

# Christian Leaders Complicit in Covid Propaganda Machine - Part 2

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**Host: David Wheaton** 00:08

Christian Leaders Complicit in COVID Propaganda Machine - Part 2.

That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on *The Christian Worldview* Radio Program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host.

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Several weeks ago, *The Christian Worldview* launched on some new stations: 99.5 FM KKLA in Los Angeles and American Christian Network, otherwise known as ACN, in the Pacific Northwest. If you'd like to help support these new initiatives to reach listeners in Los Angeles and the Pacific Northwest, please get in touch with us.

Now, the big news late this week is that Russia has invaded Ukraine. And this is a major event that we will address on a future program. But what gave Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, the boldness to invade Ukraine is the perception of American weakness in the world at this point. The passage from Proverbs chapter 25:19, really sums up what American civil or political leadership and military leadership has become. *"Like a bad tooth and an unsteady foot is confidence in a faithless man in time of trouble."* A bad tooth is painful and unusable and an unsteady foot is untrustworthy and prone to fall. That's what it's like right now to be an American under this civil and military leadership that we have. But we will get more into that in a future week.

A brief follow up from last week's program where we interviewed pastor Andrew DeBartolo from Canada about the situation going on there with the truckers protesting the mandates over COVID. He wrote me an email this past week saying, "Things took a very dark turn for the worse since we spoke in our interview last week. Yesterday, which was Saturday, February 19, was a brutal day. I was on the front line of the protesters. As police moved on us, I saw people getting beaten with batons, tear gassed, and pulled out of trucks and arrested. There were smoke and sound grenades and two pastor friends were arrested. The police took complete possession of Parliament as they pushed us back for three hours. The truckers and convoy organizers have pulled out of Ottawa. Many bank accounts have been frozen and seized, including people I personally know." And then he concluded by saying this, "I fear Canada is lost to tyranny and our national fate is all but secured." That from Andrew DeBartolo, the pastor in Canada who we talked to last week on the program. So what happened?

There were no conversations, no negotiations made by the leadership of Canada with these protesters and the police eventually, violently cracked down on these non violent protesters who simply want freedom from these COVID mandates. Police on horseback stomped a woman to death and they strong armed and arrested many other people. One website found a chat group of Mounties boasting, I quote here, "Boasting about the cruelty and violence they planned to use against peaceful protesters and laughing at injuries done to civilians." In one screenshot, I'm quoting a person by the name of Andrew Nixon, writes, "Cheers crew. Here's just some sweet overtime this weekend for our on call members. Don't kick all of them out, until next week's group gets our turn." Another member wrote quote, "Just watch that horse video. That is awesome. We should practice that maneuver." Just remember, police are the enforcement arm of the government. Most of the time, they're good guys. Sometimes though, they're bad guys. We should be respectful of police, but certainly not be unquestioning of them.

But this issue of frozen bank accounts is really a troubling one. The CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Company), which is a mainstream media outlet up there, which is totally in line with the government said, "This order says that banks and other financial entities like credit unions, coops, loan companies, trust, and cryptocurrency platforms must stop providing any financial or related services to people associated with protests, a move that will result in frozen accounts, stranded money, and canceled credit cards. It also includes anyone sending funds to support these protests." Just consider the tyranny of that. That if you protest against the government, you will have all your bank assets and financial transactions frozen.

Talk show host, Dennis Prager, wrote in response to this that, "None of these life ruining, due process defined measures is necessary. The truckers demonstrations could have been ended by arresting drivers who would not move their trucks or simply just towing their trucks. The purpose of these regulations is to destroy dissenters and deter future dissent. In a word, it is to ruin the lives of those who disobey Justin Trudeau."

And so what you have here going on in Canada is the political elites, media, banks, corporations, have turned Canada into a dictatorship. And polls show that a majority of Canadians actually support these measures, proving the point that most people will gladly trade their liberty for security. If you just promise them that they'll have financial security, they'll be able to go on their vacations and live life as normal as they think is normal, they'll gladly trade liberty for security. Let's not be a people like that.

This is a very bad omen for the United States as well. There's a trucker convoy now heading for Washington DC in March. You can see the likely response that is coming. They're already barricading the capitol as if there's a terrorist incursion taking place. There'll be a castigation and misrepresentation. The media-racists are coming. They'll be enacting terrorism powers to stop this threat. And no doubt they'll be trying to shut down the bank accounts like they did in Canada. We're living in an age of calling evil good and good evil. And unless something changes, we will lose most of our individual liberties or armed resistance could occur in this country. Remember, Americans have guns where largely Canadians do not. These truckers were simply protesting the now debunked government COVID mandates.

