Bob: And welcome to FamilyLife Today. Thanks for joining us on the Friday edition. We’re going to be continuing today the conversation we have been having this week with Sean McDowell and J. Warner Wallace about how we build a Christian worldview in our thinking and in our children’s thinking.

We’re stopping here, at the beginning of today’s program, to just pull back and reflect, and think carefully, about all that has happened in the last week. David Robbins, who is the president of FamilyLife®, is here with us. David, this has been—I’ve been thinking in the context of my own life—I lived through the ‘60s, so I’ve lived through some moments like this before; but I don’t remember a national moment like this, really, in my lifetime.

David: Yes, our nation is aching through this deep struggle. That makes us, certainly, long for the Lord’s return and also long for the promise that He will make all things new; and for us to ask questions, like, “How can we participate in making all things new in this moment?”

Bob: This is a time for all of us to have some sober personal reflection—to apply Psalm 139: “Search me, O God; know my heart. See if there be wicked ways in me,”—bring that to the surface so that I can confess it and deal with it.

How do you think we should be praying, as individuals and as a family, in the middle of this moment?

David: I wrote an article for FamilyLife.com that you can find there. It basically is an invitation to intercede/to pray—to, literally, get on our knees. It walks through five different areas. The first is to confess and lament—to pray that Psalm 139, verse 23, prayer—to come in humility and to search out our hearts: to feel pain, to listen, and to hear it, and understand it.

Bob: When you talk about lament and feeling pain, we may not be feeling it personally—because these are not things that have happened to us directly—but the Bible says we are to “weep with those who weep.” We have brothers and sisters/fellow image-bearers, who are in pain. God calls us to feel that with them.
**David:** That's right. He says multiple times in the Scriptures, “Do not fear.” He says, “Do not be anxious.” He never says, “Do not be sad.” He actually teaches how to lament all throughout the Psalms and multiple times in Scripture. Us, being able to understand how to lament, as an act of worship, is really important.

**Bob:** You said confession as well. This is where I do think we need to examine our own heart. I've been asking the Lord to reveal blind spots in my own life when it comes to how I interact with people, who are different than me; and to bring those out into the open, and confess that, and listen, and learn.

**David:** Yes, absolutely. And to learn from people who have different experiences than us is really important.

The second area I invite people to pray through is to pray for injustice to end—that we would understand that all are made in God's image—and to intercede that peace would be found and that justice would be found.

**Bob:** Justice is a big theme in the Bible. God is a just God. When we, as His image-bearers, are unjust with one another, we are marring the image of God. Again, that needs to be confessed as well. I agree with you; pray for justice. Amos said for “justice to roll” in our world [Amos 5:24].

**David:** Yes, a third area is that we would pray for our leaders at every level in our country. Our national leaders, all the way down to our community leaders, and local church leaders: pray for wisdom and compassion—for them to engage with people, with compassion/wisdom—and also to make decisions that bring flourishing for everyone in our communities.

**Bob:** As we think about leaders, I think about those public servants—police officers and those in the military, who have been called out. I think about protestors as well—pray for them to exercise wisdom and to protest appropriately.

**David:** Yes, that those seeking justice would also seek peace; and for those who are seeking peace, would also seek justice.

**Bob:** Right.

**David:** There is power in a peaceful protest.

**Bob:** Yes.

**David:** The fourth area would be to pray for renewal and revival—that we, in this time—so much has been going on in 2020: “What is God doing in our midst to break up hardened places in our hearts?” We need to pray for God's Spirit to move powerfully, with transformation, and broadly through our land.
Bob: This past week was Pentecost Sunday, when God poured out His Spirit on His church. I thought, “We need a fresh pouring out of the Spirit of God in our land today.” Yes, pray for renewal and revival.

David: Absolutely; He has put that same Spirit in each one of us, and that leads to the fifth point—that we would pray for unity. Pray for unity among the body of Christ; pray that we would be one in expressing love and righteousness together.

Bob: Well, David, this is helpful. I just want to mention that these prayer areas are a part of the article that you wrote that’s available on our website at FamilyLifeToday.com. You can go there and refer to this/maybe, lead your family through this. It is important that we take a few minutes, here, before we dive into today’s program and talk about these things. Do you want to pray for us and for our world?

David: Absolutely.

