with the best of intentions thinks, okay, maybe this is something we can use.

But something that Curtis Chang, one of the authors of the curriculum, said when he was presenting it at a large church conference, and this was fascinating to me, was that you as the pastor can use this in this contentious political year and we'll take the hits. If your people complain about what's in the curriculum, you can just say, oh, I didn't quite realize.

You know, I don't necessarily agree with that. But go ahead and use our curriculum and we will take the hits and the criticism. Just get it into your church. And I thought, is that what shepherds do? Shepherds try to avoid responsibility for shepherding their sheep. It was just such a shocking statement.

**FRANK:**

Do you see? If leftists can't convince you from the outside, they'll infiltrate your ranks and try and corrupt you from the inside. And that's what's going on. That's where the money's coming from. That's where the intent comes from. And it's all exposed in the book 'Shepherds for Sale' by my guest, Megan Basham. Now, the next name I'm going to bring up, I hate to bring up because this guy is a friend of mine. He's been a friend of mine for many years, but he's wrong. I had a six hour conversation with him about a year ago on this issue. The issue is homosexuality and same-sex marriage. And his name is Andy Stanley. Go.

**MEGAN:**

Yeah, I think a lot of people probably share your feelings. They've been dismayed at the least, at the trajectory Andy has taken on these issues. And it's not just that Andy has personally shifted his own views. We have to look at what North Point has been participating in. And one of the things that North Point has done is fund a curriculum called Embracing the Journey. And it is a fully LGBTQ affirming curriculum. It basically presents homosexuality as not a sin, despite what we are told in Scripture.

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It tells us that practicing homosexuals can be strong Christians themselves, that people who are living transgender lifestyles can be very strong Christians themselves. And this is an issue on which we can just agree to disagree. And so, this curriculum, Embracing the Journey, the authors of it have been partnering with another secular, left funded group called The Reformation Project to put on conferences and to put on programs.

And this was one of the most disturbing things I saw when I was researching the book. One of the programs that this reformation project puts on and that the Embracing the Journey authors who are members of Andy Stanley's church and were encouraged to create this curriculum by North Point staff. And North Point, they said, has financially funded this curriculum.

Well, one of the things that this partner of theirs puts on is called a Pastors in Process program. And the Pastors in Process program, they tell you, is a confidential program to train gay and transgender affirming pastors to slowly, and quietly, and carefully move their Bible believing, doctrinally sound congregations in the direction of becoming affirming over time. And when I saw that, it was so very similar to some of the things that we've heard from Andy.

I'm assuming you've probably seen those clips, Frank, where, you know, he says, yeah, that it's not the responsibility of the pastor to be a prophet. It's just to lead and nudge your congregation in the direction you want them to go. And that was very similar language to this Pastors in Process program. And, of course, we've seen Andy having these conferences with openly "gay married couples." And so, while he has been very slippery in his language about where he stands, I would say the activities that North Point is participating in and the conferences that Andy is allowing to have happen at North Point really erase any question.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. As I say, I had a six hour conversation with him last June, June of '23, and it was on the record. He said, you can share this with anybody. And it was me and Sam Albury who went and talked to him about all these issues. And at one point, I turned to him, and I said, because he was saying that, well, if somebody's in a same-sex marriage in my church, that's better than not being in it. And so, I said to him, are you telling me that it would be better to be in a sinful relationship than do nothing? You know, be out of a sinful relationship? And he said, well, I see your point, but I don't agree.

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**MEGAN:**

Well, he disagrees with Scripture. So, I mean, we're told that that is a mark, that you are not regenerated and you're not going to heaven, then if you're continuing in these sins. So, I don't really know how to put it any more starkly than that's condemning people to Hell.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. Yeah. And apparently, he thinks he knows better than God on this issue, and it may all be well intended, but as the old saying goes, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. I think he truly cares about people who are struggling with this issue. But instead of saying, you need to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Christ, it's well, you can follow Christ and not deny yourself.

You, you know, you can be in a same-sex relationship because it's legal now, you know? So, it's okay. And he's been going down this road for many years. You will never hear Andy Stanley preach on homosexuality. He had to do it once recently after it was exposed in his church that this was going on. But you will never hear him preach from Romans 1, or 1 Corinthians 6, or any. He won't do it. He'll admit it. He doesn't do it.

**MEGAN:**

Well, and, you know, this curriculum, it's gone out from, you know, just North Point. It's now being used in a number of churches. One of them was, since we talked about Rick Warren earlier, was Saddleback. And it could still be being used at Saddleback for all I know. Because when I reached out to Saddleback about it, all of the web pages talking about the groups that were meeting, using this Embracing the Journey curriculum disappeared.