And so this is what makes the situation with our topic today about how evangelical elites have been aiding the government narrative on COVID, all the more disturbing.

You've probably heard of Dr. Francis Collins. Until recently, he was the longtime leader of the National Institutes of Health, otherwise known as the NIH, a government agency which along with the Centers of Disease Control, the CDC, leads our nation's response to COVID, including mandates with regard to vaccines, mass shutdowns and social separation. Collins is venerated as the, "Head of the Human Genome Project." He also claims to be an evangelical Christian. He wrote a book titled, *The Language of God*, and is the founder of *BioLogos*, an organization which heretically attempts to merge God and evolution.

Recently, *Daily Wire* reporter, Megan Basham, dug deeper on Francis Collins, bringing to light several ungodly policies he has directed and supported over the years, and then questioning why the biggest names in evangelicalism such as Ed Stetzer, Rick Warren, NT Wright, Tim Keller, Russell Moore, Christianity Today and the Gospel Coalition all invited Collins on their platforms to persuade pastors and churches and Christians to tow the government line on COVID.

Let's get straight to the interview with Megan Basham.

The column is entitled, *How the Federal Government Used Evangelical Leaders to Spread COVID Propaganda to Churches*. You write in your column, which I just referenced, just gonna read a couple paragraphs here to start. You say, "In September, [and this was back in September 2021], Wheaton College Dean, Ed Stetzer, [that name will come up frequently in your column and also probably in our conversation today], interviewed National Institutes of Health director Francis Collins on his podcast, *Church Leadership*, about why Christians who want to obey Christ's command to love their neighbors should get the COVID vaccine and avoid indulging in misinformation." First, Megan, I want to play how Ed Stetzer introduced Francis Collins on his podcast that day.

**Sound bite: Ed Stetzer Podcast Clip 09:46**

I'm Ed Stetzer, editor-in-chief of *Outreach Magazine* and the executive director of the Wheaton College Billy Graham Center. We're excited to have today with us Dr. Francis Collins. Dr. Collins is an evangelical Christian, well known in the Christian community, who was appointed the 16th Director of the National Institutes of Health by President Obama, confirmed by the Senate; 2017 President Trump asked him to continue; and again the same in 2021, President Joe Biden. He's the only presidentially appointed NIH Director to serve more than one administration. In this role, he actually oversees the work of the largest supporter of biomedical research in the world, spanning the spectrum from basic to clinical research. He's got lots of accomplishments, right? He's actually a physician geneticist, noted for his landmark discoveries of disease genes and his leadership in the International Human Genome Project. He's a very committed Christian, we've had him on before.

**Host: David Wheaton 10:44**

Okay, so you wonder why I'm playing this particular soundbite. This was nearly a minute long, probably 50 seconds of it was used by Ed Stetzer, who you talk about who he is, and what a popular, well known influential figure he is within evangelical circles, has Francis Collins on his podcast, and bracketed between all the resume of what Francis Collins has achieved or accomplished in his career and so forth. The first thing he says, "He's a evangelical Christian." And at the end there, he said, "He's a very committed Christian." So there's this credibility he's establishing for Francis Collins, which we'll get into in a second later about who he really is. But maybe just to start out here, you could describe for the audience who Francis Collins is, what the National Institutes of Health is, and his level of influence.

Now, he is just resigned from this directorship at the NIH back in December of 2021. But tell us about him more.

**Guest: Megan Basham 11:44**

He resigned ostensibly. The public reason was he just didn't feel that anyone should hold the position for too long. But there was also a bit of a cloud of controversy surrounding that resignation. So I'll come back to that in just a second.

So Francis Collins is not just involved with the National Institutes of Health, he was the lead, the leader, the head of the National Institutes of Health. So he is running that program, has been doing so, that department, for I want to say something like 16 years. So since, again, as Ed Stetzer said, since Obama appointed him in 2008, he's been there. And under his leadership, he has instituted some programs that would trouble a lot of people who hear that he is a Bible believing Christian. And that was really sort of key that a lot of these Christian outlets like Ed Stetzer, like *Christianity Today*, like some very high profile pastors like Rick Warren, Tim Keller, and some others presented him as someone who is like-minded with the Christian community.

And they also presented him as someone who believes in the sanctity of human life. That's something of a direct quote right there from one of *Christianity Today's* introductions of him. So he was presented this way. And I think part of that is to give him the credibility of going, "look this is a Christian brother who thinks like you do". Except when you get into Francis Collins record, as the head of the NIH, you find some troubling things that I think a lot of Christians would go, "Oh, wait a minute, I don't know that he is like minded with me". And one of those things would be his very strong advocate of fetal tissue research. And that is using the body parts, organs, stem cells from aborted babies to conduct research. So one of the programs that he funded, one of the research programs at the University of Pittsburgh, has involved things like grafting infant scalps onto lab rats, it has involved harvesting the organs of full term, we're talking 40- to 42-week, aborted babies. So babies that should have been born and were not born because instead they were aborted at the very end of their terms.

