

10. Atheism & the New Crusade

Tess Lambert, 22.04.2022

Youtube Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szw-IPR3d0Y>

[00:00:16.690] - Tess

Dear Lord, thank you for how you have led and guided this movement. We see an Almighty hand behind every step that we've have taken. We are in awe at times when we think back of how you have led us to understand external events in all their complexity, so much that we expected so much that might not have been predicted, that makes perfect sense. That we know how to relate to. We know what positions to take on issues because you have taught us. You have led and guided us just as you led and guided ancient Israel towards the promised Land. It is as real as the pillar of fire. I pray, Lord, as we continue to study together, that we will only see with greater clarity how wise your guiding really has been. Please deepen our understanding, help our minds to understand and absorb what you wish to teach us in these classes. I pray this in Jesus name, Amen. We are studying the midnight cry. That surprises me. You know, it's been 2018, 2019, 2021. It's been a while. And we are studying the midnight cry. We are studying two streams of information.

[00:01:49.590] - Tess

And 2018 was the beginning of an incredible journey. And when I look at what 2018 was, and the light that we're walking into today, and as we see it flicker off into the future, just those glimpses of the greater understanding God wants to give us. Perhaps some might think it's not rational because I can't break it down and show them the pieces of data, but it is just as real. It's just as true. And it's impossible to not feel inspired, I believe, by that journey. But we are studying two streams of information. This was meant to be a critique into the left wing, how we break apart the left wing, and understand how to sift information, how to sift sources that we read online in newspapers, in the information age. How do we sort information, even from trustworthy sources? Because we don't accept 100% of what a trustworthy source has to say. We lost our board work because of last week's camp meeting. I just want to redraw a couple of things. By the way, I might ask Katherine, did you read the media broadcast article on Elon Musk and his takeover bid for Twitter?

[00:03:48.410] - Tess

How did that make you think about what we've been saying about freedom and equality? Did that connect?

[00:03:57.890] - Katherine

Yes it did. It seemed to be really closely connected with what we're learning right now. I thought the timing was really interesting. He seems to prioritize freedom of speech over other things. That's like a core value that he holds, that the Internet should provide a forum where people can just speak and say whatever

they like. There should be no censorship. And I think the article was pointing out that that's sort of an old, outdated mindset. That some of these social media platforms have moved on from then. Elon Musk is a little bit behind the times.

[00:04:47.930] - Tess

I find that concept of it being outdated interesting. Because Jack Dorsey, the founder of Twitter, and the other young entrepreneurs of the tech age, idolized freedom, that so often happens. And then they started their platforms, they let them go, and then they watched years of what happened. When you give that type of freedom and that type of free speech, it's through harming society, we see the consequences of some of that. They have learnt the hard way. That freedom needs to come under something, whatever they think that thing is. Freedom has to be ruled by another principle and we would call that equality. I think it's reasonable, even externally, to call that equality. But how tech platforms have learnt that the hard way and many have not learnt. And that is creating a key part of this culture war. Did you have anything else you want to say on that?

[00:06:08.500] - Tess

I don't want to interrupt.

[00:06:11.020] - Katherine

No. That's all.

[00:06:16.350] - Tess

'HP', is that Marie?

[00:06:21.290] - Marie

Yes, it is.

[00:06:22.170] - Marie

Sorry, I'm sitting on my computer.

[00:06:25.750] - Tess

I knew that you were doing that with your computer. Did you have a comment?

[00:06:36.700] - Marie

Only to tell you that that's who I am. Sorry, HP.

[00:06:42.670] - Tess

I will remember.

[00:06:45.790] - Marie

Okay. Thank you.

[00:06:47.240] - Tess

Because you're one of the ones participating, so I need to find you. This is the left wing. Right wing. And we know that the midnight cry was to move us from being right wing to being left wing. And we know that's important because both sides of this curtain of the great controversy, whether we're dealing with the spiritual war between Christ and Satan, or we're dealing with the world you see around us, the politics, the election in Australia, where we seem to have a centrist party, a right wing party and a far right wing party. It's a mess. Whether we're looking at that externally, both sides of that political spectrum center on an election. It centers on a choice between two political ideologies, Christ and Satan. Left wing. Right wing. Perhaps that might be overly simplistic and scare some people, but we have been arguing that the tree in the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve made that choice, what happened was just an election campaign. God says, don't eat it, choose my government, choose the principles of my government. And Satan comes down and all he does is campaigning.

[00:08:29.330] - Tess

It's a classic political campaign where Satan is saying to Eve, look what my government can offer you. My government can offer you so much more. My government can offer you freedom, unrestrained freedom. God is trying to restrain you. He's causing you harm by restricting your freedom. If you want to come up higher, to a higher state of being, to a higher state of power, freedom, vote for me. She votes for Lucifer. It was a campaign and Satan won. Satan claimed this Earth. He claimed to this Earth because they voted for him. And God respecting people's freedoms to vote, freedom is still important; God says: you with your free will, your freedom voted for Satan's political party. I God cannot step in now. Your free will allows you to choose your political party. And everything that has happened since then is because earth voted for a political system that Satan offered in Eden. And what God has been doing since then is a political campaign to say, okay, some people have voted for Satan, but every single person in their lifetime gets to vote. We all get to vote whether we want Lucifer's government or God's government.