Lord, we come before You, King of kings/Lord of lords. You have said for us to approach Your throne of grace with confidence when we are in need of grace and mercy.

Lord, we pray for ourselves, individually and corporately, that You would move in us and transform and form our own hearts and souls toward You and You would also form our country and our world toward You—that it would be “on earth as it is in heaven.”

Lord, thank You for [us] getting to be a part of ministering to families, where we would live out our vision of every home becoming a godly home. Lord, would You do it in our day? In Jesus’ name, amen.

Bob: Amen. Thank you, David.

Now, we have been having a conversation this week about how we, as parents, can help our children think biblically, think critically, think from a biblical worldview about the issues that we’re facing in our world today. We’ve got friends, who have been with us this week; they are back again today. Sean McDowell and J. Warner Wallace are joining us. Guys, welcome, again, to FamilyLife Today.
J. Warner: Thanks for having us.

Sean: Good to be back.

J. Warner: Yes.

Bob: Sean and J. Warner are both involved at Biola University as professors in the apologetics program that is one of the premier programs on apologetics in the country/maybe, in the world; I think that would be safe to say.

J. Warner: We would say that. [Laughter]

Bob: And you are equipping college students to know how to defend their faith in a way that brings reason and logic and says: “This makes logical sense.”

But even on the college campus—it’s not just middle schoolers, but college students—the headwinds for Christian living today: “Is it stronger than it’s ever been?” or “Am I overstating the case?”

Sean: I think it shifted a little bit. When I talk with my father—who has spoken on 1,200 universities, going back to ‘60’s and ‘70’s—he said the questions he used to get are: “Is it true?” “Give me facts.” There was an assumption that there is such a thing as truth, and you should put evidence forward for your position.

Well, we now live in what’s called a post-truth culture, in which people tend to navigate reality a lot through their feelings. It doesn’t mean truth is not important; but feelings, for a lot of different reasons, are shaping how people are even processing truth today. The questions have shifted from: “Is this true? Give me evidence,” to the assumption that Christianity is bad: “How can you believe this?!” “How are you not a bigot?” “How are you not hateful?”

We still have to make a case that Christianity is true—and I would say people always inherently care about truth, because we are made in the image of God—but what’s happens now—it’s not just that Christianity is false; Christianity is deemed as being bad, and it’s being harmful—a lot of young people look at this and go, “If I really want to love people, what does that mean for how I view marriage?”—because they are saying: “I want to follow the biblical worldview, but I don’t want to be a bigot.

Bob: Right.

Sean: Navigating those waters is really, really tricky for this generation.

Bob: As a grownup, I’m equipped a little better to handle that than a 14-year-old, who is trying to say, “Who am I? Do people like me? How do I get people to like me? How do I
fit in? How do I not be an outcast?” We’re saying, “Oh, you are going to follow Jesus, which is going to make you an outcast”; and who wants to sign on for that?

J. Warner: Well, don’t you think that most of the time, though, our young people are, by their innate nature, a bit rebellious? I think young people are, by very nature, trying to find/carve a new way that is somehow slightly countercultural.

Bob: Right.

J. Warner: The culture is shifting now; it’s actually embracing the views that the rebellious teenagers held two generations ago. Jesus was very countercultural. If you’re looking for a countercultural role model, I think we’ve got one on the pages of the New Testament.

Ann: I think for parents today, it’s really confusing. A practical question is: “Should we put our kids in Christian schools?” “Should we be homeschooling them?” or “Do we put them in public school?” I think so many young parents are trying to make those decisions, and they feel very lost.

Sean: I think that’s going to depend a lot on the quality of the public school, the quality of the private school, the resources to homeschool or not, and the nature of the young person. I’ve seen Christian young people thrive in all of those different settings, and I’ve seen them crash in all of those different settings.

I think what parents have to do, if they send their kids to a public school: be involved, be engaged, build relationships with the teachers, find out what’s being taught, and be really active in that relationship. If they homeschool, that has challenges. If you private school, that has challenges. I’m not going to say you necessarily have to do one or the other, but I think parents need to be very thoughtful about this.

They better find out exactly what is being taught. In schools right now, there are things being taught in the public schools, which you cannot opt out your kids, that are directly in contradiction with the Christian faith. Now, does that mean no Christian parents can send their kids there?—that’s not my point—but if you do, be aware, be involved, and know exactly what you’re getting into, and make sure there is a relationship there to counter some of the ideas that are coming.