So that's the kind of research that I think a lot of Christians will go, "Oh, hang on, I don't consider that a pro life ethic". And part of that is, he has not just said, this is happening. I wish it weren't. I've made my best efforts as the person in charge where the buck stops at the NIH to stop this kind of research. He's really advocated for it. In my story, you will find quotes where he lamented when the Trump administration pulled back funding for fetal tissue research. He said, That's too bad, we made an argument for it. Unfortunately, we didn't win. I'm paraphrasing here. So that's one part of Francis Collins record.

And then another part of Francis Collins record was that, as the LGBT movement has grown since the Obama administration to hold much more sway over the Democrat Party, over a lot of government institutions, Francis Collins has also been a part of that. He put out a statement very boldly describing himself as an advocate and an ally of trans individual's and he initiated a program to direct more funding into what he calls "sexual and gender minority research". So um, these are things that I linked to in the article, you can look at the actual initiative, you can look at the letter that he wrote declaring himself an ally and an advocate. One of the research grants that came out of this new initiative, went to a doctor in California who started giving opposite sex hormones to children as young as eight and mastectomies to girls as young as 13. So when you hear all of this, you go, this should have been presented, I think, when you present Francis Collins as a Christian brother, an expert, who we should

all be listening to, in this time, where we're making a lot of complex medical decisions related to COVID. So hopefully, you know, that was rather long answer, but hopefully it encapsulates what we're talking about here.

**Host: David Wheaton 15:54**

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**Featured Resource: Enemies Within: The Church 16:12**

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**Host: David Wheaton 18:18**

Welcome back to *The Christian Worldview*. I'm David Wheaton. Visit our website, [The ChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry. Now back to the interview.

Megan Basham with us today here on *The Christian Worldview*, a Daily Wire reporter. We have this column that she recently wrote that really caused a firestorm and we'll talk about that coming up, too.

How the federal government used evangelical leaders to spread COVID propaganda to churches. That really is the thesis of the column. That there is the government, the Biden administration. The NIH is a government funded organization. The director of it, the head guy, Francis Collins, that he used, not just evangelical leaders, but willing evangelical leaders like Ed Stetzer, like Rick Warren, like NT Wright, (and this is all linked and evidenced in your article), like Tim Keller, *Christianity Today*, *The Gospel Coalition*. These are the big headliners in evangelicalism. Basically, they were willingly used by Collins and the government to, I'll use this word, "propagandize", the evangelical world, whether it's regular Christians, churches, pastors, via this kind of media tour that he went on, where he's representing again, the Biden administration. Anthony Fauci works for Francis Collins, at the time, to give what we know now is a false narrative about COVID like "the virus came from an animal, not a lab in Wuhan", that getting the vaccine or wearing a mask is about "loving your neighbor" or masks "stop the spread of the virus". And if you believe otherwise, Well, you're just a conspiracy theorist.

So let me just read directly from your column where you talk about the types of policies that Francis Collins has led the National Institutes of Health on.

You write; "Perhaps the evangelical elites willingness to unhesitatingly credit Collins with unimpeachable honesty has something to do with his rather Mr. Rogers like appearance and gentle demeanor. Going by his concrete record however, he seems like a strange ambassador to spread the government's COVID messaging to theologically conservative congregations. Other than his proclamations that he is himself a believer, the NIH Director espouses nearly no public positions that would mark him out as any different from any left wing bureaucrat. He has not only defended experimentation on fetuses obtained by abortion, [you just mentioned that] he has also directed record level spending toward it. Among the priorities the NIH has funded under Collins, a University of Pittsburgh experiment that involve grafting infant scalps onto lab rats, as well as projects that relied on the harvested organs of aborted full term babies. [You mentioned that. You further write] When it comes to pushing an agenda of racial quotas and partiality based on skin color, Collins is a member of the left in good standing, speaking fluently of, "Structural racism," and "Equity," rather than equality. He puts his money or rather taxpayer money, where his mouth is, implementing new policies that require a scientist seeking NIH grants to pass Diversity, Equity and Inclusion tests in order to qualify".

Next paragraph: "To the most holy of progressive sacred cows, the LGBTQ orthodoxy, Collins has been happy to genuflect, having declared himself a, 'ally of the gay and trans movements'. He went on to say he, 'Applauds the courage and resilience it takes to be LGBTQ individuals, to live openly and authentically'. And is, 'Committed to listening, respecting and supporting them as an advocate'."