[00:10:01.650] - Tess

Both sides of the great controversy curtain are centered on politics. Therefore we need to understand them. And the midnight cry was God, as part of his political campaign for humanity, saying, you think that it's right to be in this spectrum. I need to move you because what we believe externally politically is directly connected to this election campaign between Christ and Satan. We were here. And what we have been discussing as a group is first of all, what principle governs the left wing. And we saw that it was equality governing freedom. And just as one example, we shared that media broadcast article that Katherine and I just discussed on Elon Musk and Twitter. This is the underlying issue that is driving the culture war, not just in America, not just in the west. You can see it in South Korea, in Ghana, in Russia. It is driving that culture war. Many countries though, including Russia who doesn't have freedom anyway. So it becomes a little more complicated there. I can see that. Freedom coming underneath equality. Right wing says freedom above all else. Still believing in equality, but not willing to restrict someone's freedom

to provide equality. So not willing to restrict freedom of speech on Twitter when that let loose ultimate freedom of speech is a driving force behind growing misogyny, far right racism, militia groups, Donald Trump and everything surrounding that ideology.

[00:12:16.770] - Tess

So equality over freedom, freedom over equality. We defined the beating heart at the center of right wing politics and left wing politics. Then I shared with you a Vox article. I'm not sure if people have had a chance to reread that before today or before tonight. If you have had a chance to reread it today, this afternoon, can you please put your hand in the chat. If you read the Vox article, just to know if people were able to do that and who was able to do that? Three quarters of it. That was probably the majority of the useful of what I wanted to see. Quarter of it. That might have missed some of the quotes. It is long. Moli, you read it? Moli, did you see anything more in that article because of what we've been discussing the last few weeks, or did it just refresh your memory?

[00:13:40.770] - Moli

Yes, I was just refreshing my memory on what we've been talking about. But I only read at least probably half of it. I did not finish it yet.

[00:14:00.170] - Tess

Sure. I know that asking people to do that, this afternoon, on a Friday afternoon and the length of it, was not necessarily going to happen. I was just curious if people had got more out of it, having read it after what we discussed last week. Because I did it and it refreshed some things. We are going to quote some portions of it tonight. That might help. Partly based on that article, but without necessarily proving it. I said Christianity is here. Protestantism. They'll call that Dominionism. And to get to the point, I'm saying that Protestantism, Christianity, religion is not the whole of the problem. I'm saying it's not the whole of the problem. I'm also saying that it is not the cause of the problem. We have spent most of the time from 2018 targeting religion, Protestantism specifically. Protestantism, because isn't it Protestantism that brings about the Sunday Law? So seeing Protestantism and Dominionism, how they have impacted the Republican Party, this portion of the political spectrum, targeting Dominionism specifically, talking about Ted Cruz and other Dominionists. But what I want us to see and what we started to pull out after that Vox article, was that it is not the whole of the problem, and it is not the cause of the problem.

[00:16:06.830] - Tess

And we want to see the whole, the other portions of it. And we want to get to the point. Which is the underlying cause. I want to quote. This is an article, an interview. The interviewer is Sarah Henry and this is the Humanist. The website is the Humanist. It's an atheistic based publication. Sarah Henry is herself an atheist. And Sarah Henry is interviewing a woman, Alex DiBranco, who is also an atheist. This is an atheist interviewing an atheist on the Humanist website publication. It's titled '*Exposing and Challenging Male Supremacism*'. Alex DiBranco is the woman being interviewed. She gives a little background. She's a sociologist, a journalist, and a researcher studying the founding and development of the conservative movement in the United States. She is the executive director and co founder of the 'Institute for Research on Male Supremacism'. Her work includes a focus on male supremacist, terrorism and violence, including

incel mass violence and anti feminist conspiracies. And the Altright has an umbrella for white supremacism, male supremacism, and antisemitic mobilizations. She provides trainings for social justice organizers on countering supremacist mobilization, and ideology.

[00:17:53.070] - Tess

So that's just a little bit of background into the woman being interviewed. I only have a couple of points to make from this interview or really one point. Sarah Henry says, tell me a little bit about yourself. What in your background inspired you to found the Institute for Research on Male Supremacism? Alex DiBranco answers. While my original research focused on the Christian right and antiabortion movements, I also worked as an activist on sexual violence issues. And starting in the early 2010s, I was watching Men's Rights Activists, MRA's, like Paul Elam and their victim blaming rhetoric. We're going to actually quote Paul Elam, he's going to come up down the road. I just mentioned him. Over time, I became more concerned with the growth of secular misogynist movements. Sarah Henry says: It seems to me that more often than not religious Dominionism, white nationalism and male supremacy are inextricably intertwined. Is that something you've found in your work? So the interviewer is going to ask Alex DiBranco that most of the time it is religious Dominionism intertwined with white nationalism, racism and male supremacy sexism.

[00:19:25.690] - Tess

Sarah Henry saying, it seems to her that you find racism and sexism intertwined with Christian Dominionism. Alex DiBranco answers, I would actually have to say that contemporary white supremacist and male supremacist communities demonstrate more of what I would term secular misogyny, which includes what appears to be an overrepresentation of atheists with regards to their small percentage of the population. The interviewer, remember these are atheists being interviewed, is saying, isn't it religious Dominionism that intertwines around racism and misogyny? And Alex DiBranco countered that and says: contemporarily? No contemporarily what you find is secular movements and atheism intertwined around white supremacy and male supremacist movements. I wanted to hear that from an atheist herself. That's the same point we made last week. And remember, the Vox article says there is a pipeline between libertarianism and the alt right. And we are going to go back into discussing libertarianism. But there is also a pipeline, an overrepresentation of atheists in the alt right as well in regards to their percentage in the actual population. When we talk about the far right Trinity, the altright Trinity, it is not Protestant Dominionism that takes the largest part of the issue.

[00:21:14.790] - Tess

What she has just said is from her research, Protestantism is not the whole of the problem. It isn't even half religion, not just Protestantism. Religion. Dominionism is not even half of the problem. And that's what we've been exploring. I'm going back to that Vox article. It spoke about that Trinity, that far rightwing Trinity. Who remembers that? Marie, what was the Trinity?

