

American Gospel discussion, Part 2

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] Well, welcome everybody again. Tonight we'll watch about 30 minutes.

! We'll give us more time for discussion. We'll pick up where we left off obviously, going back a little bit to the last couple of statements that were made to kind of jog our memories of where we're at. Then we'll have a discussion that will follow. I just wanted to express my appreciation to you all as well. I appreciate your prayers and your, you know, encouraging words over this past week. This class that I'm taking, they warned us in my previous one that this is the one that don't be surprised that, you know, you'll have students in it who are taking it for a second time because they failed it. And so what makes the paper, the hard paper is done. What makes it hard is they say, basically you have two weeks to write it and you have 40 sources that you have to find, which is crazy. So I was thinking, no wonder so many people fail it. But then it made me really appreciative of this church that, you know, the support of our elders and our leaders, the encouragement of you all, Monty to be able to step in and preach for me. I mean, that took a big weight off of my shoulders this week. So I thank you all for being so encouraging and supportive. That does mean a lot to me and hearing comments like, whoa, why weren't you, we pay you to, you know, preach to us. Whoa. So anyhow, I do appreciate it. Huh? Yeah, I know. Well, if I don't, you may never find out. Unless my wife rats me out or somebody else. Wes? Okay. I tried to get some of our elders to write pages for me, but they talked, they said something about ethics or something like that. What that's about. Okay. Let's watch the second part and then we'll have a time of discussion. Jesus' last name isn't Christ in case you didn't know that before. All right. We've got some microphones here. I'm going to kind of go through what we've watched and ask some questions, encourage your comments. So first of all, first subject that they covered was God and justice. Here's one there, Paul. Got injustice, right? And can God just forgive our sin? So you have really, that was the debate over those who said, well, yeah, he can, because God can do whatever he wants and he could just forgive it, just wipe the slate clean. And then there are others who say, well, no, he can't because God is holy and God is righteous and he can't overlook that just as it is. Okay. So why can't he, or why do you think maybe, I mean, maybe there's somebody who thinks that he can, when it comes to God's love and his justice and him just overlooking sin or just wiping the slate clean, if somebody came to you and said, well, well, God can do whatever he wants and he could just clean the slates, what would you say? Or if you have a comment from that section, go ahead and make it. Just raise your hand and we'll get a microphone to you. Wes?

[4 : 18] I would say that God is unchanging. He's always the same. And like they said in the video, if he were to change, then everything else is all of a sudden, you can't trust the Bible, what it says, because, oh, that was yesterday, but today I think it's this way. What kind of God do you have there then if it's can all of a sudden change the rules? And I mean, he could, could start sinning. We're glad that he doesn't, but he's not going to do that.

He's always the same. And then gives you the ability to trust what you read in the Bible and that you can trust God, that he's, he feels the same way about sin as he did from the beginning. He feels the same amount of love. He's always the same. Yeah. Good. All right. Any other observations on that one? God's love and justice? Anything you, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. Yeah.

Yeah. Good. So Charlie was saying he's been taught all growing up, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. And that's, I mean, that's what the Bible teaches. You know, for God to overlook sin might sound good. It sounds really good to sinful people. But if you think about it, it's a really bad thing. Because if God isn't just or righteous, then we're in a big problem.

We have a huge problem. Because maybe that means that God can change. And I, you know, you try to put it in a illustration that maybe can help us understand. Like I always talk to teens, or maybe

when we're talking about this question, the link between God's justness and his love. You know, you think about a judge who, whose son has done something horrible. You know, say he's murdered a young family with their young children. And I know in real life, that judge, his son, he'd never be able to be presiding over that court. But you know what I'm saying, for sake of the illustration, if that judge said, well, he's my son and I love him, and I couldn't stand to see him go to prison, so therefore I'm going to, you know, tear up the charges and let him go free, we would know that that's really wrong, wouldn't we? Or if it wasn't even his son, right? But say that, you know, he's just like, well, I'm sorry. I'm sorry that I did that. If the judge was like, well, listen, you all heard it, he's sorry. So let's just let him go. He's apologized. Well, we know. No, why? Because we demand for justice.