Next paragraph: "Under his watch, the NIH launched a new initiative to specifically direct funding to sexual and gender minorities. On the ground, this has translated to awarding millions in grants to experimental transgender research on minors, like giving opposite sex hormones to children as young as eight and mastectomies to girls as young as 13." [You mentioned this.] "Another project awarded \$8 million in grants, including recruiting teen boys to track their homosexual activities without their parents consent."

Last paragraph: "Other than his assertions of his personal Christian faith, there is almost no public stance Collins has taken that would mark him out as someone of like-mind with the everyday believers to whom he was appealing. So the obvious question is, Why has Francis Collins been so revered as this evangelical Christian then?"

**Guest: Megan Basham 23:27**

Well, you know, that's a question I've been trying to sort of sort through myself because there was so little critical thinking in the presentation of him. Another leader I think we need to include here, because he was also quite vocally supportive of Francis Collins was Russell Moore, who was then head of the ERLC, the arm of the SBC that does public policy. The reason I bring that up is because all of them presented him very much as a Christian brother that I know. So they were sort of lending their credibility and their reputation as men of integrity to Francis Collins.

To give you one example, Rick Warren specifically presented him as "a man of integrity, a man you can trust". So they were sort of saying, "trust us". Trust us that this is a good man, that this is a strong Christian, even though so little in his record would back that up. And to be very clear, it was not exactly secret. It sort of surprised me as I was working on the reporting that people were surprised by what I was writing, because this was not covert. You could find articles in *Time Magazine* saying, because Francis Collins has these relationships with leaders in the evangelical world, he was dispatched the same way Anthony Fauci was dispatched to the secular media, Francis Collins was dispatched to the Christian media. So he does this sort of tour as you described it. And in all of these instances, he was not presented as a voice to listen to, a voice to consider, and maybe we will also waive some other expert medical opinions. He was presented as authoritative and his views unquestionable.

So to give you an example, when he talked about churches not meeting, he and Tim Keller agreed. There was no pushback that that represented the churches who chose to go ahead and start meeting again before the government said they could, churches like John MacArthur's in California, they were presented as the bad and ugly of "good, bad and ugly" COVID responses within the church. There were other instances where he and NT Wright really sort of dismissively sneered at Christians who had questions about mask wearing or the vaccine. They sort of made a joke about well, these people seem to think that "Jesus is my vaccine". So it was always sort of very dismissive. And the biggest problem with it wasn't even just a presentation of medical opinion, which is debatable. I mean, we're now finding that one, there is a lot of medical debate on the efficacy of masks, even the CDC has pulled back from the idea that cloth masks are, as Francis Collins claimed, "a life saving medical device". That is very much in question now. But it was also that he presented it as an authoritative voice about gospel matters. He specifically said that, you know, doing these things, shutting down churches, wearing your masks, getting vaccinated, this is how you love Jesus. This is how you love your neighbor. And these major Christian leaders and pastors came along with that narrative. There was no pushback, there was no critical thinking, there was no debate about that issue.

So that for me was where the story really got interesting because I went, you have a real concerning marriage here of church and state, where the state is now using the church as a platform to spread the messages that it wants to spread. And in fact, one of those messages turned out to be something that would have been personally damaging to Collins himself. If you're following the news cycle, you've probably seen in a lot of secular mainstream outlets that Collins and Fauci emails have now leaked where they said we need to suppress these stories about the lab leak theory that the Coronavirus originated in a lab in Wuhan, which was always a very reasonable hypothesis. And now we know that some very early scientists came to Collins and Fauci and said, we believe this is a very reasonable hypothesis, and in fact, the likely origin of the Coronavirus and they worked to suppress that.



Well, if you go into Christian media, you also find Collins saying that same thing to *Christianity Today*, saying this was nature made, humans did not create this virus. And so you have a Christian media outlet, furthering that narrative. And then to get a little more unethical, as Stetzer wrote an article, again repeating that it was conspiracy theory, it was indulging in sin for Christians to spread this idea of the Wuhan lab leak theory. Well, at that point, the article just disappeared when it became more apparent that in fact, it was likely that that was where the Coronavirus came from. Stetzer's article in *Christianity Today* just disappeared with no editorial notes, no acknowledgement. And the only reason I was able to find it was because it was still contained in the Wayback Machine, the web archive, if you're familiar with that, it will sometimes archive old articles, even if they're deleted, you can still find them. So that was where I found that.

So it gave me the sense that they knew, that they kind of knew that they had strayed and made some mistakes, but they weren't going to acknowledge the mistakes publicly they were just going to erase them.

