



SERIES: Pursuing Spiritual Fitness
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Pastor Nat Crawford:

Welcome to the Hard Questions, Real Answers podcast. I'm your host, Pastor Nat, and we are here at NRB 2022, wrapping up a great convention. I'm here with my special guest, Ken Ham. Ken, you are the CEO and founder of Answers and Genesis, the Ark Encounter, the Creation Museum, author, apologist... I mean, I could go on for days and you just keep going. So I appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to join our audience.

Ken Ham:

It's a pleasure. I love the ministry that you're involved with.

NC:

Yeah. I was really blown away to hear your story and your connection to the ministry and it really touched me and I don't think I had the opportunity to tell you how much your ministry has impacted our family and my own personal life. So thank you so much.

KH:

Hey, thank you.

NC:

One of the things that I think we have a serious issue with is the legacy of the church. Church tends to do these pendulum swings and right now I think we're in a very dangerous pendulum swing. So, from your assessment, how do you think the church is doing today and what should Christians' response be to it?

KH:

It's very interesting because I get a bird's eye view of the church that not many people get. The reason I say that is because I've spoken in all 50 states in America, hundreds of churches, lots of different denominations, colleges, universities, seminaries and so on. But I've also done that around the world in many different countries too. Even third world countries. So you get to see the pattern.

One of the interesting things I noticed in the church, the churches recognize they're not really impacting the culture like they have in the past, generations ago. And we are losing the younger generations from the church. I mean, you look at the latest statistics in regard to church attendance—if you go back to the 1700s, in the 1700s around about 70 to 80% of people went to

church.

Now, as you go down through all the generations, the greatest generation, the silent generation, the baby boomers—I'm in the baby boomers generation—then generation X, generation Y, the millennials, generation Z, you see a generational decline in church attendance. And so if you look at the baby boomers, about 30% of the baby boomer generation had to go to church. But if you get down to Generation Z and the millennials today, it's like about 8%. It's really getting down there. And a lot of churches recognize this.

And so the church wants to come up with ways to—how do we solve this? How do we keep people in church? What do we do? And it's interesting when somebody comes up with an idea, a lot of people just follow. And to me that's a big problem.

One of the things that I've seen—I see a pattern. And I always tell people, here's my little caveat. I love music. I played the piano, actually, and I love worship music. Here's what I noticed as someone looking from the outside into all these different churches, I see a lot of similarities—that the worship time on stage becomes the most important part of the service, not the teaching of the Word. And a lot of it is performance oriented. Where it's not really congregational type songs.

A lot of the songs they sing—they might sing five songs fifty times each while you stand up. And a lot of those songs, you know the theology is dreadful. I don't even know what they're saying. And I'm not saying that for all of them, there's some great contemporary music. My wife absolutely loves “In Christ Alone” by the Gettys. But the thing is, it's more performance. It's entertainment, is what I see. And not in every instance, but a lot of instances. And they've watered down the teaching of the word. It's made it very shallow and the stories more entertaining, but they're missing what's needed.

I would say this, what I have found in—I wrote a book recently called *Divided Nation: Cultures in Chaos & A Conflicted Church* to say the church has failed in a number of areas. Here's two of them—there's a few that I list in the book, but here's two main ones. They haven't taught apologetics by and large. What does that mean? Having an equipped generation know how to defend the faith, how to answer the skeptical questions of the age now that are really undermining God's Word in today's world.

And then we also need to be teaching them a literal Genesis 1 to 11 as the foundation. It's the foundation for all doctrine, our worldview, for the rest of the Bible. I even noticed today for a lot of churches, if you look at their statements of faith, a lot of churches will have just very general statements of faith, and general when it comes to Genesis, which means they don't really understand how important it is.

I find there are a lot of churches that are more interested in eschatology, you know, Revelation. In fact, some churches will say you must believe this particular view, and if you don't, you can't be a member of the church. When it comes to Genesis, they say it doesn't matter. And I say to people, wait a minute, Revelation is not the foundation for the rest of the Bible. Genesis 1 to 11 is. Revelation is not the foundation for your worldview. Genesis 1 to 11 is. Revelation is not the

foundation for all your doctrine. Genesis 1 to 11 is. I'm not saying Revelation's not important, but it's not the foundational book. Genesis 1 to 11 is.

The reason the church is in such a mess is because Genesis 1 to 11—we gave it up. And when you give up the foundation, the structure falls. And that's what I see as a major problem in the church. And that's why we've lost generations of these younger ones.

NC:

Well, it's kind of like a decaying tooth. If you get on it right at the beginning, you can clean it up and restore and get them moving. But if you wait a year, two years, three years, you're probably just gonna pull that whole tooth out. And it makes you wonder how far we're gone in the church.

One of the big things I'm seeing in the church as a pastor and a pastor of pastors, is a compromise in the area of sexuality. And it's amazing, transgenderism. Let's just talk about that for a minute. You know, it's not just an outside the church issue now, it's an inside the church issue. But should it be? And what is a biblical response to something like transgenderism?

KH:

Here's the point. If we believe Genesis 1 to 11 is literal history, you've got your response. In other words, let's believe God's word. What does it say there? Genesis 1:27, God made male and female. There's no other option. I mean, in Genesis 5, male and female, all the way through the Old Testament, male and female. Jesus, in Matthew 19, when asked about marriage, first of all He quotes about how God made them male and female. When you go to Mark 10, He said that from the beginning of creation, He made them male and female.