[00:22:18.830] - Marie

I didn't look at my notes. I'm sorry.

[00:22:22.070] - Tess

That's fine. Notes are fine.

[00:22:31.410] - Marie

Okay, Men's Rights, Atheism and Libertarianism theology.

[00:22:56.920] - Tess

Men's Rights, Atheism and Libertarianism. It's not Dominionism that forms the bulk of the rightwing problem. It's there, and we've targeted it, because it's there that we find Adventism. And Adventism is a very small group of people, in reality. I think we've all said Adventism is a small world. Everyone knows that once they have a piece of news that they don't want too many people in the church to know about. It's a small community, and we're speaking to a small community because we care about Adventism. We care about the church, we care about the people in it. It's our target audience. We're going to target the issues that relate to Adventism. But if we step back from that, we still need to see it in its context. We still need to see the subjects of racism as a prophetic subject and sexism as a prophetic subject, as the Sunday Law issue. We have to see it in its correct external context. And when we put it in its correct external context, it is a combination of atheism, libertarianism, and misogyny summarized in men's rights movements, but misogyny in general that are the foundational principles of much of the far right.

[00:24:46.660] - Tess

That Vox article has a couple of points that I wanted us to take from it. Feel free to raise your hand at any time. A couple of points to take from that Vox article. It says that he went to College in 2006 and he was 18 when he went to College. If my maths is correct, then when this article is written, which is 2015, Max is about 27. We're talking about a younger segment of society. All of the context of what they're discussing in the shadow of Gamergate is a younger segment of society. And that is one of the reasons that looking at this secular Trinity, it is more symbolic of America's future than its past. And because of that, we can see the danger that the United States is in, that the lamb like beast is in. Max would be about 27. It's not aging Protestants who are losing their Dominionism and trying to desperately protect it. We're talking about a younger segment. I'm quoting: 'Max doesn't think much of feminism in general, or at least of what he says feminism became once the voting and the jobs and the abortion rights were sorted and the word became a dog whistle for self pity and sexism towards men.

[00:26:27.490] - Tess

A couple of points from that paragraph. Max says that women now have the right to vote, they can get a job, and they're allowed to be in the workforce, and abortion rights are sorted. Which feels like an awfully premature thing to say in the context of 2022. It's like the victories were won. And I just like to make the point that the less radical of Men's Rights Activists, whether they accept that acronym or not, are not proposing that women lose their freedom. They're fine for women to have freedom just the same as they're fine with gay marriage. They're okay with that. What they are not okay with is equality. I hope we can see that in these statements. Max is saying women were given their freedom, they can vote. Now they've got nothing else to ask for. Well, they do. Women have equality to ask for. The issue is not about

freedom. It's about equality. Once women could vote, once women could enter the workforce, what else do they have to ask for except equality? But again, equality is going to cost men some freedom.

[00:27:47.930] - Tess

And he of course thinks, using the language of the paragraph, that becomes sexism towards men. Women have freedom. And Max says, great, they should be allowed to have their freedom, but women say no, we want equality. And when Max sees that women want equality, he can't support that because for women to have equality, it's going to cause him to lose some of his own freedom. And we discussed that when we showed that court case that we had on the board, which needs to go back up on the board. When we discussed title two and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, they're all about equality, not freedom. And that is where libertarianism this Trinity opposed portions of the Civil Rights Act. This is where they oppose feminism because they see that feminism is not fighting for certain freedoms. Women can vote. They have their freedoms to an extent. They are fighting for equality. And when women fight for equality, men start to lose some freedom. And that causes self pity and a feeling of reverse sexism that they are being discriminated against, because they are losing some freedom. You have to pull the thinking apart to see that.

[00:29:37.020] - Tess

But it is still all this inter tangled argument about freedom and equality. With Men's Rights Activists saying you have freedom, you have the right to vote. And women saying we want more than that, and then men feeling that they are the ones being harmed, they are the ones being discriminated against and pointing the finger back and saying you are sexist. Women are sexist. Feminists are sexist because we are losing our freedoms. We can no longer in good society make sexist and misogynistic comments without it harming our careers. We can no longer show prejudice to women in the workforce. We feel this restriction, this pressure by left wing appropriate parts of left wing society to treat women with equality and that impacts their freedom. I hope that all makes sense to us. It's building upon what we did when we discussed libertarianism. Josephine.

[00:30:58.230] - Josephine

I just wanted to say: that makes them feel oppressed. They feel like the victim, like they're being oppressed?

[00:31:14.410] - Tess

Yes, they see it as reverse sexism. Being sexist is one of the things I'm currently being accused for, particularly in Brazil. But there is that accusation that's coming from men who have been in that self pity, because this movement is insisting on equality, not freedom, and that causes a feeling of oppression with some men who have benefited for a very long time, and felt the benefit of their status and of finding that taken away from them. So, yes, it is a feeling of being oppressed. I've faced that in 2020 extensively. One of the arguments that some men who have now left the movement were making in Uganda and South Sudan was a fight against giving women freedom. Because they were so terrified that to relinquish the hold on women, which I cannot in words describe, the horrific extent of the control over women there in both freedom and equality. They felt that if that hold was loosened on women, their greatest fear was that

men might be oppressed. It is a very deep fear. It is also the fear behind white supremacy, behind losing a majority white America. The fear that white people will suddenly be suppressed by a multicultural country.