**Host: David Wheaton 28:31**

Why is that particular issue of where the virus came from, why do they want it not to come from that lab in Wuhan and just come from an animal market?

**Guest: Megan Basham 28:42**

Well, that's a pretty important question, isn't it? And part of the reason as we're now seeing in the news cycle is that the NIH may have funded what we call gain of function engineering, where you take a normal virus and you engineer it to be more powerful, more transmissible, and they weren't supposed to be doing that. The funding had been pulled away from that. There are some questions over whether it's ethical and certainly now we are questioning whether it's wise given what we have seen with the Coronavirus. Now, it has not been determined that that is what happened with COVID. But we do now suspect, and if you watch Congress is now investigating this, that the NIH funded gain of function engineering at that Wuhan lab so there would be a lot of impetus for Fauci and Collins to not want the truth, or at least not want theories about the origins of the Coronavirus to get out and to suppress that and we now know that they were making efforts to suppress that.

**Host: David Wheaton 29:42**

Megan Basham with us today here on *The Christian Worldview* Radio Program. The topic is; how Christian leaders are propagandizing the flock. She's a reporter for *The Daily Wire*. Her article is excellent. I highly encourage you to read it. Please go to our website [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) where the article is linked in the preview for today's program.

Okay, I want to play another soundbite from that radio or that podcast interview between Ed Stetzer of Wheaton College, *Christianity Today*, and Francis Collins. This is back in September of 2021. Listeners will get an idea of what this sounds like, what this propaganda sounds like as Stetzer interviews Collins.

**Sound bite: Ed Stetzer Podcast Clip 30:23**

Is it 10 years from now we're still not able to have church and still masking or at what point do we say we're going to have to walk through this and find ways to protect the vulnerable and walk with the situation?



Well Ed, it's kind of going to be up to all of us. We know what we need to do to send this thing into the past. And that is something unfortunately, we haven't been successful at doing. Until we have the vast majority of our population immunized, this virus is going to continue to evolve, develop new mutations, and of course, spread itself again. And that's not just about the US, that's about the country and the globe.

So basically, I think it'll be five or 10 years, but I don't see it as sort of getting better in the next month or so when you see where we are at the present time. So maybe it's time to actually say this a little more clearly, Hey, nation, if you want this to be over with, there is a responsibility that all of us have, not just the people who decided to take action, but all of us. You don't get to the end of a pandemic when you have a significant number of people who are still able to catch it, spread it and incubate new mutations, If we could somehow figure out how to get the message across, and that includes a lot of people in churches who are still hesitant about taking these actions, then we might be able to send this thing packing.

But, you know Ed, I didn't dream we'd be having this conversation in September of 2021. There's no reason we should be here. If we'd been successful in convincing everybody that these incredibly safe and effective vaccines were answers to prayer, that they would want to take, and we had 95% of our population in that space, we'd be in a very different place. So if you want the future to be better, if you want people to be able to gather in churches and other places, we've somehow got to get the full endorsement of everybody, including a lot of believers, that this is up to us. This is not one of those where you stand back and let somebody else take care of it.

**Host: David Wheaton 32:34**

Okay, I'm going to stop it right there, Megan. And there was a lot said there, and I apologize for the blipping in the audio. That actually came directly from the Stetzer podcast, that was not from our program. It was on the original recording, apparently.

Basically what Francis Collins is saying there is, ending this virus is up to us. If people could just get with the program and get vaccinated. They're safe vaccines, there's nothing to worry about here. Keep moving along, wear masks, you know, we'd be done with this right now. But it's these, kind of, these six-toed people who just, you know, are holding us back. If we get this message better. And well, this is exactly what they're doing in this interview. What are your thoughts as you hear them actually talk about that, Megan?

**Guest: Megan Basham 33:18**

One of my thoughts is that it's disturbing to me that one, that Stetzer offered, you know, so little pushback to anything Collins said. Well, now wait a minute, you know that other medical experts have suggested that, you know, maybe myocarditis is an issue for particularly the demographic of young men, or that children because they have such low risk from this particular virus, maybe they don't need to run the risk that vaccines present. There was just no really digging deep into conflicting medical opinions. And there *are* conflicting medical opinions. And you know, I'm a reporter, I don't know what's right. But that's part of why we have this public discussion. And you have figures like Francis Collins, sort of, he is in a position of power who try to shut down that conversation. And as we have seen in these leaked emails, it's something that he was very strongly trying to do.