I think being created in the image of God, having the law of God written on our heart, we know that that there must be justice, and that God is fully just. And if he didn't punish our sins, then he wouldn't be just. Which goes on to say, or which, you know, it goes on to them, they were talking about, well, is God's justice unjust? Is God unjust for being just? Did you hear that part? Or they were really offended by the fact that God would have, that he would be righteous, that he would be just, that he would punish sin. And so, you know, in the eyes of those who believe that, you know, God is love and love wins or whatnot to them, the fact that God is just is almost like, is immoral for being just. Stan, let's get you a microphone.

[8 : 23] I would simply say that that is a simplistic view of sin. If God did not have a judgment, then he winks at sin. And we all know God doesn't wink at sin. So there had to be a punishment.

There had to be a sacrifice. There had to be bloodshed. Or we just have a, oh, well, you know, God winks at sin, we're okay. Yeah, it's not a big deal. Which the Bible, you know, says explicitly, it is a big deal. It was a big deal when Adam and Eve sinned. And all throughout, we see that sin is a big deal. All sin, ultimately, the Bible says, is committed against God. It's we whom we sin against. When David commits adultery with Bathsheba and has Uriah murdered, what does he say first when he repents? You and you alone have I sinned. And you're like, well, wait a minute. You've really hurt a lot of other people. Well, ultimately, all sin is committed against God, right? So then Stephen Furtick was shown saying that God broke laws in order to save us. What's wrong and or dangerous about making such a statement that God would break laws in order to do something good, you know? So he used the illustration of parents going, speeding through and past, going over the speed limit in order to get to the hospital to be able to have the baby or to get to their child or whatever the case was.

But what is wrong? What's problematic about saying that God could break laws in order, you know, to show his love? Okay, Amy?

The big part, okay, it brings God down to our level. Yeah, if my kids were in the hospital, I would race to the hospital. You can give me the ticket. I don't care. God doesn't act like that.

[10 : 39] And what they're missing on all of this is the whole nature of God. His goodness, his love, his holiness, his, it's so much more than we can, with our minds can get. And the problem is, is that they're in a spirit of delusion, thinking that what they're thinking is correct, because it suits their sin. And it's rampant. I mean, everybody knows somebody who's got the false doctrines and stuff like that. They don't see God as who he truly is. They don't see who Christ is and the spirit as who they truly are. But the problem is with that is they'll never see if they're not chosen. And so we have to stand against the false doctrine for our children's sake and for people that we love's sake. We have to know what the Bible says, and we have to do it, and we have to stand on it. And if it hurts, so be it. Yeah. Yeah, we have a responsibility. So be it.

I'd rather, I'd rather take my licks now than have to take some licks later. Yeah. And that goes to the point, like they say, you know, when Bernie Sanders is real and the one guy, um, and you know, it's to, to an unbeliever, it sounds hateful and it sounds immoral. But if it's true, and we'll see later on, there's another well-known atheist, uh, who will make a comment and I'll save it until next time. You just have to guess who that might be. But he makes the point that if you truly believe that as a Christian, then you have to say something. If you think that I'm going to spend the rest of my eternity in hell, then I expect you to tell me, to warn me. So really, uh, it's a loving thing to do. Unfortunately, sometimes Christians don't go about it in a loving way, but yes, we must warn. I mean, you know, you read the gospels and you will see that Jesus talked a lot about hell, talked about hell more than he talked about heaven. And so why to issue these warnings? And so we do too.

I appreciated Monty's comments this morning about the fact that hell is not a topic that even in Bible-believing churches, that is mentioned a whole lot because it's a really uncomfortable topic. But it's a reality, hell is a reality, as he pointed out this morning. And, uh, and we have a responsibility as believers to, to issue those warnings to unbelievers. The big problem with God, uh, with Stephen Furtick's comment that God could break laws. Well, you know, we have a whole lot of, of, uh, of commands in here, right? Also have a lot of promises in here. And if God could break laws, then God would be sinful. And if God is sinful, then we're in a, a really big issue.

[14:02] Linda, we have a really big problem because then if God can sin, then God can lie. And if God can lie, then how could we be certain of anything that we have in his word as being true? Linda?

My question was, I didn't hear what law that the Christ, that it was supposed to have been broken. He gave the example of the, of the parent racing to the hospital, but what, what was he saying that, you know, what law had God broken? What, what did he give as an example?