[00:33:02.370] - Tess

It is that fear. And we have spoken about that fear in a Christian context. It is the fear behind Dominionism. But you do not have to approach it from a religious perspective to have that fear or belief that you are being oppressed because of someone else's fight for equality. It exists in a religious context, for sure. That is Dominionism. That is church and state at its core. That is 1888 at its core. Sunday keepers in 1888 were so afraid that if it wasn't enshrined in the very Constitution that Sunday was to be a day of rest. They were so afraid that all these Catholics coming in, all of these Jews coming in, to a small extent those Seventh-day Adventists, especially Catholics and Jewish immigrants, Irish immigrants. They were so afraid in 1888 that they would lose supremacy and with that they would be oppressed. And if you go and read A. T. Jones. All he writes about that history, it is so clear. Protestantism was being driven in 1888 by a firm belief that they were the oppressed. Not just that they would be oppressed in the future, but that they were being oppressed right then and there. Often because of immigrants, Irish immigrants, Catholic Irish immigrants, Jewish immigrants. They were sure that they were not just future being oppressed, but they were being oppressed currently.

[00:34:43.590] - Tess

And the only way to stop that would be to change the US Constitution and enshrine Sunday as the Sabbath day, and make everyone keep it. That feeling of being oppressed is very important. Because there is oppression, was there oppression in 1888? Yes, Irish Catholics were being oppressed. Jews were being oppressed. Seventh-day Adventists were being oppressed. Secular humanist, atheists were being oppressed in 1888 because it was a dominant Protestant church led church and state movement. There was oppression. There is oppression today. There is an oppression of people, of a different race of immigrants, of Jews. Often now that there is a hostility to people from Asia, there is oppression. And the Sunday Law context, the most fundamental and deepest set and widespread and most generally worst suppression in human society is misogyny. There is oppression. There was oppression in 1888. There was an oppression in 1850 slavery. But it was the south that said we are oppressed. We are oppressed by Abraham Lincoln and by this large Northern government. There is oppression. But it is the people who are not being oppressed, who feel that they are the victims, who feel the self pity. The Southern States in the Civil War, who feel the self pity. Protestantism in 1888.

[00:36:38.210] - Tess

Men's rights groups today. And all the people who would say they are not Men's Rights Activists but still come under the same ideology. Josephine, did you have something else to say or were you finished?

[00:36:58.410] - Josephine

I'm finished. I think I'll write to you about my story.

[00:37:04.770] - Tess

Sure. Thank you for sharing. It's an important point to draw out. There is harm being done to a segment of society. But in Florida, it's not schoolchildren who are being suppressed and harmed by Florida's culture. It is not cisgender heterosexual people. It is the LGBT community. But you can see which side is trying to use the government to protect themselves. It's been this way. It was this way in 1850. It was this way in 1888. It will be this way today. Continuing to quote: *'But these vagaries, the specific grievances of Gamergate, the sort of person who self applies Men's Rights Activist versus the sort who prefers some other acronym, are merely symptoms of a broader male sense of victimhood. It is this victim complex I intend to tell you about.'* This article is acknowledging that someone might not want to be called the Men's Rights Activist. Some people were involved in Gamergate, some people weren't. But it's a broad segment of men, of society and of women also defending this mindset who have that sense of victimhood in the victim complex. This Max himself would prefer not to be called in Men's Rights Activists.

[00:38:44.390] - Tess

He prefers the term humanist. And humanist is another way of saying rational atheist. And we are coming back to atheism. *'He orders us another round and continues on with what has become a familiar line from Men's Rights Activists or new atheists or libertarians.'* This article repeats on the Trinity. It says these words are interchangeable. He's going to continue a common phrase, a phrase common to all three groups of people. For Men's Rights Activists, New Atheism, which is really just militant 21st century atheism and Libertarians. This is the second time that this article mentions this Trinity. It's not by accident. They're adding weight to that point. For Max, it is all a crusade. The struggle against the church. Atheism. It's a crusade against the state, libertarianism. And women. For Marx, it's all a crusade. The struggle against the church, the state, the women. Church, atheism. State, libertarianism. Women, feminism. And what is the common phraseology you find behind each one of these segments of the Trinity? *'It's the explicit claim that they are the last remaining purveyors of reason.'* Quoting the type of phrases they will use. They, feminists, religious people.

[00:40:56.160] - Tess

Anyone, not libertarian, anyone preferencing equality over freedom. *They just won't use logic. I am just arguing logically. I am only interested in evidence. You can't scroll down a comment section without flashing past a few of these. And they are tribal markers, not real claims.'* They're a tribal marker marking someone generally as a Men's Rights Activist, an atheist, or a libertarian. When we start discussing New Atheism and people like Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, you're going to see these phrases, but you're seeing these phrases in a large segment of secular society and even non secular society, even religious society that will tune in to listen to someone like Sam Harris, I think probably the most dangerous of all of them. Sam Harris. Tune into Sam Harris the same way they'll tune into Ben Shapiro, because Ben Shapiro will use the phrasing, that he's only interested in evidence, that he is arguing logically, that they others against him just won't use logic. And as the document says, these are more tribal markers than anything else. They are fighting the church, the state, and women. If we consider that the Sunday Law is a combination of church and state, shouldn't these people be on our side?

[00:42:27.790] - Tess

If they're fighting against the influence of the church? Wouldn't you think that this entire spectrum that we've been discussing for a few weeks now would be on our side at the Sunday Law? That would be the rational expectation, wouldn't it? But remember, I'm irrational. There you go. We're irrational, apparently. We started to investigate New Atheism. We zoned in on here last week. We had been discussing libertarianism. We will go back to libertarianism, but we wanted to look at the militant atheism of the post September 11 world. And that led us to the forehorsemen of modern atheism. The most influential people, of course men, but the most influential people of modern atheism. And that was Sam Harris, who I consider today one of the most influential. And I find him deeply troubling. Richard Dawkins, which is perhaps the most well known to us because his book is just so famous. And Christopher Hitchens. It was said by another prominent leading atheist, that if there was a Mount Rushmore of atheistic leaders, you would find Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, and Christopher Hitchens. He seemed to leave off Daniel Dennett. I'm not sure why.