Think about this: Even homeschool parents today can’t keep their kids from the ideas—

Bob: That’s right.

Sean: —in the culture.

Bob: That’s right.
Sean: So, unfortunately,—

J. Warner: Yes.

Sean: —we have to start those conversations—

J. Warner: —early.

Sean: —early.

J. Warner: If we can control some of their consumption of this digital media/ if you have some parameters—and there’s enough technological changes right now that are out there that are designed to protect these platforms. If you will install them on your platforms, they will give you a good sense of what your kids are doing—even resend them, by email screen shots, of what they are seeing on their phone—that’s pretty much a limiter for a lot of young people. If they think their parents are going to get a daily email, which are going to have screen shots from their phone, there are some ways to kind of set some boundaries/some realistic boundaries. I think that’s probably appropriate for us to do.

We recognized that there are a lot of books that are written about: “What is true...” This book, we wrote this time, is really: “How do you take what is true and practically engage your kids with it?” It’s a how-to book.

Bob: And the book is called—so our listeners will know—So the Next Generation Will Know by Sean McDowell and J. Warner Wallace. As you said, it’s practical; so let’s make this practical. Let’s get into: If you were sitting at a table, with a group of parents of middle school-/high school-/college-age students, and they are going, “We want our kids to thrive, and to embrace their faith, and to be able to defend their faith, and to hold fast to their faith,” where do you start?

Sean: Here are a couple of practical examples of things parents consider doing. Now, realize, kids are different; some things work for one kid and not for another. Part of the book is to say: “Here are a bunch of tools you can try. Take what works, and throw out what doesn’t.”

About a year/year-and-a-half ago, my son wanted to see this movie about the rock band, Queen.

Bob: And let’s just acknowledge, for folks who don’t know, Freddie Mercury was not a moral individual; right?

Sean: Yes; so I read stuff about it—knew the rock band, Queen; saw their—“Okay; there are some things in this that are probably pushing a certain agenda.” Read enough and said to my son—he’s14—I said: “Okay, you want to go see this movie. Here is the
deal: I’ll pay for it; and I’ll take a friend, who is fine. All I ask—I’ll even buy a popcorn—is when we’re done, we just sit down; and I just want to know what you think about it: ‘What did you see? What did you learn? Was Christianity presented? Were there any ideas that you thought were being preached to you? Was it good storytelling?’—just have a conversation.”

He goes, “Sure, Dad!” We go to the movie; I paid for it. We came out afterwards; and probably 30 minutes, we sit down at our dinner table. I’m like: “What did you see? Did you ever feel they were preaching at you?” He goes: “Oh, yes, Dad. In this one scene, they said something; they never would have said in the ‘80s,” or whatever era it was. We just simply had a conversation about it. There are more opportunities, if we build a relationship, present if we will seize them.

Another example is my daughter. This past summer—she’s 12—wanted these Birkenstock shoes that are not cheap. [Laughter] She wanted them; I thought, “Well, what if I can find a way, where she can get these, that I bring some value to this?” I said: “Okay, I’ve got an idea. There are these short videos online,”—by a one of my favorite radio show hosts named Dennis Prager—“They are on religion, and they are on culture and politics. They are four or five minutes.” I said, “If you watch 50 of these, and you just write a summary of each one.” She worked through all 50; got her the shoes. She learned a little bit about: things have a value; you work for something. We had all these worldview conversations.

Now, my son just simply would not have done that—

J. Warner: Right.

Sean: —but my daughter did. When she’s done, she’s like, “I don’t think I’d do that again.” I said, “That’s fine.” It was a good experience.

Dave: What do you say to the parent that says, “No way am I letting my kids see Bohemian Rhapsody even if we have a discussion about it!”? What would you say to that parent?

Sean: I’d say: “Why not?”

Dave: Yes.

Sean: “What are you afraid of?”

Dave: Right.

Sean: Look, if your kid is eight, I get it.