So here's the bottom line. If you start from God's Word, you've got your worldview and your doctrine, and you know what you should believe. And, you know, that's the point of dealing with any of these, these issues. You see when you look at abortion, gay marriage, critical race theory, transgenderism, you're dealing with all these different issues that we see today, racism, et cetera... When you are looking at all those—a lot of people in the church look at them and say that they're all problems. How do you deal with critical racism? And we've gotta deal with gay marriage and we've got to deal with abortion and we've got to deal with transgenderism. Well, wait a minute. That itself is a problem. Stand back and understand this. They're all the same problem. They're different symptoms. They're different symptoms of what problem? Well, that people build their thinking on man's word not God's word.

So what's the solution? The solution is the same for all. The solution is, oh, can I use the phrase back to the Bible? <laughter> The solution is God's word and the saving Gospel. But we've got to understand God's word starts in Genesis 1 to 11. And that's where the foundation is. And so when it comes to—let me give you a practical example to help people understand this, When it comes to gay marriage. I had a young man come to me that I'm friends with, I've had this sort of thing many times. But he said, "I'm gay and I believe in gay marriage. What do you say about that?" Now I know immediately—here's how I think: I can't take my Christian worldview based on the Bible and impose on that person if they don't have the foundation. I do.

In other words, the argument can't be up here right? That's why people see it as hate speech. And that's why we clash and they see you as intolerant. It's when you are arguing up here because it's a clash of worldviews.

So the first thing I said to him was, "We'll I'm a Christian and I believe the Bible and said my thinking starts from the Bible here in Genesis." And you know what he said to me? He said, "I don't believe the Bible. Don't give me that Bible stuff."

So what I said to this person was, "you don't believe the Bible. Well, guess what? I do. I'm unapologetic about it because that's foundational thinking. But then I take them—and you've got to do this, because what they've been taught in the schools and through the media—you've got to ask the right questions and you modify your questions depending on where they go.

But the conversation went like this. "Well, I do believe the Bible, that's where I start. You don't believe the Bible? Why do you think science has disproved the Bible? Were you taught that at school? Or what do you believe about where you came from? Tell me, how do you decide right and wrong? And should your right and wrong, be the—should somebody else have the same morality as you? If not, why not? Where does your morality come from? How do you decide what is true? On what do you build your thinking? Why do you believe the way you do?" You know what you're doing? You're getting the arguments down here. "Were you taught evolution? Do you think that's true? Tell me what you think contradicts the Bible." And you get the argument down to a foundational level.

Now if they claim to be a Christian, you still use the same argument. Because if they claim to be a Christian, then I say to them, "but you don't have the same, the same view of Genesis as I do." So our argument is still down there. Because you obviously don't have the same view of Genesis, if they claim to be a Christian. So regardless, you've got to get down to the foundational level.

So when it comes to even things like CRT—I know people will be going, "two hours of discussion all about CRT?"—when someone says to me, "what do you believe about CRT?" You know, the first thing I say—this may sound very simplistic—but to me this is the answer: is his foundation man's word or God's Word. His foundation is man's word, well then, you know the worldview's wrong. It's the wrong foundation. Regardless. And you can judge their worldview against God's Word. Because when you do that, what do you find? CRT, the worldview built on that, is you judge people according to their outside. Right. What does the Bible say? You judge people according to their inside.

Remember when David, or, when Samuel came to anoint the king, and he didn't know it was going to be David. And he saw David's brother and he immediately thought, this is it. Look. Tall, handsome, on the football team. Well, maybe not that, but...ha, you know what I mean. And obviously he's gonna be the king.

And what did God say? "Man looks on the outside and God looks on the inside, and I have refused him." God's words. And it's a reminder, God judges us according to our heart: "out of the

abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” And He judges us according to what we believe on the outside.

And if you, if you start from the right foundation of God's word, we're all descendants of Adam and Eves biologically. There's how many races? One. And two spiritual races. But we're all one race, which means there's no such thing as a biracial couple, or biracial kids. But we want to divide them like that. They're all one race.

A good friend of mine is here at NRB. In fact, we were at a breakfast this morning and he opened in prayer and we're working together to deal with this whole issue. Well, he and I co-author the book called *One Race, One Blood*, and he's African American. Dark-skinned. I've always in my talks, when I've talked with him, said, “don't call people black, don't call them white.” So now he says of himself, “I'm of the darker hue.” And he says that I'm of the lighter hue. <laughter> And that's a good way of putting it because we are different shades. Because it gets away from this black and white separation and division and that sort of thing.

But what a difference when you start with the right foundation of God's Word. And we need to do that in every area.

NC:

Absolutely. I couldn't agree more. Well, we've taken up too much of your time. You need to get moving. I've got to get moving. Ken, you've begun to unpack a lot of hard questions, but you've given the foundational answer. Go back to the Bible. We are to be students of the Word like the Bereans. We are to teach the whole counsel of God. We are to embrace study, engage the whole counsel of God so that we are transformed by it. Not to be influenced by the world. That is Ken's challenge. That's my challenge for you today. Do not settle, do not reject a part of the Bible just because the culture says to. We take all of it or we take none of it. And our challenge to you is to take it. Ken, thank you for your time brother.

KH:

Good to be with you.