[00:44:34.010] - Tess

Even from what I was looking through, I didn't ,him come up as much and that they considered him less influential than the other three. But these are the four horsemen, a name they gave themselves, of modern atheism. And we wanted to see the positions they would take on politics, on that political spectrum, on equality and freedom, on gender equality as we understand it, as people who believe in Eden to Eden. We discussed Sam Harris first. There's more to say about him, but we illustrated some of the problems with Sam Harris. We spoke about Richard Dawkins. There is more to say about him, but we covered his response to feminism. We discussed Christopher Hitchens. His 2007 article for Vanity Fair, *'Why Women Aren't Funny'*, which has quite a few sources said was one of his favorite topics to talk about. Christopher Hitchens has passed away. I think he's the only one that has. But this isn't so long ago. The comments that he made that we went into last week and there are only a few of them. I want to reference what he said in 2010. He was at the 2010 White House Correspondence Dinner.

[00:46:21.650] - Tess

If we're familiar with the White House Correspondents Dinner, when a lot of people across the media and art world, popular people today gather at the White House and they have an evening. The President is pretty much always in attendance until Donald Trump didn't appreciate the way that they were talking about him and he canceled them. But this is the White House Correspondents Dinner of 2010. Obama is now President. And one of the comedians who spoke there, because they'll often have a comedian speak to the crowd. And Christopher Hitchens is in that crowd. Wanda Sykes, don't know whether we are familiar with her, was one of the comedians who spoke. At the end of the evening's entertainment. Christopher Hitchens made the comment about Wanda Sykes comedy, the comedy she presented at the White House Correspondence Dinner. He said the President should be squirming in his seat, not smiling, he said. He doesn't call her Wanda Sykes. He says... I won't read it. I can't read it. He says: The black dyke got it wrong. No one told her the rules. I will erase that soon, because it is a deeply troubling comment to make. But what he did when he didn't like Wanda Sykes comedy, was both racist. What point, what relevance does the color of her skin have to her comedy?

[00:48:02.170] - Tess

And then he references her gender because you don't say this about anyone not female. And this is also a slur made against lesbian women, because she is lesbian as well. But it also has the insinuation that she isn't very feminine in her appearance. It's a lesbian that might wear more masculine clothing and have short hair, et cetera. He attacks her on the color of her skin, on her gender, and on her sexual orientation, all just to say he didn't like her comedy. Such was the man that was Christopher Hitchens. Such was the man who used reason and logic, social evolution to explain why women aren't funny. Such as one of the foremost influential men of modern atheism. I don't really want to speak more about Christopher Hitchens because other than an example of why 27 year olds like Max in 2017 have the attitude that they do, I don't think there is much more he can contribute to making the point that we want to make. I could justify having his face on a secular Mount Rushmore if that was 250 years ago, but 50 years ago is too soon to consider why that would be at all tolerated.

[00:49:36.990] - Tess

Still no. Hands up. That's fine. I have a few quotes to read. You remember earlier we spoke about two women. Sarah Henry was interviewing Alex DiBranco, and Alex made the comment that in her early research she was watching Men's Rights Activists such as Paul Elam. I want to quote actually Paul Elam. Paul Elam is the founder of the 'International Conference on Men's Issues' and formerly the publisher of 'A Voice for Men'. 'A Voice for Men' is a publication that is considered to be the online flagship of men's rights movements. I want to quote directly from an article on 'A Voice for Men'. We'll go to the source to quote him. *'I have often wondered if my state of mind as an atheist has also played a role in becoming a Men's Rights Activist. I like to think I view things objectively, that I rely on available science rather than faith or folklore to shape my beliefs. That attitude has certainly helped me to understand issues like domestic violence and alleged wage gaps as much as it has evolution.'* What Paul Elam is saying, the founder of the online flagship of the men's rights movement is saying, that he has wondered and he'll go on to tell you that it is, that his state of mind as an atheist played a direct role in him becoming a Men's Rights Activist.

[00:51:29.530] - Tess

In other words, in his fight against feminism. Because he is able as an atheist, to look at things objectively, he doesn't need faith, like feminists and religious people. Christians. He doesn't need faith or folklore to shape his beliefs. Looking at just rationality, he can understand domestic violence and fight feminism on domestic violence. And fight feminism on what he calls the alleged wage gap just as easily as he can fight a creationist. Because his underlying thinking behind both is the same. And this is why there is a pipeline between the two of them. And he just says there is a pipeline. It's because the fundamental thinking of both is the same. Did anyone go and read that full article by Stephen Hitchens after I quoted it so much last week? Katherine, you did.

[00:53:05.320] - Marie

Yes, I did.

[00:53:05.910] - Katherine

I put myself through the paint.

[00:53:07.930] - Tess

Okay.

[00:53:08.940] - Katherine

And I went further than that because I found that some female comedians had written a response to him in Vanity Fair. Did you know that as well? And then he was interviewed on there's a video clip of him on YouTube responding to their response to him. He has another shot at them and it's just nasty stuff. It's so sexist.

[00:53:38.050] - Tess

I don't know why laughter is a response, but somehow laughter manages to soften that throbbing ball of pain that you get when you watch and read these things.

[00:53:54.830] - Katherine

It would be funny if it wasn't supposed to be serious. It's just sad. It is horrible.