Dave: Yes.
**Sean:** If your kid is **14 years old**, this is the world we live in; and it’s not **endorsing** it, necessarily, by seeing that film. And there is not sex scenes that are explicit at all; it’s language, and it’s suggestive. There are certain films I’d say, “No, we’re not—

**Bob:** Of course.

**Sean:** —“going to see this.” You do have to be careful and read ahead of time; but the way my parents raised me is to look at this as an opportunity and not be afraid of it.

I think what happens is when we say, “They are not watching *Bohemian Rhapsody!*”—it becomes a forbidden fruit. I just want to take that away from them and go: “Hey, I’m not afraid of this. We’ve got to have discernment; we’ve got to have wisdom. Let’s watch it and talk about it.”

**J. Warner:** Keep in mind, too, a basic principle here is we do not want our young people to engage bad ideas for the first time when they are not with us to help them navigate the bad idea.

**Sean:** That’s right.

**J. Warner:** It’s been said that one of the biggest challenges—and we wrote a whole chapter on this—is apathy. The biggest challenge to theism is not atheism but apathy-ism. I think there is a good argument to be made there. We have a sense: “He doesn’t really care about this,” and “How do we increase passion in our students?” This is a challenge.

But I would say the one thing we would offer—as kind of an overarching principle that will change every conversation you will have with your kids—we have a tendency, as parents, is to offer a lot of what’s: “What is true about the Bible?” “What does the Bible teach about this?” “What’s true about God?” “What does God say about that?” “What...?” “What...?” “What...?” “What...?” “What...?” “What...?” “What...?” “What...?” Instead, let’s offer two why’s for every what; and you will see your conversations change. You will see the interest in your students change/in your kids change.

“What does the Bible say about ‘X’?” “Fine; what objective reason should I believe that the Bible is actually **accurate** on that issue?” It’s going to require us, as parents, to have a little bit more in our pocket than just “The Bible says so.”

**Dave:** Yes.

**J. Warner:** It turns out we could make a case for everything that’s claimed in the Bible, from both natural revelation and from special revelation. It’s our choice if we’re going to do that or not. That’s the first why.
The second why is, probably, even more important: “Okay, so you’ve made this claim about the Bible; and you’ve given me some good evidence for why it might be true, but why should I care?” That’s a good question, I think.

You know, it turns out this generation reports themselves/they will identify themselves as the loneliest generation. Why is that the case? Well, it turns out that it’s theological—because under a Christian worldview, it turns out that your body matters. Being in the proximity of another physical body is what relationships are built on. Because you were created in the image of God, and He gave you both a body—by the way, when we die, we don’t go be a nonphysical beings; we have a resurrection body.

It turns out I can make a case for what the Bible claims about this: why this is true, even if there was no Bible; and why it ought to matter to you.

Dave: It is interesting—you’ve already said—that I, even as a parent, or as a youth pastor, or as anybody trying to influence the next generation—they are not really going to listen to the why’s even or the what’s unless they feel—and you started the book with this question—that you love them. Isn’t it interesting?

I mean, as I looked at even how you broke the book up—this generation is different; there is all kinds of different influences—but when it comes down to the core, they are still asking the same question we still ask today, as adults—but we definitely asked as a 12/13-year-old—“Do you love me?” and “Will you show it?”—those are your two sections.

It’s like, “How do I reach my son and daughter?” They are going to want to know, first, “Do you love me?” and then out of that relationship—right?—I love how you phrased it.

Sean: That’s the heart of it.

J. Warner: Yes.

Sean: I mean, at its core, I think this generation wants to be called “the beloved”; that’s their heart. We all do; and especially in light of this loneliness—especially in light of distractions/especially in light of the constant pressures and anxiety—in their heart, they just want to be known as the beloved of an adult, who steps in and says: “I care about you,” and “I’m going to help you be everything God has designed you to be.” They might not show the immediate response they want to; but that is making a difference in their life and, more often than not, bears fruit in the long run.

Ann: I think that’s the most important thing that we can really end on—is that fact. My mom recently passed away; she was 90 years old. We recently just celebrated her life. For her celebration, there are 12 grandsons—no granddaughters—only grandsons, ages 28 to 41. All stood up and gave her a tribute and talked about the impact that she had made on their lives—every one.
It really wasn’t about her worldview; it wasn’t about how she was such a theologian—although she lived her faith—it was that she loved them; she saw them; she played with them; she made them laugh. They said: “When she sat down with us, she looked at us in the eye; and she said, “I love you. I love how God made you; I’m so proud of you.” Basically, she said, “You are my beloved.”

