

# OpenTheo

## Five Lies of Our Anti-Christian Age with Rosaria Butterfield

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### Life and Books and Everything - Clearly Reformed

Is homosexuality normal? Is transgenderism a sin? Is Christian kindness the same thing as spiritual niceness? What's the difference between acceptance and approval? In this episode, Kevin and Rosaria probe these questions and many others like them. Whether you are struggling with sexual sin, know someone who is, or even if you think Kevin and Rosaria are dead wrong, you won't want to miss this important and provocative episode.

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Don't Waste Your Life

## **Transcript**

Greetings and salutations. Welcome back to Life and Books and Everything. I'm Kevin Deung, Senior Pastor at Christ Covenant Church in Matthew's North Carolina.

And today I am joined by my guest Rosaria. Rosaria Rosaria? Rosaria? Rosaria? That's what I thought. That's what I thought.

That's what I thought. That's what I said. Rosaria.

You could do that too. Yes. Then I think you were my grandmother.

Anyway, that's it. I don't want to be that. We don't want you to know it.

confusion on this. Rosaria Butterfield, five lives of our anti-Christian age is the book that we're going to talk about. Hopefully, most of our listeners know of Rosaria and some of her other books, The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert, Openness Unhindered, the Gospel Comes with a House Key.

She's an author, pastor's wife, homeschool mother, former professor of English and women's studies at Syracuse. We may talk about that. And I forgot about this.

You have your PhD from the Ohio State University. Don't forget that article adjective. They may have dropped the article adjective, actually, since I graduated in the Dark Ages.

No, they still haven't. In fact, they were trying to, a few years ago, they tried to trademark the the. They couldn't do it.

But Crossway, who's published this wonderful book, actually, it just says Ohio State University. So there are some book guys that are going to want the the Rosaria. I wish that's the only controversy about this book that we could talk about.

Yes. Well, we won't talk about that one. We will get into many others.

But let's start here. And I don't think you get tired of this question, but you're asking it often. But it gives you an opportunity to talk about the Lord's grace in your life.

Probably most of the people listening know something about you. But in case there's someone who who doesn't, it would be important before we jump into this book. Tell us how did you become a Christian? Yeah, that is an important question.

And I never tire of the Lord's grace in my life. When I was a professor of English and women's studies, and I was at Syracuse University, and I was actually recruited, hired, mentored, and then tenured in some ways to make homosexuality look wholesome. And unfortunately, I actually pulled it off.

So I was a lesbian feminist activist. I say that because I wasn't just the quiet lesbian next door trying to mind your own business. I genuinely was trying to change the world.

What is it, Proverbs 23.7, how a man thinketh in his heart. So he is. I was all in.

And I believed that in the morality of gay and lesbian lives, and in the various ways that feminism was truly good for the world, as well as good for me. And after my tenure book was written and totally set at university press, I started writing the book that was on my heart. And it was really just a question, why do Christians hate gay people? What is it? Why can't people like you just appreciate the person I used to be? And why did you even think about Christians? Had you had that in your background or encountered Christians? Why make that the load star of your objection? Right.

Yeah. Well, I was a political activist. I testified before New York's legislatures, and I wrote the first policy at the university for domestic partnerships, which then became part of the, you know, part of the bulwark of gay rights, you know, gay marriage activism decades later.

So I had had lots of interfaces with Christians, and it always seemed that we were talking past each other. It always seemed to me like, you know, I was saying, here are logical arguments in a world that isn't Christian. And you all were saying, but I think the whole world is Christian.

And I thought, can't, you know, does everybody have ADHD? Can't you stay focused? You know, so I really, but I also genuinely wanted to know why you all thought what you thought. So I had a little stick them on my desk that said I'd rather be wrong on an important point than write on a trivial one. And in some ways, you know, I've always kind of lived that out.

I also had interfaced with a number of Christians around policy issues. And I was kind of hankering to talk to you all. I just wanted to sit down, have dinner, listen to you.

And you know, I also have never wanted to make straw men in my books and my articles out of my opponents. So I it's important to me to hear the other side well enough that I, you know, understand it. So, so that that was why that's why Christians were on my my radar.