[00:54:12.090] - Tess

Thank you for the added context. And often when they double down on their thoughts, it only gets worse and worse. It gets hard to follow. I was in a bookstore yesterday and I saw a book written by a woman explaining the history of female politicians in Australia and how the media treats them. Actually, I took a photo of it. I haven't read it. And perhaps it might have quite a few things I don't agree with, but I'm sure it has a lot that's accurate history. It's titled 'Media Tarts' and it shows how the media has treated, has framed, female politicians. And I think many of us have seen enough to be familiar with the extent of misogyny in Australian politics. Maybe it's just my distance, but it goes beyond what I see in the United States, in other parts of the world. I'm not going to read the book because I don't want to. There's enough I think. The author of the article who is interviewing Max and showing this Trinity that they can see in 2015, and certainly it's only grown. He does make that point, that it's seeing inequality is something you have to have your eyes opened to.

[00:56:18.600] - Tess

You have to read a book like The New Jim Crow to understand the extent of racism in policing and in the courts in the United States. You have to read a book like that to see the institutional racism. And if you won't educate yourself, then you won't see it. But once you do see it, you cannot unsee it. And the other thing that education will teach. The other thing that teaches is experience. It is partly experiential. It's a combination of education and experience that can help see the vast need for equality. If I could quote a friend of mine. Religion is similar. There is evidence. A human being could not have constructed the Eden to Eden model. Could not have constructed what this movement taught prior to 2018 and since 2018. A human being is not capable of it. There is evidence. A human being themselves could not have predicted what would happen between Russia and the United States at the end of 2021. There is evidence and

there is also the experiential. But the thinking behind atheism and behind Men's Rights Activists. They acknowledge themselves that there is that pipeline because there is the same methodology.

[00:58:05.630] - Tess

I want to quote from Phil Torres. Phil Torres is a firm atheist. And there is a lot that he says that I don't agree with, and at one point I will make. He's a biologist, a science communicator, a photographer, and a television host based in New York City who works projects all over the globe. Phil Torres wrote an article for Salon in 2017. And he goes into the history of New Atheism. Now, Richard Dawkins objects to it being called New Atheism because it's really just modern day atheism. And that's the point Richard Dawkins makes. It's not new. It's just a continuation of an atheistic movement, and people tend to acknowledge that that is the truth. It's not like just a segment of atheism. It is modern atheism. And quoting from this article by Phil Torres, the new atheist movement emerged shortly after the 9/11 attacks with a best selling book by Sam Harris called *The End of Faith*, and we mentioned that last week. This was followed by engaging tomes authored by Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, and the late Christopher Hitchens. *Four Horsemen*. For many years I, Phil Torres was among the New Atheism movement's greatest allies. So he was one of the greatest allies of the New Atheism movement.

[00:59:43.390] - Tess

Then he goes into all the problems with New Atheism, which is really just a description of what we've already said, the rampant misogyny. And we haven't discussed the racism yet, but we will. I'm skipping a lot. He gets lower down in his explanation of what is wrong with New Atheism. He says: *'subsequent statements about profiling at airports, serious allegations of rape at atheist conferences, and tweets from major leaders that linked to white supremacist websites further alienated women, people of color, and folks that one could perhaps describe as morally normal.'* I could be wrong, but I think it was Sam Harris that tweeted, a link that ended up at a white supremacist website. *'Yet some of us, mostly white men like myself, like Phil Torres, persisted in our conviction that overall, the new atheist movement was still a force for good in the world. It is an extraordinary personal embarrassment that I maintained this view until the present year.'* That year is 2017. He said he was one of the greatest allies of these men of New Atheism. And he says that it is of great personal embarrassment to himself that he continued to think that this movement, despite some problems, was any force for good in the world until the year 2017.

[01:01:14.290] - Tess

For me, it was a series of recent events that pushed me over the edge. And then he's going to quote some people who we haven't mentioned, people who aren't on their Mount Rushmore but are still leading atheists. *'Just consider a recent tweet from one of the most prominent new atheist luminaries, Peter Vocian. The tweet. Why is it that nearly every male who's a third wave intersectional feminist is physically feeble and has terrible body habits?'* Another tweet from the same fellow. *'I've never understood how someone could be proud of being gay. How can one be proud of something one didn't work for?'* He's quoting from maybe not Mount Rushmore, but other of the leading atheist voices in the world today. And it's not good reading. *'Many leading figures have recently allied themselves with smalltime television personality Dave Rubin, a guy who has repeatedly given Milo Yanopoulos, the professional right wing troll who once said that little boys would stop complaining about being raped by Catholic priests if the priests*

were as good looking as he is, a platform on his show. In a tweet from last May, Ruben said, I'd like assigned copy, please. In response to a picture that reads: Ah Peace and quiet, #ADayWithoutAWoman.'

[01:02:46.190] - Tess

'If, say, Paul Ryan were asked, he'd describe this as sort of like the textbook definition of a misogynistic comment. Did any New atheist leaders complain about this tweet? Of course not. He's identifying a problem with New Atheism. He also says that the magazine *Skeptic* recently (2017), published a glowing review of Milo Yiannopoulos recent book, "Dangerous". Look into Milo Yiannopoulos if you haven't, it's not healthy. But this is the ugliness, the alt right, and the pipeline back to New Atheism, back to not just Mount Rushmore, but the men who have swelled up underneath them. And when we talk about Max, he's low level. He's that common, broad segment of mainstream society that are impacted by this thinking. This fellow, Phil Torres, he says he's deeply ashamed that he still stayed allied with this modern atheistic movement until 2017, and he's now separated himself from it. He's still atheist, but he doesn't want anything to do with them. I have a problem with him, though. Because if he's truly ashamed of it, and he should be. This is ten years after Hitchens writes his article. The title of Phil Torres article that I just quoted from is: 'How New Atheism Slid into the far right', and I believe that to be a justification of the fact that he stayed with Atheism for so long.