So, they have, I know the pastor, the counseling pastor on staff at Saddleback, who was also participating in these reformation project conferences is still there, but you also don't see him on any websites anymore. And his LinkedIn page even disappeared when I asked Saddleback what was going on with his pastor and these Embracing the Journey groups that were meeting at Saddleback.

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So, all of that disappeared. Nobody answered. And I think you could say the last time I saw Rick Warren asked about this issue, and I transcribe this conversation in the book because it was such a fascinating interview. A reporter for a British Christian magazine tried to get Rick Warren to be clear on whether homosexuality is a sin and that churches who want to affirm it, is it justified for them to divide over that issue?

And he really worked really hard to not answer her question, kind of using euphemisms like, well, it's not God's best. And this is great dogged reporter. And eventually she did get him to admit that, yes, it is a sin and yes, churches should be able to divide over it. But she had to fight really hard. I mean, she came and asked him, I think three, four times before she could get a clear answer.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, I read that this morning. In fact, he apparently, and Rick is another friend of mine, I haven't talked to him in years, but I've had a relationship with him. Warren, he's since retired from Saddleback. But Rick tried to divert the conversation to pedophilia, if I remember correctly.

**MEGAN:**

That's correct, yes. And the reporters, that's not what we're talking about here.

**FRANK:**

I'm not talking about pedophilia. And it's tragic, Megan, because both these men, Rick Warren and Andy Stanley, are just tremendous communicators.

**MEGAN:**

Very much. And I think that's part of why, you know, in Rick Warren's case, that that is why groups like the Council for Foreign Relations and the World Economic Forum, that's part of why they have brought him into the fold and have wanted to make him part of their program is because they recognize that influence.

**FRANK:**

Yeah, in the last podcast, we started talking about the World Economic Forum and how even

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some of these evangelicals are getting, are being funded by groups that want to basically control population and kill half the population. I mean, they're like Thanos in the Avengers series. It's what they are. In the interest of saving people, why don't we kill half the population? [laughter] It's, it's crazy. My son and I actually talk about that in the book 'Hollywood Heroes: How Your Favorite Movies Reveal God.' There are Thanos' in the real world, ladies and gentlemen. They're called the World Economic Forum.

**MEGAN:**

And the bizarre thing is to have representatives from the World Economic Forum showing up at seminaries, you know, trusted seminaries that people believe are conservative, and they send their kids there or they decide to go. You know, you want to get a seminary training, so you decide to go there, and the next thing you know, you have someone like the climate change activist Kathryn Hayhoe, who has put on big conferences with Leonardo DiCaprio and Obama coming to speak to the seminary students about--

**FRANK:**

Did they take their private jet Megan? Did they take their private jet?

**MEGAN:**

No, I did not get that information. That's a good question.

**FRANK:**

Leonardo DiCaprio flies around the world in his private jet talking about there's too much carbon out there.

**MEGAN:**

But, I mean, that was just so shocking to me to see this woman I recognized from the World Economic Forum giving lectures to the students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. You don't expect to see that. And, you know, maybe you can make an argument. I don't think she should be there at all, but maybe you can make an argument. Okay, they're going to present both sides of this issue. They're going to have a wide discussion of applying Christian principles to the public sphere. But that's not what Southeastern Seminary did.

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They brought in these people, these activists, who are only on one side of the issue, and they didn't bring in people from, like, say, the Cornwall Alliance, who has NASA scientists, NASA climate scientists, who will tell you that, no. Humans are not having a massive impact on the climate, and it's not an existential crisis. So, they're only presenting one view.

**FRANK:**

By the way, even if humans did have an impact, even using their own models, the climate change activists will tell you that even if the United States reduced their carbon footprint to zero, it would have virtually no impact on global temperatures. It's the third world countries that are putting all this stuff out. And why are they putting it out? Because if they don't, their people are going to starve. You know?

**MEGAN:**

Absolutely.

**FRANK:**

People think, oh, yeah, we can just. We can just... And Kamala Harris, she wants to get rid of fossil fuels in the United States and all this. It's crazy because they're not thinking about life as a system. They think that they can take away all fossil fuels and it won't impact people's ability to make a living or to put food on the table. And that's just not true. It's just crazy.

**MEGAN:**

I wrote about that a little bit in my book about how this has impacted countries like Sri Lanka and Ghana, that as they have tried to come out of their third world past by tapping into their oil reserves and finding offshore oil deposits and how this really allowed them to start to flourish and their people to rise out of poverty, The World Bank rushed in there and made deals with these small country's leaders, and suddenly they were shoved right back into their third world past. And there had been riots and people starving in the streets. I mean, they chased the president of Sri Lanka out of the country with riots because people were starving because of these climate policies.

