

24-1113wc Transcript

24-1113wc - *Christian Apologetics, p77, Tom Freed*

This transcript transcribed by TurboScribe.ai

See a detailed summary: [Detailed Summary HTML](#) - [Detailed Summary PDF](#)
(Detailed Summary by Grok / X)

24-1113 Wed. Class - Christian Apologetics, p77

Transcript (0:04 - 23:52)

Transcript

Teacher: Tom Freed

(0:04) Good evening, I'm back, but not for long. (0:09) Two classes and it's Scott's turn, so we're finishing up (0:14) looking at morality and why does the signpost point to God? (0:20) Our morality comes from God because he made us in his image. (0:25) He is righteous, sinless, moral, and just.

(0:28) He's given us a perfect world that we can live by. (0:33) We need to have a higher morality than just humans. (0:38) Everyone can't just be their own moral confluence.

(0:41) You can't just say everybody can have their own morality. (0:44) I mean, that doesn't work. (0:46) If you did, then you couldn't say Hitler and the Nazis (0:49) were wrong in what they did because they believed (0:53) they 100% were fighting for good.

(0:55) They did all that because they believed they were right. (0:58) They believed the Jews were evil (1:00) and they needed to be exterminated. (1:03) You just go off of what everybody thinks (1:05) and you have a million different views on morality.

(1:11) We need to look to somebody, something outside of humanity. (1:16) Looking to a transcendent, personal, good agent (1:19) beyond this world is the one who has designed the world (1:23) and gives ultimate meaning to our lives (1:25) is the simplest and most coherent explanation (1:28) for the full range of moral truth. (1:32) God's really the only explanation for moral truth.

(1:37) You can't have it any other way. (1:38) If we're just animals, then it doesn't matter if we kill (1:44) and take whatever we want, kill infants, or do whatever. (1:49) If there's no God, it wouldn't matter.

(1:50) If we're all just animals like the atheists say (1:52) and only the strong survive, (1:54) then none of that would be wrong. (2:01) Once again, while this argument could be used (2:04) in support of other forms of theism, (2:07) the human need for value, moral obligation, (2:09) and purpose in life is seamlessly (2:12) within the Christian story of reality. (2:15) Like we said, the Christian story (2:19) is about the explanation of reality (2:21) and that's because it is, it is the truth.

(2:24) It explains everything, not every single thing, but enough. (2:32) We're in the middle of looking at the greatest story (2:34) ever told so far in this chapter. (2:37) We have traits how observation and experiences (2:40) can point to a transcendent reality beyond our universe, (2:44) which is, of course, assumed within the Christian worldview.

(2:49) Each of the questions and explanations that follow (2:51) can assist in opening the door (2:54) to consider the distinctive aspects of the Christian story. (2:59) The atheist doesn't have answers (3:01) to the deeper questions of life, but Christians do. (3:06) Who are we and why are we here? (3:09) What is the problem with the world and what is the solution? (3:14) And where are we going? (3:16) They're not simply answered with isolated statements (3:20) or logical syllogisms, but with stories (3:23) that seep into our bones and powerfully shape our daily lives.

(3:30) So we can see the atheist will go through his whole life (3:33) wondering, why am I here? (3:36) What's my purpose in life? (3:37) They don't have an answer to that, we do. (3:41) The Christian story told and embraced (3:45) in life-changing ways in incredible numbers (3:50) over the past 2,000 years has provided powerful answers (3:54) to these universal questions, (3:56) which even non-believers have noted. (4:00) Who are we and why are we here? (4:02) We are made by God in his image (4:04) in the world God created for us, (4:07) which means we have inherent value, meaning, and purpose.

(4:10) We were designed to live in a right relationship (4:13) with God, devoted to him, enjoying and stewarding (4:17) his good gift of creation. (4:20) We are here for God's pleasure, (4:22) and Solomon explains perfectly what man's duty is. (4:26) Now all has been heard, here's the conclusion of the matter.