Yeah, I think he's talking about love over justice. You know, that God is just, but in order to save us, he sort of looked over his judgment and just focused on his great love for us.

So kind of push that to the side so that he could love us. James? I think one of the things that was brought out is when they were showing the little graphs of, of God's, uh, attributes and how they showed the different pieces and everything broken up instead of seeing God as all of these holy and, you know, there's no breaking down. He's, all of these things equally 100%. It's not anything strengths or weaknesses because he has no strengths or weaknesses. Every, well, he's all strength. Yeah. He's not weak. So, and I think the question that I would have for these people is how are they raising their children? Are they, are they teaching their children that they're not going to discipline them because that's wrong? That's not, you know, that's not loving? Yeah. So that would be my question to them. How are you raised? Because that's going to carry on to the next generation, the next generation. Yeah. Do you think that we're already seeing that? Yes. Yeah. Well, I guess you all agree, right? Because we know that a good parent disciplines their child, as James pointed out, and they discipline the child because they love the child, right? Um, I want you to look both ways before you cross the street, because if you don't, there's a chance that you could get hit by a car and you would die. And so if I see you running in the street and there's a car coming and you didn't look both ways and you came close, then there's going to be some kind of a punishment for that in order to get the point, uh, into your mind that that is a dangerous thing that is bad for you, that you've got to, because I love you and I don't want to have that separation from you. I remember, uh, I rode my bike across the street and I almost got hit by a car and my sister ratted me out to my mom and I had my bike taken away for a week and I thought it was the worst thing ever, but now as a parent, I understand why that discipline came in. But what I think we're seeing in our culture right now is a swing more towards thinking that they're loving their kids by avoiding discipline. Uh, we've seen that nowadays where, and I've especially, um, this wasn't, and, you know, I think that I'm still young, the teens would disagree, but when I was a teenager, when I was in middle school and high school, my teachers were right. If I was acting out, if I was doing something wrong, my teachers were right. And my sisters are now teachers and they'll tell me stories about how these emails that they'll get from the parents, and I've shared this example before, but I think it speaks, uh, exactly to what, uh, the way our parents are raising children today is that my sister, one of our students did not do well on a test. And so she graded in red ink. And if she got it wrong, you know, it was checked that she, the student had it wrong. And then at the top of the paper, my sister asked a question, did you study? And gave it to the kid who took it to their home. And then my sister got an earful from, uh, that student's mother, because one, grading in red ink is too harsh.

And two, the question that she asked, she felt was anti, antagonizing, uh, her, which, to which my sister responded, well, I asked that question. I know Denise is a teacher. She's probably, uh, but my sister asked that question because one, if she didn't, if she did study and didn't do well, then that helps her better be, uh, to be a better teacher. Uh, if she didn't study then that, then, and she didn't do well, then that explains why she got a bad grade. So it was helping her. Um, but that's kind of, that's sort of the, the culture that we're living in is it's heavy on love. And I know now we're getting away from what we're kind of talking about, not as much on discipline. And I think part of that too, is that with parents, both parents oftentimes working, they don't have as much time to spend with their kids. They come home, they feel guilty for that, and they would rather not spend that time

disciplining their child as much as they'd rather spend it being their friend or whatnot. So, uh, that is an issue. And then the next topic that, uh, Julie, let's get you a microphone. So everyone can hear how strong I am. Yes. No, it's not. Here's what keeps going through my mind is what is the emerging church, a church that, that is building their own religion. So they're not even reading the Bible or believing the Bible or yeah, that's, I'm, I'm, I can't get my mind around what, what they're doing. I don't think anybody is really. That's why it's like nailing jello to a wall. It's, uh, because they're all sort of different and it's really loosey goosey as we've talked about. There's no real concrete anything.

[20 : 11] It's really based on that deconstructionist, deconstructionist mentality. Yeah. Yeah. Where, yeah, they're skeptical and they ask a lot of questions and then there's skepticism right now. And again, that's a cultural thing where we feel like to be a skeptic makes you seem really smart, Paul, and then Michael, and then Wes. All right. We hit on something here.