[01:05:05.290] - Tess

This was ten years after that article and many of their quotes. That article was written the same year that these four men first met, first titled themselves before Horsemen. It's going back to the inception of that core group of men as leaders of New Atheism, when he says that he's deeply ashamed that it took him until 2017 to see the problems with it and start to sever from it, and then titles the article How New Atheism Slid into the Altright. It's suggesting that it was okay to begin with, and therefore that his alliance with modern Atheism was justified in its early days. Because it's suggesting that in its early days it wasn't that big of a problem and has, over time, quoting him, 'slid into the alright'. Most of the quotes and comments we made those, particularly of last week, go back to 2007, 2008, 2010, 2014. I'm not sure if we read any quotes that were after 2014. I find the titling of his article a subtle defense of his own alliance with that community. And the fact he can see it now is positive. Obviously he is atheistic, so I don't agree with many points, but I don't think that the titling of his article is intellectually honest. If his apology or recognition of his mistake is a genuine one, it seems more like an excuse. They have only manifested a few more times what they were manifesting at the very beginning, at the very inception of these men as leaders of 21st century atheism. Do we have any hands up? Brodie! I just lost your audio. Say that again. I'm sorry. I can't hear you from the beginning.

[01:07:38.210] - Brodie

Sorry. In 2017, he's publicly distanced himself from modern atheism. And also in 2017, he proposed to his wife. I think that's neat. He had to, in a way. Potentially.

[01:08:03.370] - Tess

This movement considers themselves to be the modern Enlightenment, perhaps his wife enlightened him. We can hope so. We can hope she's continuing to. I just want to mention race. Just an example of a

number that illustrate the racism that has also been seen within this community. In 1994, a book was published by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray called *The Bell Curve*. What this book, *The Bell Curve* argued was that black people are genetically inferior in intelligence to white people. It's a 1994 book arguing about a genetic inferiority by people of color compared to white people. In a discussion between Sam Harris and Christopher Hitchens. I spelled his name wrong. Making happy all the people that were probably staring at it. A conversation between Sam Harris and Christopher Hitchens is taking place. This book comes up that argues about that black people are genetically inferior in intelligence to white people. This book comes up in a discussion between Sam Harris and Christopher Hitchens. And Hitchens says to Sam Harris. Okay, but if this what they're alleging in this book is true. If black people are genetically inferior in intelligence to white people, we shouldn't ignore it. What he's saying is we shouldn't let political correctness impact rational thinking.

[01:10:17.820] - Tess

We should think rationally. We should think rationally, even about things that are confronting on some subjects, such as genetic inferiority and intelligence between different races of people. Hitchens says, if this book is true, if it is true. Very much a Garden of Eden type of leading. It should not be ignored. We should have a rational discussion about it. But it's not viable. I'm sure it's not true. Later on, Harris brings up the discussion again. Harris says if there were reliable differences in intelligence between races or genders. And then Hitchens cuts him off again and says, But I don't think any of us here do think that that's the case. Harris comes back. It's a convoluted discussion, but they bring it up with that. If there is a genetic difference in intelligence between the subject of race, if there is, we should talk about it. But there probably isn't. Sam Harris says, but if there is a reliable difference in intelligence, not just between races, but between genders. And then Hitchens shuts it down and says, but I don't think any of us think that. This is part of what they've got in trouble for before.

[01:12:02.370] - Tess

They constantly dog whistle on issues of gender, but also of race. And then they clarify that by saying, no, it's not just freedom of speech, it's rational thinking. We need to be rational thinkers. We're the only ones thinking rationally. And it's left wing culture that is just trying to cancel people that just wanting rational discussion. In 2018, now we're going modern day. Sam Harris on his podcast, interviews Charles Murray. Charles Murray, one of the two authors of that 1994 book, *The Bell Curve*. Harris in 2018, many years after that discussion, goes on to bring one of the authors onto his podcast and interview him. And Harris gave him a weirdly uncritical two hour conversation. He is not critical of the racist arguments that Charles Murray was making. Instead, Harris claimed that Murray, one of the authors, had been the victim of a terrible academic injustice for the way in which his notions about the inherent cognitive inferiority of some races had been rejected by the scientific establishment. He's going to blame left wing establishment cancel culture for silencing, but doing an academic injustice of not giving proper attention to a book that argued that there is an inherent cognitive inferiority between races.

[01:13:58.410] - Tess

This is where the preeningly fearless insistence on entertaining uncomfortable questions can so easily lead. They'll say we're just having rational thought on uncomfortable questions. Harris ended up in the

company of the alright and the so called intellectual dark web populated by people who portray themselves as valiant enough, brave enough to say what you're not allowed to say anymore, and are constantly invited on right wing talk shows to say it. There is a lot of people who have divorced themselves from New Atheism today. A little bit like the scandal around some the fellow in Australia who just got fired by that Sydney church. I have a complete mind blank on names and titles. Jerry Farewell in the United States, very scandal. But the impact that their thinking and philosophy has had on millions of Max's is really what we're talking about. It's not even the view in the far right. It wasn't George Bell, it was the head of Hillsong who just got fired. There is scandal. But to be honest, the things that these men have said, what Jerry Farewell has said, Junior, I think his father was more problematic, pale in comparison with the comments the ideology supported by New Atheism. At its most extreme, but also, as that Vox article illustrates, by the large segment of society who don't call themselves Men's Rights Activists, who don't like titles like that, who might not call themselves new atheists, but they will listen to Ben Shapiro, Jordan Peterson, Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and their entire worldview is molded by it. The point I want to make is when we look at this problem, and especially this problem. Protestantism Christianity, it can't be the root of the problem. If it was the root of the problem, as America becomes more secular, it would improve. It's not the root of the problem in South Korea. And we've shared articles on what men's rights movements are doing in South Korea. It's not the root of the problem in Australia. It's not the root of the problem in Romania. It's not the root of the problem in Brazil. And it's not the whole of the problem. And most of what we've done last weekend and today, is try and demonstrate that. Try and demonstrate that by looking at the Trinity, by looking at Men's Rights Activists as they fight women, feminism, gender equality. New Atheism as it fights against religion, but also as it fights against gender equality.