So I hear this, and I hear other segments of that particular interview, where he was saying, I exhort you pastors, exhort you pastors, spread this message in your churches. And the thing that shocked me most in that moment was to go, why is Ed Stetzer at least philosophically not asking, “Is that the proper role of pastors to be exhorting their congregants to wear masks or get vaccines?” Or “Is that really what they're to be focused on?” “Is that important to the spiritual health of a church?” So that was all really interesting to me. And that was, to be honest with you that first podcast, some of what you just played is what really set off my alarm bells going, I just don't know that this is something that a Christian leader has to lend their platform to uncritically and unquestioningly.

**Host: David Wheaton 34:58**

That's a good question in and of itself. Are these Christian leaders just undiscerning that they wouldn't think beyond just the mainstream government narrative on this? And you mentioned how it wasn't just Ed Stetzer. It was Russell Moore, he had a webinar, reading from your article, featuring Collins, and Russell Moore, when he was then with ERLC (now he's with *Christianity Today*) and it largely centered again on the importance of pastors convincing church members to get vaccinated.

The discussion also moved to the topic of masks. With Moore nodding along, Collins held up a basic over the counter cloth square. He “You said this earlier, ‘This is not a political statement, [he asserted], this is not an invasion of your personal freedom, this is a life saving medical device’”. That's Francis Collins, the head of the NIH, dictating policies in this country for how we're all going to live. But we know from studies and so forth, that a basic cloth mask, does basically nothing.

So again, how do you explain the level of discernment by not only Francis Collins, this is someone who's highly educated, highly influential, highly accomplished, you know, head of the Genome Project. It's like being a rocket scientist or something, you know. And then at the same rate, you have people like I mentioned, Stetzer, Warren, Russell Moore, all these other folks, Tim Keller, NT Wright, why the lack of discernment in just buying the public government narrative and not thinking biblically or critically about this? How do you explain that?

**Guest: Megan Basham 36:33**

You know, that's a really good question. And I didn't want to put words in their mouth, so I tried to ask. Particularly on some of those issues, you know, you had Russell Moore, in that particular webinar, they discussed masking children and as an unmitigated important public good. And of course, we know now that there has been a lot of damaging effects of masking children for so long. A lot of that research is just starting to come out, as is research showing that not only was it not effective, it might have been harmful in some cases.

So I looked at that, and I did try to call all of them. I tried to call Moore, I tried to call Stetzer, I tried to call Warren, Wright, Keller, everyone. And no one would talk to me. Specifically, when I presented Francis Collins record and said, Do you stand by these comments, calling him a man of integrity, of great faith, a national treasure? All of these things? I said, Do you stand by this? And why? Why did you lend him your platform? No one responded to me. So I'm left to look at the evidence that's out there to draw my own conclusions. And one of those was, I read some articles in *Newsweek*, in *Time* and some other outlets, where they deemed all of these men part of the Christian intelligence. Yet, in fact, they all are part of a book club. I don't know if every single one of them, but I know Moore, Keller, David French, David Brooks, and Francis Collins, and all of these men are, NT Wright apparently attends

sometimes, are members of some sort of elite book club. So I know that they socialize together. Warren said that they met at Davos in Switzerland at the World Economic Forum.

So we're traveling in some extremely tiny circles here, some extremely elite circles. So when I looked at all that I went, since they won't talk to me, I'm drawing my own conclusions. And it seems like there is a very strong pull towards such an elite figure in government. I mean, there are very few men who are as powerful as the head of the NIH, who have as much access to the levers of power in government as the head of the NIH. So I have to wonder is that a huge part of the pull? Is there also something about a bit of an embarrassment of everyday Christians that, gosh, we feel like people are kind of backwards, the world does not see us as intelligent and sophisticated. And now we're able to show them Francis Collins. He worked on the Genome Project, he's at the head of the NIH, he is intellectual and sophisticated, and he makes us feel intellectual and sophisticated when we can point to him as a friend.

So you know, those are those are my hypotheses, but I can't tell you that I was able to document it because no one would talk to me.

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**Host: David Wheaton 39:21**

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**Featured Resource: Biblical Foundation of Economics 39:40**

Recent guest, Cal Beisner, defines economics as, "Moral philosophy applied to marketplace relationships." So it makes sense that as our nation's judgement of what is right and wrong has moved away from biblical morality, our economic policies have gone the same wrong direction. So what is the Christian worldview on economics?

Cal Beisner has written an insightful 56-page, softcover booklet titled, *Biblical Foundations for Economics* that shows how economic principles and policies need to be based on the Bible to achieve the greatest human flourishing. For a limited time we are offering *Biblical Foundations for Economics* for donation of any amount to *The Christian Worldview*. To order, go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call 1-888-646- 2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. Again, the website is [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org).