Yeah. And that's what I've been thinking all along as, as the different people shared on the video. And it's, it's, it's abandoning the Bible. It's abandoning God's revealed word and God's revealing of himself. And it is replacing it with either somebody that I think is intelligent and says things I like. And therefore that's who I'm going to believe over and above the Bible or believing that I'm smarter than what the Bible says. And then I can reason and I can logically get to this conclusion that makes a lot of sense to me. Therefore it must be true. And that is what the devil did in the garden.

He said, did God really say this or this or this? That, that is why it is so important that we test everybody we hear, even in our own churches. Yeah. Not that I don't trust his preaching, but we must because Mike's as human as the rest of us. And every other man that we see up there is, even the ones that told the truth, but we need to be always going back to the word and only the word to make sure that that's true. If not, you have no foundation to stand on whatsoever.

Yeah. Jello. Asking questions. Yeah. Yeah. Feels good. Think that we've kind of unlocked this hidden secret and we're figuring it out, but it just, yeah, it's, go ahead, Michael.

One of the things that, that they talk about when you go to Bible school and things like that is context is king. A lot of what they do with this is they take one passage and they interpret it a certain way without looking at the context of the bigger picture, not just in what it represents in that paragraph or that chapter, that, that the overall writing structure of the book itself, or even in the Bible as a whole. And so they take these individual passages and, and they twist it to whatever they want it to say without looking at the rest of context of the passage itself, coming up with their own truth. It's what it, that's, it's what we see a lot now is, is, you know, we take that passage and we say, okay, you know, in the beginning was the word, right? And we talk about John and, and how it's been so twisted in other, other religions and other faiths to say, well, it, you know, they're talking about that, that God isn't really, that, that Christ isn't the word.

[23 : 19] They've twisted it. They, you know, was the word. So, um, yeah, a word, right? A God. So they've twisted that whole, whole verse instead of looking at the context of the whole thing. Good. Two really good observations. Uh, so one, the more you're in scripture, the more you can identify a counterfeit.

And two, when you're listening, especially, you know, Joel Osteen, uh, and others like him who they'll reference, maybe some scriptures, it go to where that scripture is referenced and read before it and read after it. And you'll know the context. And a lot of times what you'll find out is it was used out of context, right? And so context is extremely important. Wes?

I was just going to say, it's, it's about the itching ears. Either they're doing it. They want to itch their own ears. They're, they're coming up with this new gospels because it makes them feel better or people that follow along. And, you know, Oprah's just, you know, fawning all over this guy.

It's the, it's the gospel she wants to hear. It's like that, that sounds good to me. It's the, you know, it's the itching ears thing. You know, Paul talked about that. Yeah. Good. We're almost out of time and we didn't really even get to cover that much of this topic. But I encourage the conversations. I was, I was, I've, I've liked to hear what I've heard from others about how, you know, in Monday night and Wednesday night, maybe even you all are talking amongst one another. That's a good thing. That's how iron sharpens iron, right? We're growing.

The one last question I had is, you know, they made the observation, okay, we talked about, kind of hit on Richard Rohr, the guy who differentiates between Jesus and Christ. And he's sort of like the father of a lot of these progressive pastors. But the one observation they made is that the group of people that are most appealed by his message is young people. Why do you think that that is

without just bashing on young people, right? Because there's something about the message that is appealing to them? What do you think that that is? And what can we do to communicate the truth to them? Danny?

[25 : 43] Danny? I think that, one, we need to pray. And I think also that so many times it's the young people that have watched even us and our lack of prayer and our, and I'm speaking of everybody really, but lack of being, you know, true to the word. And, you know, nothing is new with this progressive and the deconstruction guys that are making these appealing churches for the young people is that even when Jesus left this planet with his, with his, uh, ministry, uh, Peter and Paul had to, had to fight all kinds of things that were creeping in and, and they still are. But I think that we need to be a voice and we need to set example and we need to set rules and, and be true to the Bible, you know, and, and to its word. And, and then that can close the door to a lot of skepticism and things.

Yeah. Um, good. One of the comments that they made too, is that these young people who are joining this, um, emergent church, progressive church, whatever you want to say, did you hear him say that a lot of them came from, they grew up in the church, you know, but that's where they're moving to.