Sean: Wow.

Ann: I’m telling you—these 12 boys would give their lives for her. That’s what really matters is: “Do we love them?”—because we can make it so complicated and fearful, as parents, thinking: “I need all of these answers. I need to know apologetics. I need this worldview.”

It really comes down to: “Will you spend time with them? Will you be with them?—engage in their questions and their dialogue.” They just want somebody to see them/to love them. Maybe, if we don’t know the answers, we can help them find the answers.

Bob: It’s not that the apologetics don’t matter; obviously,—

Ann: Right.

Bob: —we’re sitting here with two apologetics guys,—

Ann: Exactly.

Bob: —who are giving their lives to saying: “These truth claims do matter.”

Ann: —“and both are important.”

Bob: But if you don’t have a foundation to communicate that—what’s the old line?—“They don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care”; right? All the way through your book, you weave the idea that: “This is how you love: You love this way by sharing truth, by engaging, by being there”; but it’s all with this foundation of: “Yes; I really do care, and I respect you. I’m going to listen to you, and we’re going to have a relationship. In the context of that, we’re going to talk about what a biblical worldview looks like; because you’re going to face some headwinds, and you’re going to have to stand in the midst of those headwinds.”

Just like you, Sean, when you were 19 years old, you may think, “I’m not sure I believe all of this stuff.” “That’s okay; think deeply about it.” Our conviction/your conviction is: “If people will think clearly about the Bible, the Bible is going to validate itself.” Who was it?—I think it was Spurgeon, who they asked him if he would debate the Bible. He said: “I don’t need to debate the Bible. Just take it off its leash—it’s like a bulldog; it’ll defend itself,”—the claims of Christ hold up under intellectual scrutiny.
But the foundation of love—we started this whole conversation by talking about the fact—John 1:14—Jesus came; He was full of grace and truth. If our parenting/if our Christianity is not full of grace and truth, there is something deficient; and we’ve got to be full of both.

You guys have helped equip us in both areas, and we’re grateful for the book. We’re grateful for you being here. Thanks for being on FamilyLife Today.

J. Warner: So glad to be here.

Sean: Thank you.

Bob: And guys, there are a ton of parents I’m thinking of right now who need this book and realize they need this book. They can go to our website, FamilyLifeToday.com, to order the book, So the Next Generation Will Know, by Sean McDowell and J. Warner Wallace. There is also a participant’s guide. You can get together with other parents and go through eight sessions, where you interact and talk about how you’re going to do this with your kids—great for a small group or a Sunday school class.

Again, find the information on our website at FamilyLifeToday.com. You can order from us online or call to order: 1-800-FL-TODAY is the number. The title of the book, one more time, So the Next Generation Will Know. Order, online, at FamilyLifeToday.com; or call 1-800-358-6329—that’s 1-800-“F” as in family, “L” as in life, and then the word, “TODAY.”

Again, I want to point you back to our website, FamilyLifeToday.com. At the beginning of today’s program, David Robbins, the president of FamilyLife, joined us to talk about how we can be praying together—as a family, as individuals, brothers and sisters in Christ—in the middle of issues that we are facing as a nation. The article David wrote on that and the prayer prompts that he provided are available online at FamilyLifeToday.com.

Let’s take this assignment seriously. Let’s make sure we are spending time praying for our nation/praying for the Spirit of God to be poured out on us in our day. It’s clear we need God to do a work in our midst. I hope, again, you go to FamilyLifeToday.com and get a copy of David’s article and pray through it this weekend.

And with that, we’ve got to wrap things up for this week. Thanks for being with us. I hope you have a great weekend. I hope you and your family are able to worship together with your local church, one way or another, this weekend; and I hope you can join us back on Monday. We’ll introduce you to a couple who, at one point in their marriage, realized they had to deal with what had been a hidden trauma: a wife who had experienced sexual abuse and never told anyone. That finally came to light in a
pretty dramatic way. We’ll introduce you to Bill and Pamela Ronzheimer on Monday. I hope you can be here for that.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, along with our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our hosts, Dave and Ann Wilson, I’m Bob Lepine. Have a wonderful weekend. We will see you Monday for another edition of FamilyLife Today.

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