**Host: David Wheaton 40:40**

David Wheaton here, host of *The Christian Worldview* Radio Program. Listeners are often surprised to learn that we as a ministry pay to broadcast on the radio station, website, or app on what you are listening today. That expense is recouped through listeners like you making a donation or becoming a Christian worldview partner. Our aim is to have each broadcast outlet fully supported by the listeners of that outlet. If you'd like to help us in our mission to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians, and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) and click on Donate.

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**Host: David Wheaton 41:46**

Thanks for joining us today on *The Christian Worldview*. I'm David Wheaton. Just a reminder that today's program and past programs are archived at our website, [The ChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org). Transcripts are also available. Now back to the interview.

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**Host: David Wheaton 42:00**

Megan Basham with us today here on *The Christian Worldview*. Her information or contact where she writes, *The Daily Wire* and her Twitter handle and so forth are all linked at our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org), as is the article we're talking about today.

So none of them have have responded or commented on your article, but what I have seen, the kind of comments I have seen, is not dealing with what you actually exposed, but that her tone is too critical or something like that. What has been the response to your column?

**Guest: Megan Basham 42:33**

I'll be honest with you. It's been sort of frustrating, because immediately after the article came out, I don't know if you're familiar with him, but the conservative radio host Erik Erickson, who's taken over Rush Limbaugh's old time slot, he at first said, I am very concerned about the issues that Basham brings up here. And I was grateful for that. The following day, or maybe it was a couple couple days later, he had an essay out saying, I spoke to some of the men named in this article. Now, Erickson didn't say who he spoke to. And he wasn't very specific about what they said. He just said, They assure me that the issue is more complex than it looks at first sight.

So once again, we have lending credibility. We have Erickson lending his credibility to these unnamed leaders, possibly Keller, possibly Moore, I don't know, because he didn't say, saying they're telling me that Collins is a good guy. They're good guys. You don't need to worry about it. That's not really how journalism is done, right? I want to know specifically, who did you speak to, what was their defense? To some degree, they said, Well, maybe Collins didn't know about all this research? Well, a couple of things to that. One is that Collins is the head, was at that point, the head of the NIH, so the buck stops with him. It didn't delve into the fact that he signed his name to some of this research. So it doesn't get into any of the specifics. So in the meantime, as Erickson's essay went on, it then went on to say, I really am grieved though, by the divisiveness and disagreement within our evangelical tribes, we need to disarm.

Well, then the Gospel Coalition picked up that part of Erickson's essay saying the divisiveness, the tone, it needs to stop. If you look at my article, I don't insult anyone, I don't smear anyone. I was very careful to document everything, very careful not to make assertions that I could not back up. So one, I didn't know what they were talking about with tone, and I started sort of demanding why, specifically, what are you objecting to about my tone? No answer, no response. And then you saw a lot of other evangelical leaders starting to say things that I don't know if it was about me. At the risk of hubris, I

went, suddenly all of these people at the ERLC, Beth Moore would have been another one, if you're familiar with Daniel Darling, who recently left the National Religious Broadcasters, he's now I believe in the communications department at a southern seminary, started putting out a lot of this commentary all week about lamenting the negative tone. None of them were specific about what they were talking about.

So I'm left here going, Is this about me? Is this about my tone? And when I would directly ask, no one would respond, they just kind of kept continuing saying this needs to end, all this negative tone. So for me, I go this is a manner of deflection. This is not acceptable. One, to try to answer through a backdoor, through Erickson's essay, which was then distributed and quoted through other leaders. Like, we need to have real concrete answers to real concrete questions. Tone at this point has nothing to do with it. And again, I challenged everyone, please point out what you object to in my essay as far as tone. No answer.

**Host: David Wheaton 45:47**

Megan, these would be the same people that would criticize the Son of God for His tone in cleaning out, cleansing the temple, or rebuking the Pharisees or Paul or Peter or John warning about false teachers, they would say their "tone".

**Guest: Megan Basham 46:05**

By the way, I didn't call anyone a whitewashed tomb or anything like that. I just laid out the facts.

**Host: David Wheaton 46:12**

No, I thought your article was very fact based, actually, and very direct, which is very helpful. This is a typical response. They don't deal with the material inside the article because the greatest value of evangelicalism is to be kind, to be nice, to be appear to be a good person. There's the emphasis on truth and a big emphasis on tone. They're just hoping it kind of goes away at this point. But this is why we wanted to have you on the program today. We want listeners to read this article. So that's my final question for you, Megan, is; Where do you think this is going to go? But more importantly, how should people listening today, once they have a chance to read the article for themselves, how should they respond going forward when they look at people like Ed Stetzer, Tim Keller, NT Wright, Rick Warren, Russell Moore, David French, *Christianity Today*, *The Gospel Coalition*, all these organizations and Christian leaders who provided cover or gave, not provided cover, actually provided platform for someone like Francis Collins? I can't see anything about him, besides his mere profession, that he would be a born again Christian, based on the things he's supported and lead at the National Institutes of Health. What do you think we should do with this information now that you've written it out?