(4:30) Fear God and keep his commandments, (4:31) for this is the duty of all mankind. (4:35) Ecclesiastes 12, 13. (4:38) We had a great sermon from John.

(4:43) So about that, and I've mentioned that verse before, (4:46) that's the whole duty of mankind, (4:49) to serve God and keep his commandments, to fear God. (4:54) What is the problem with the world and what is the solution? (4:57) An almost universal intuition exists (5:01) among people that something has gone wrong. (5:04) You have sensed that something's wrong with this world, (5:07) it's a fallen world, there's a lot of sin, suffering, evil, (5:12) and almost universal things are not as they should be.

(5:18) Some have even suggested that religion itself is a problem. (5:21) You ever hear these people say, oh, religion's the cause (5:24) of all the wars and killings and evil. (5:29) There's a problem with sin, evil, and suffering, (5:32) and the solution is not a series of abstract beliefs (5:35) or an ideology, but rather a person.

(5:41) God provided the solution with Jesus, (5:43) and it's the perfect sacrifice who died (5:44) for all the world's sins before and after him. (5:51) So in summary, the solution is that God (5:54) as a loving Father has acted. (5:56) He has not sat on the sidelines simply to condemn creation (6:00) or leave it to spiral to death and misery.

(6:04) God has entered into the world in the person of Jesus (6:07) to absorb the cost of rebellion and to destroy evil (6:10) to make this world a right. (6:12) Ephesians 1.7, in him we have redemption through his blood, (6:17) the forgiveness of our trespasses (6:18) according to the riches of his grace. (6:22) So God didn't just sit back and let evil take over.

(6:26) He sent his Son, he gave us the sacrifice, (6:29) he has the solution. (6:31) That's the solution is Jesus. (6:34) The Spirit resides in those who turn (6:37) from their self-absorption and pledge allegiance (6:40) to their rightful Lord in order to live eternally (6:44) in the right relation to God and the creation (6:47) he is redeeming.

(6:51) So we'll finish end of this with where are we going? (6:58) The Christian story offers the answer (7:00) to this inescapable problem of universal desire, (7:06) which Luke Ferry describes as an issue (7:08) that all humans are attempting to come to terms with, (7:12) to be understood, to be loved, not to be alone, (7:15) not to be separated from our loved ones. (7:18) In short, not to die and not to have them die in us. (7:22) He recounts Edgar Allen Poe's poem, The Raven, (7:26) and the bird's famous line, (7:29) nevermore is a powerful illustration (7:32) of the existential terror that death brings.

(7:37) Poe is suggesting that death means everything (7:39) that is unrepeatable. (7:42) Death is in the midst of life, that which will not return, (7:47) that which belongs irreversibly to time past, (7:51) which we have no hope for of ever recovering. (7:56) Death casts a shadow over all life.

(7:59) Death is seen as an idyllic experience of our childhood (8:03) that we can never get back. (8:05) Death is every mistake that we have made (8:07) and can never be reversed. (8:10) Death is every friend, child, or loved one we have buried, (8:15) we can never get back to.

(8:18) They are gone. (8:19) Death is the future. (8:20) It is our inevitable fate.

(8:23) Utter silent darkness cut off from all we love, (8:26) all we hold dear. (8:28) That's a grim look at death. (8:30) I mean, that's what death basically is (8:32) without God and Jesus.

(8:34) The finality of love and relationships (8:37) is what makes death so intolerable. (8:42) The belief that death ushers in an impersonal existence, (8:47) absence of consciousness, (8:49) or the belief that death is just nothingness (8:52) provides little to no solace. (8:55) No wonder the atheist is so miserable and depressed.

(8:58) You know, they live life with no meaning. (9:01) You know, they believe they're gonna die (9:03) in the eternal darkness, (9:04) and it will be eternal darkness for them. (9:07) You know, they'll still be alive in hell, (9:10) but their souls still exist.

(9:14) But in contrast, in Christianity, (9:17) the darkness is ultimately banished. (9:21) Instead, the believers offer eternal relationships (9:23) with God and others and mutual love. (9:27) The resurrection promises that the love in this world, (9:31) the things we love in the right relation to God, (9:34) are not only meaningful, they will exist forever.