And so I think part of it is that, and you mentioned it, Danny, is that too often and for too long, churches have treated their youth ministry as something that's done sort of over here, right? You guys have your own time, you have your own study, um, a lot of churches, if they can, you'll see, especially in some mega churches, and there's some really good mega churches, but what they do is they have, uh, the teens and the children, they go, they go worship in separate locations, not with everybody else. And so what happens a lot of times, I think what's happened is that youth groups and youth ministry has gotten too much into the fit, just trying to bring kids in.

And so there's a great emphasis on games and there's a great emphasis on entertainment. Now, I think that games and those fun things are a great way for youth pastors and workers to get to meet their kids, because that's where you really get to know the person and they start to open up to you.

[28 : 29] But that's not the objective when our teens come here, right? We want to teach them God's word. We want to, um, share the gospel with them. We want to train them up in the way that they should go, and that's why it's so important. I think that, uh, a church pay a lot of attention and give a lot, uh, to the youth ministry, but that it's not just the youth pastor and the people who work with the teens who do that, that it's everybody within the church taking an interest in the young people of the church. And you might think, well, I'm too old and I don't understand that generation. And what, what do I have to offer to a young person? Um, I will tell you that you have a lot more than you realize. And you just taking the effort to try to get to know, uh, one of our young people, it will go a long way. I've never forgotten, uh, the men in my church growing up who, for whatever reason, they took an interest in me and they would pray for me and they just thought, I mean, it wasn't anything big, big deal. Some of them were greater mentors than others, but it goes a long way. And the one, uh, there was a study and I'm going, going over, this is part of what I'm working on my doctorate about too, right? Is that one study and it was an SBC study. They found that for those, uh, Southern Baptist teenagers who grew up, went to college, graduated, and who were still in a Southern Baptist church that like 80% of them, something that was crazy, uh, had somebody in their church who wasn't their mother or father or their youth pastor, but was just somebody of the older generation in their church who they had a strong relationship with. So that makes a big deal. So I say one of the things that we need to do to put an end to that is to pay more attention and care more about our young people. And as Mark Dever talked about in our last study, um, identifying who those future leaders of the church will be and start pouring our resources into them in preparation for the fact that they will be the next generation who leads the church onward. So

I just encourage you to be praying about that right now. I know for our teens, we're getting ready to send them to Falls Creek. We're going to do some things to try to make that more feasible for everybody to go. And so we'll be coming to the church with some things. And so I just encourage you not just to give, um, your treasures, but give yourself and, uh, and man, it'll have a huge impact. I promise you.

All right, let's pray. Lord, thank you for this time together and for this, uh, dialogue. I know that God, this is, uh, something that weighs heavy on a lot of our hearts because, um, it, it breaks our hearts to see, uh, and to hear, uh, and to hear some of these comments, uh, that are made in, in people who claim to know you, claim to speak for you, claim to, to know what is true, but yet they're so, uh,

incredibly lost. And Lord, we would be, um, doing them a disservice if we just, uh, were here, uh, hearing these, these, uh, or watching this, this film and just talking about what's wrong, but not willing to do anything about it. And so God, we pray that, that, uh, you would continue to use this time to help us to sharpen one another, to have these important conversations, but then to, to go out into the world as we interact with people who they, they've been told something about you that isn't true, that your word doesn't back up, or they have, uh, believed something that, that is just, uh, a different gospel. It's not, it's not the gospel, uh, of your, of Jesus Christ. And so Lord, I pray that we would care enough and love enough that we would, uh, take it upon ourselves to have these conversations with them, that we would point them to your word, uh, not, not in an attempt to win an argument, but in an attempt to reveal truth and, and, and, and, in, in hopes that they too will come to, uh, saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Lord, help us to keep in mind the Samaritan woman, this woman that we saw tonight on the video, who is all into astrology and, and all those different things. Yet God, you're, you're capable of saving, uh, those whom, whom we may deem to be too far gone, too far lost. And so Lord, help us to continue to go, uh, to them as you, uh, as you sent others to come to us with the good news of Jesus Christ. And so, uh, Father, we pray for this and, uh, we ask that all the results would be, uh, glorifying to you. And so, uh, we love you, Lord. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.