**Guest: Megan Basham 47:28**

What's been frustrating for me is to go, something like this happens and nobody responds. As I said, this sort of back channel answer is presented. Trust me, these are good guys. That's actually not good enough. So what I would love is for people to just sort of join me in demanding some answers here. I think I've sort of reconciled myself to the fact that I am not going to be the one to hear from them. I'm not going to be the one to get answers, but I hope that others push because I feel like if there is enough clamor, if there is enough of a demand going, "No, we are not going to move on from this".

For the last two years, we have seen a divide within the church like we have not seen in generations over things that the church leaders pushed. You very specifically told us, we were not loving our

neighbors, we were not following Jesus if we didn't believe the government in every jot and tittle of what it told us. So I feel like that is something that needs to be answered. So what I would really like is for other people to go, yes, let's all together go, "Please answer these questions". It is not enough to say, that's divisive and just move on, we're not going to do that. So that's probably my first thing is I just hope other people will reach out and ask them because I would really like to know what their explanation is. I think we all would like to know that.

And, second of all, I hope that we all have learned, if nothing else, that if it's a debatable issue of Christian liberty, let's leave it as a debatable issue of Christian liberty. I have to answer to my master the same way every other believer has to answer to the Lord as well. And our consciences may be leading us to something different when it's in an area in which the Bible does not specifically speak. Now we can draw principles, but we may draw different convictions. And I think we have to allow for that in other church communities, for other believers, for other people's families.

**Host: David Wheaton 49:20**

I think that's very wise and very well said. Megan, thank you so much for coming on the program today to further explain what you wrote in your article. There really is no further explanation needed after you read the article. You'll see how comprehensive it is. But we're thankful that you expose this. It's important to point out the truth and you did do it with grace. There was not bad tone, at least from my opinion in this article and was very helpful to read about how evangelical leaders, prominent ones, are being used, willingly used to get out this propaganda of the government's. It's actually really quite chilling. We thank you for bringing this to light and we just wish all of God's best and grace to you and we hope you'll come back on the program sometime.

**Guest: Megan Basham 50:03**

I absolutely will. And thank you so much, David, for having me. I'm obviously very passionate about this issue. And I think it's really important that we talk about it. So I appreciate your sort of amplifying the story.

**Host: David Wheaton 50:14**

Okay, you've been listening to an interview with Megan Basham today, a reporter with *The Daily Wire*. We have this column linked on our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org). And I know this can be hard to believe for some of you listening today because, "Ed Stetzer spoke at my church, or my Bible study group did Tim Keller's book on marriage, or my friend was saved through Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, or I like such and such an article on *The Gospel Coalition*, or I've heard so many great things about Francis Collins from fellow Christians." But we have to realize that those who are either deceived or are actually knowing deceivers are not obvious under miners.

Just consider the religious elites over history. The majority of them are usually on the wrong side of God. Consider the priests during the days of the Old Testament kings, they were always going in a direction away from God. Consider the Pharisees and Sadducees, the religious leaders of Christ's day, always opposing Christ. Consider the Roman Catholic Church and its Pope's over the centuries. And now we can add to that so many in evangelical leadership. It's very difficult, if not impossible to be in elite positions. There's a peer pressure to conform. There's a seduction of getting to that position and maintaining it. There's a temptation of having power and exerting it. There's financial incentives, and there's this respecter of persons dynamic. So and so is the president of this seminary or this reputable institution. But let's not forget the Christian life is a narrow road. It's a life of vilification and frankly, we



don't need these evangelical elite. Rather, we need to mark these evangelical leaders and abstain from their influence. I Thessalonians 5 says, "*Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good, abstain from every form of evil.*" Your unknown local pastor is far more reliable if he is faithful to the Word.

**Host: David Wheaton 52:28**

Thank you for joining us today on *The Christian Worldview*. Thanks also to our listeners and Samaritan Ministries for funding today's program. In just a moment, there will be more information on the ministry. Let's remember, we may live in a challenging world in which evangelical leaders are complicit in government propaganda, but we need to look to Jesus Christ and His word. He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Until next time, "Think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm!"

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The mission of *The Christian Worldview* is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript, or find out "What must I do to be saved?" Go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call toll free 1-888-646-2233.

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Thanks for listening to *The Christian Worldview*.