(9:39) Death cannot touch such love. (9:42) Jesus' resurrection points us forward to God's redemption (9:46) of both the world and individuals, (9:49) real human beings, body, face, voice, personality. (9:55) This not-ending is a fully embodied eternal salvation.

(9:59) Love will not end at death. (10:02) We remember Christ defeated death. (10:05) He conquered death.

(10:07) God will undo death. (10:09) He will reverse what seemed irreversible. (10:13) But is it too good to be true? (10:15) As Julian Barnes admits, the gospel is a beautiful story, (10:21) but is it a lie? (10:22) Yes.

(10:23) There he concedes, (10:25) amongst the available doctrines of salvation, (10:28) nothing can compete with Christianity, (10:30) provided that it is that you are a believer. (10:34) Later he adds, were it to be true, (10:37) I would certainly be his partaker. (10:41) He even says it's a great story, (10:45) great to believe in, but he doesn't believe it's true.

(10:48) One of our jobs as apologists is to ask the question, (10:52) but what if it is true? (10:55) One of our goals would be then (10:57) for the unbeliever to respond. (10:59) It would be nice if that story were true, (11:02) but too bad there are no good reasons to believe it is. (11:06) We should have good reasons.

(11:08) We should hope they have said (11:09) to give them a reason to think about. (11:12) The appreciation of the beauty of the story (11:14) can be a first step to believe the veracity of the story. (11:20) Awakening the imagination can lead to an openness (11:23) to the reasons to believe.

(11:26) What are some of the reasons for believing the story? (11:30) The chapter started out by surveying some of the signposts (11:33) that point beyond contemporary secular narratives (11:37) with the purpose of opening doors for the gospel. (11:41) Keeping the signposts from the opening section (11:45) of the chapter in mind, (11:47) we now turn to some historical signposts (11:51) from the climax of the Christian narrative (11:53) to provide a model to persuade others (11:56) that it is both a beautiful and a true story. (12:00) We know it's true.

(12:02) We have good evidence. (12:04) We just need to convey that to others. (12:09) Now look at Jesus' death and resurrection.

(12:12) When discussing any event in ancient history, (12:15) 100% proof is not on the table for anyone. (12:19) This is just not how historical evidence (12:21) from the ancient world works. (12:24) You know, they didn't have cameras and cell phones (12:27) thousands of years ago, you know? (12:30) There is an absolute proof, but there is evidence.

(12:35) There is firsthand witnesses. (12:37) That's how all history was written by, you know, witnesses. (12:43) And do not forget, there is no such thing (12:45) as a neutral observer, especially when approaching (12:48) a question with such high stakes, high stakes implications.

(12:54) We should avoid portraying ourselves as unbiased (12:57) or calling on unbelievers to be impartial. (13:00) That's a great point. (13:02) You can't look and expect and pretend (13:05) like we're impartial or they should be.

(13:07) We do have bias, but however, we can seek to be fair. (13:14) We can ask the unbeliever to try and approach (13:17) the Christian claim with as much fairness as possible. (13:23) The story of Jesus' resurrection would have been (13:27) too counterintuitive to simply be made up.

(13:31) Look at an unexpected death. (13:34) Due to the amount of evidence, (13:36) almost all New Testament scholars today agree (13:39) that Jesus died at the hands of the Romans by crucifixion. (13:42) Well, it's not even debated anymore.

(13:44) There's historical evidence outside the Bible. (13:48) In contrast, Jewish scholars, before Jesus arrived, (13:52) did not seem to have been expecting (13:54) the true Messiah to die on a cross. (13:58) This is why it would have been strange (13:59) to first century years to hear the disciples (14:03) continue to proclaim that Jesus was the Messianic King (14:06) after he was shamefully crucified.