[01:17:46.620] - Tess

And then look at libertarianism. Fighting the state, but also fighting against gender equality. And there is a disproportionate amount of people in the far right who are atheist and libertarian. Disproportionately compared to their numbers in society. There is that pipeline when it comes to atheism and when it comes to libertarianism. And we need to understand why. Why is that? Brian Houston of Hillsong. Someone reminded me. There was an article talking about the braise and sexism in these movements. And it gave two reasons as to why this sexism exists in the atheism movement. The first reason they give, I think, is the main reason, and they list it first is social Darwinism. Philip Kitcher, a professor of philosophy at Columbia University, wrote in the New York Times in 2012 that the first Tenet of social Darwinism is the belief that people have intrinsic abilities and talents and correspondingly intrinsic weaknesses. If you have intrinsic talents and intrinsic weaknesses, social Darwinism teaches that that has developed through evolution. So perhaps rational thought possible, perhaps there did develop intrinsically over millions of years, an intrinsic weakness of black people in regards to intelligence. And white people developed an intrinsic talent for intelligence, rational thought. Which will be expressed in their actions and achievements independently of the social, economic and cultural environments in which they develop.

[01:20:01.320] - Tess

Maybe women over millions of years developed an intrinsic ability to be cunning minxes. Burnt into the back of my brain thank you Hitchens. Cunning minxes manipulate men, therefore be the dominant force, even in a patriarchal society. Suppressing men, even in a patriarchal society. They developed an intrinsic weakness for a sense of humor, an intrinsic ability to be able to nurture and raise children. Thank you,

Sam Harris. They have an intrinsic ability to be nurturing. Therefore, they have an intrinsic weakness when it comes to conflict and rational thought. Thank you, Sam Harris. All of this is the first tenant of Social Darwinism. You do not need religion. Darwinism teaches this. A concept such as 'men are from Mars, women are from Venus' is one version of such gender essentialism social Darwinist ideas. In the atheist movement, social Darwinism has played out as the justifiable assault of women by naturally aggressive men. So assault of women is justified because men are naturally aggressive. Thank you, Richard Dawkins. Because if you get in a car drunk and drunk drive, what do you expect to happen if you get drunk around a man? What do you expect? He might rape you because he has developed a natural aggression.

[01:21:38.850] - Tess

Aggression is an intrinsic strength or weakness that men have. It's a woman's fault if she causes him to rape her. Some women say BuzzFeed's Mark Oppenheimer detailed many accounts of alleged sexism, sexual assault and coercion in his excellent expose on the atheist movement. Some women say they are now harassed or mocked at atheist conventions. And the online attacks, which include jubating, threats of anal rape, and other pleasantries, are so vicious that two activists I spoke with have been diagnosed with PTSD. Oppenheimer also writes that James Randy, chair of annual atheist gathering, the amazing Meeting, used biological essentialism to rationalize alleged sex crimes and sexual harassment. Why wouldn't he. The Four Horsemen do it? Mount Rushmore justifies sex crimes and sexual harassment. That filters down, filters down all the way down to the level of Max. Randy's comments were in response to accusations made by multiple women against Michael Sherma, the founder of Skeptic magazine. Sherma had a bit too much to drink and he doesn't remember. I don't know. Randy uses. I've just heard that he misbehaves himself with the women, which I guess is what men do when they're drunk.

[01:23:01.370] - Tess

The idea that sexual harassment and violence is just what men do, is the 21st century atheists interpretation of the lattice Maxism that boys will be boys. Why will boys be boys? Not because God created boys to be boys, not because there was creation that put those qualities in men, but because of millions of years of biological essentialism that created intrinsic strengths and intrinsic weaknesses. The same logic is manifest in statements that justify sexual violence on a woman's behavior or style of dress. The underlying Maxism of Darwinism leads you down that pathway. The second explanation of why the atheist movement foment sexism, they say, is related to atheism becoming much more militant in the 21st century. They're not just content to renounce religion individually. They are on a crusade to weed religion out of society. Again, how would these people not just misogynistic, but often racist? How would they approach church and state? If church and state is what brings about the Sunday Law. And the Sunday Law is as we as a movement have understood it since 2019. Then how do these people, the atheistic community led by social Darwinism that teaches intrinsic strengths and weaknesses, the racism and sexism that that foments, how would they approach a combination of church and state of morality?

[01:25:04.610] - Tess

We've said something about atheism and libertarianism. How is libertarianism going to support a union of church and state? They're not. Because the Sunday Law is not a union of church and state. And we will

discuss that next week. There's no final hands up, but things will arise during the week and we will continue then. I'm not sure if I had an exhaustive list of everyone who was participating. But Lynne, would you mind closing for us?

[01:25:46.970] - Lynne

Loving Creator God, we come before you. We give you thanks and praise. We thank you for the privileges that we are given with the messages that we've been given. With the opportunity to be able to come together and to hear these things that have been able to bring about changes in those who are willing to listen and apply the knowledge. We just thank you for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to your people. We ask that you will please work in each one of our hearts that we may be able to understand all of these things better as we go along. Because we know that there's still more to understand. We ask that you will open our eyes and our ears and our hearts and minds to be able to "*follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth*". And we just again, thank you for the wonderful privilege it is to be able to be within this movement at this time in history. I pray for all of those who are with us this evening. We thank you for the Sabbath day. And we just ask for a blessing on all those here, but also all of those who haven't been able to be on the meeting as well. We thank you again for your blessings and your mercy. And we pray all this in Jesus name. Amen.