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**FRANK:**

Wow. Hey, I want to. We've just got just a few minutes left. I want to kind of end on an up note here, because one of the people we've been talking about is Tim Keller. And you and I both like Tim Keller's sermons, but we were not fond of his application to political issues. But he does get something right in here that you quote. This is on page 217. This is on the sexual issues. Here's what Keller said in his book, 'Hope in Times of Fear.'

"The Christian sex ethic was understood by the Apostles to be a non-negotiable part of orthodoxy, one of the core beliefs of Christianity. What Christians taught and practiced about sexuality, was as much a necessary implication of the Gospel and the resurrection as were care for the poor and the equality of the races. This makes it impossible to argue, as many try to do, that what the Bible says about caring for the poor is right, but what it says about sex is outmoded and should be discarded." Well, at least Keller got that right.

**MEGAN:**

Yeah, that was a great statement. And that's the Tim Keller that I love. And, you know, because he's not with us, I can certainly hope that if his life had been extended, that maybe Tim would have started to see a few of these issues differently. But, you know, we can call people to account, we can show where they were in error and at the same time believe that I'm going to see them in heaven.

**FRANK:**

Sure. Yeah. And I think Keller understood the Gospel very well. But when it came to political issues, he seemed to live maybe 40 years ago when there wasn't maybe that much of a difference between the platforms of the two parties. But as we look at politics now, it's so divided. The Democrat platform, as John MacArthur said, and you quote John MacArthur in this book. Again, friends, the book is called 'Shepherds for Sale: How Evangelical Leaders Traded the Truth for a Leftist Agenda.' John MacArthur basically said that the Democrat platform is basically the sin list from Romans, chapter one.

**MEGAN:**

Yeah. I mean, it's hard to get away from that.

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**FRANK:**

Not that the Republican platform is perfect, but.

**MEGAN:**

Right. And that's kind of what I always want to tell people, that what Christians are trying to do politically as we spread the Gospel and do all of these other things that are more important, that doesn't mean that we neglect the political sphere. And part of what you have to do there is politics is transactional and it is using leverage to try to get these representatives to enact your will. And there is only really one side right now that is even going to give Christians a hearing on our moral priorities. And so, we have to use the leverage with that side, whereas the other side has completely committed itself to moral degradation and insanity in some cases.

**FRANK:**

Yeah. And the ability to be, or I should say it this way, the ability to preach and live the Gospel is partially a result of politics. People, I always hear pastors saying, I just preach the Gospel. I don't get involved politically. And I say to them, well, if you don't think politics are important, you don't think the Gospel is important. I mean, go to some of the countries I've been to. I've been to Iran, Saudi Arabia, China.

You can't do what we're doing right now, Megan, on this podcast in those countries. There's no First Baptist Church of Tehran. There's no Calvary Chapel of Riyadh. There's no Daily Wire in China. Why? Because politically they've ruled it out. And my sister just sent this to me yesterday, breaking Bevelyn Beatty Williams has just been sentenced to three years in federal prison for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in front of an abortion clinic. Who do you think's for that? It's not the Republicans that are for that.

**MEGAN:**

And we're starting to see that here with these Face Act prosecutions where they are throwing the book at abortion people who are, maybe they shouldn't be in the building, but they're peacefully praying and singing, whereas you see protesters right now in the Capitol defacing our monuments, attacking police officers, and we're not seeing that kind of prosecution against them.

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**FRANK:**

There is a big double standard. Someone said it. If the left didn't have double standards, they wouldn't have any standards at all. So, Megan, this is a fabulous book and it's a terrible book at the same time because it's revealing so much of what is going on nefariously in our churches funded by leftists and some of our leaders who have been corrupted. I urge everyone to get it and read it and share it. Again, the book is called 'Shepherds for Sale: How Evangelical Leaders Traded the Truth for Leftist Agenda.' Megan Basham is the author. Please get the book and share this podcast with others. Megan, thanks so much for being on. One last time, if you would, give the website where people can find you.

**MEGAN:**

Yes, you can find me at [DailyWire.com](http://DailyWire.com). You can find me several times a week on Morning Wire Podcast and X or Twitter, I'm @megbasham. And Instagram, I am @JournalistMeganBasham.

**FRANK:**

Excellent. And friends, if you want to get better at the life issue, not just politically but personally, you need to enroll in 'How to Convince People to Be Pro-life.' It starts August 5. Scott Klusendorf will be your instructor. Go to [Crossexamined.org](http://Crossexamined.org). Click on online courses. You will see it there. It's the most comprehensive pro-life course you'll find anywhere. Scott is the author of the book 'The Case for Life.' It is the handbook on the life issue. You'll want to get that. Anyway, friends, Lord willing, I will see you here next week. God bless.

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