(14:10) The death was reserved for the most despised criminals. (14:14) No Jews in their right mind would have imagined (14:16) that the long-awaited Jewish king would die on a cross, (14:20) not even his own disciples. (14:24) The disciples' repeated failure (14:26) to understand Jesus' statements concerning his death (14:30) was because they apparently, (14:33) along with other first century Jews, (14:34) believed that Jesus would do normal things (14:36) expected of the coming Messiah, (14:39) serve as national deliverer, (14:42) perhaps engage in military victory, (14:45) and set up a visible kingdom on earth, (14:47) not to die a dishonorable death on the cross.

(14:51) We can see that exact opposite of what they expected. (14:56) They expected Jesus to be like David, a conqueror king, (15:01) like they said, not dying like a criminal (15:04) the most despised way. (15:07) Since they didn't see the death coming, (15:09) this of course meant they didn't see (15:11) the resurrection coming either.

(15:15) A counterintuitive claim, the resurrection. (15:19) The work of the scholars such as N.T. Wright (15:21) has shown that the resurrection of Jesus (15:23) was an unpopular notion with first century Jews and Greeks. (15:29) That's the sort of thing one would make up (15:31) in an attempt to start a movement.

(15:33) The dominant non-Jewish view was that bodily resurrection (15:36) was impossible and unwanted. (15:40) They believed the soul was good (15:42) and the physical body was bad. (15:46) Many Jews on the other hand (15:47) look forward to the future bodily resurrection.

(15:51) However, this resurrection was a corporate resurrection (15:54) of all the righteous, not just one particular person. (15:59) What is more, this future resurrection (16:02) was thought to occur along with the renewal (16:04) of the entire world. (16:06) It was not thought of as a single individual (16:09) in the middle of history (16:10) while the problems of the world continued to unfold.

(16:14) Here's the key. (16:16) The disciples simply would not have made up (16:18) the story of Jesus' resurrection (16:20) because people were not expecting the Messiah (16:23) first to be killed and then to raise from the dead. (16:27) Neither Jews nor Greeks would have naturally (16:30) been naturally open to this idea.

(16:34) Moreover, we know from history that Jesus (16:36) was not the first would-be Messiah to gather a following (16:39) only to be executed. (16:42) Nevertheless, as N.T. Wright observes, (16:45) in not one single case do we hear the slightest mention (16:48) of the disappointed followers claiming that their hero (16:52) had been risen from the dead. (16:55) They knew better.

(16:56) Resurrection was not a private event. (16:58) It involved human bodies. (17:01) There would have to be an empty tomb somewhere.

(17:05) A Jewish revolutionary leader, (17:09) a Jewish revolutionary whose leader had been executed (17:12) by authorities and who managed to escape arrest (17:16) had two options, give up the revolution (17:18) or find another leader. (17:21) Claiming that the original leader was alive again (17:23) was simply not an option unless, of course, he was. (17:29) That's a good point.

(17:32) You know, to claim all that, you had to have no body there. (17:36) You remember the guards standing over the tomb, (17:38) all the security they put in measure? (17:42) And the body they believed was risen because they saw it. (17:48) They witnessed it firsthand.

(17:51) We also have counterintuitive witnesses. (17:54) It is also odd for the first century context (17:59) that in each of the four gospels, (18:01) women were presented as the first eyewitnesses (18:04) to the risen Jesus. (18:06) At this time, women were not believed (18:08) to give trustworthy testimony on important matters, (18:12) which is why they were not allowed to testify in court.

(18:16) How would the public respond to an unpopular doctrine (18:20) being propagated by people who did not culturally (18:23) count as witnesses? (18:25) It surely would not have helped. (18:29) It would be counterintuitive to invent a story this way (18:34) with the hope of it catching on unless, of course, (18:37) the various reports were all in agreement (18:38) with its culturally uncomfortable detail (18:41) because it was the way it actually happened. (18:45) More than 500 people saw the resurrected Jesus (18:48) and some of them were skeptical (18:50) prior to what they witnessed.

(18:53) Also, the multiple appearances. (18:57) Peter, James, Paul, and at one time, (18:59) more than 500 people claimed to have seen (19:01) the resurrected Jesus. (19:03) Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15 (19:06) that the appearance of 500 was just one of many times (19:11) people saw Jesus and that many of these witnesses (19:14) were still alive, which meant Paul's claim (19:17) could have easily been invalidated (19:19) if these witnesses weren't really around.

(19:23) While it has been argued that Jesus' followers (19:25) were in such a state of grief that they hallucinated, (19:29) this does not explain why so many people (19:31) at different times had the same hallucination. (19:35) As projections of the mind, (19:37) hallucinations are singular, not subjective events. (19:42) Regarding mass hallucinations, (19:45) in which people in a group hallucinate the same image, (19:48) modern psychologists provide little scientific evidence (19:52) to substantiate such occurrences.

(19:56) Nor does grief explain why Paul committed Jewish leader (20:00) who was persecuting Christians (20:02) and clearly not grieving would have hallucinated. (20:06) Nor does the hallucinations theory explain (20:08) why the body was not produced by the authorities (20:11) who had the power and motive to extract the body (20:16) to end this new movement. (20:19) So another reason is unlikely disciples.

(20:23) Paul, the persecutor of the church, who was suddenly changed. (20:27) Paul was an active persecutor of the church (20:29) and from his own testimony and from Luke's and Acts, (20:33) he claims to have had an encounter with the risen Jesus. (20:38) Instantaneously, Paul went from an active prosecutor (20:42) to a bold proclaimer of the gospel.

(20:48) Paul was so convinced he had experienced the risen Jesus (20:51) that for the rest of his life, (20:53) he suffered both spiritually and physically (20:55) for the sake of the gospel. (20:57) Do you remember all he went through? (21:01) He was almost stoned to death, the shipwrecks, the beatings, (21:04) being hungry, starving, constantly being harassed, (21:09) having nothing, and why would he do all that for a lie? (21:14) James, the brother of Jesus, the skeptic-turned believer. (21:20) From the gospels, we learn that Jesus' brother, James, (21:23) was unbelieving during the time of his ministry.

(21:27) However, following Jesus' death and resurrection, (21:30) James is reported as not being only a believer (21:33) but a prominent Christian leader in Jerusalem. (21:37) In 1 Corinthians 15, three through eight, (21:41) the early credal passage, (21:43) Jesus is said to have appeared to his

brother, James. (21:47) We also know from Acts 15 and Galatians 1 (21:50) that James became a leader of the church of Jerusalem.

(21:55) Furthermore, James not only became a believer and a leader, (22:00) but he also, according to Josephus and other sources, (22:02) became a martyr for the faith. (22:05) We can see all the unlikely disciples. (22:10) The next is, no body was produced.

(22:14) We'll pick that up with that next class. (22:21) And like I said, we'll finish up. (22:22) Hopefully, Scott's ready.

(22:24) I've been warning him, so. (22:27) I guess I could take you out on another something (22:31) if you're not ready. (22:32) But like I said, I think this went longer than I expected.

(22:37) I was just, you know, I was trying to find a subject (22:40) that we didn't really totally go over. (22:44) I know Scott did some apologetic stuff in that whole, (22:49) you know, the creation was a great apologetic proof. (22:56) I'm not the expert on this subject, (22:57) so I'm glad you guys stuck with it (22:59) and hopefully picked something up.

(23:04) But along with a prayer, (23:06) thank you, Lord, for another day to get together, (23:10) another day to go over apologetics. (23:12) Hopefully, learn something and be able to use it (23:15) and reach out to others, spread the word (23:19) and be able to turn people towards Christianity. (23:25) Watch over this country, watch over the leaders, (23:29) watch over President Trump as he goes into office.

(23:34) Hopefully, the leaders follow your word (23:37) and you're with them. (23:38) And we know that you put the leaders of nations (23:42) that you appoint them, Lord. (23:44) So help us to obey your word, (23:49) spread the gospel and be bold. (23:51) Jesus' name, amen. (23:52)