And in the process, I met a pastor, Ken Smith, he's still alive. I talked to him fairly, you know, recently and 96 years old, still very sharp, still rebukes me for various things. And he and his wife, Floyd, became, I learned that they were my neighbors and they were

willing to really, they were willing to just open up these scriptures and tell me why they thought what they thought.

And so the really short story is after, you know, reading the Bible through seven times under Ken Smith's authority. I wasn't just, you know, reading the message and letting people know what I thought about it. It wasn't that it was I was trying to read it in the way that they were reading it so I could understand.

And probably eating 500 meals at their house and just, you know, I came to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I learned that repentance unto life was my threshold to God and was liberty. And that's when life really got messy for me.

But like, that's when that's when my life fell apart. That's right, Christianity doesn't always make your life come together. Oh, no, oh, not not for me.

I mean, can you imagine being the, you know, the faithful 10 year queer theory prophets Syracuse and now you're a Christian and I've got all these graduate students who are hoping I'm still going to be working with them in queer theory. And I'm saying, well, I'm not really teaching that anymore. I'm teaching Christian hermeneutics.

And, you know, I mean, it, it, it, it, it had also, you know, there were personal questions. How's the Lord going to work with my, at that point, very persistent lesbian desires? Like what, how does a woman like me who I'm a Christian because I believe that Jesus Christ, you know, is in fact, our resurrected Savior and that the resurrection of Jesus is true, whether I believe it or not. So that's why I'm a Christian.

But how do I fit into this paradigm? So those are big questions and hard questions. And the Lord very faithfully worked all of it out. I don't have everything figured out, but I'm very grateful to God for salvation and for the forgiveness of sin and for the liberty that is in Christ and for my husband, my children, my grandchild, all of that.

Have you heard from people over the years? As you've shared that, that story and just a little plug here, Rosaria is going to be at the cross conference. I'll be there. Others will be there.

It's a missions aimed conference for 18 to 25 year olds. You can check it out. But there'll be a main session, which will be me and Rosaria having a more far-reaching conversation, not just about this book about her life.

So there's lots of questions I want to ask you. I'll save most of those for that time. But I just wonder, as you've shared that story many times over the years, have you had people say to you, well, Rosaria, I doubt you were really a lesbian.

Absolutely right. And what do you say to them? You probably were just dabbling and you didn't really come out of that thing into this new thing. People don't really change like

that.

Right. Absolutely. Absolutely.

And I'll be the first to say that that was probably the hardest thing I've ever done was to leave my lesbian partner and join a church and try to go to battle against a sin that felt like who I was. And so if the Lord gave me a lighter sentence, then he's given other people. It's because he knows I'm a very weak woman.

So I do not, I mean, it was Jane Austen who said in sarcasm about the women writers of her day, well, my sore throat hurts more than everybody else's. If I had a lighter sore throat than everybody else, it's because I needed it. So that's what I would say.

I would say that how God liberates you from the entanglements of Satan, that's quite a mystery. I would also say that there's something generational about this that I would like to say. I'm 61 years old when I came out as a lesbian, I was a late bloomer.

Right. I was considered a late, you know, everybody, I just, you know, I went to Catholic school. I didn't date anybody.

I wasn't interested in anybody. I was just never really interested in men at all. And in college, men were interested in me.

And so I was, I dated a number of men. I was dating men, you know, throughout college. And then at the same time, falling in love with women, which was, you know, a little bit awkward, that can put a damper on a relationship kind of quickly.

But I didn't really, this was not, it wasn't a world that was given over to the celebration of all things homosexual. So I didn't really have language for who I was, when I came out as a lesbian, all my friends were like, yeah, we knew it. Like, okay.

And I would say the organizing paradigm for me was something that Adrienne Rich, who was lesbian, poet, and very significant to my generation, she had an article called compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. So I saw my former heterosexuality as a kind of social compulsion, and my lesbianism as a kind of freedom and authenticity. Having said that, I would have never said born this way, because I was a feminist.

And I did not want to get anywhere close to the pathology of homosexuality. I was not sick. I would very, you know, was happy to tell you I chose this.

And so that was part of the language. All of this is part of the language of Freud, though. And that's what we need to realize that in the 19th century, the, in some ways, the invention of a new category of personhood called homosexual orientation, you know, that was the first time in the history of the world that anyone would say, this is who I am, rather than how I feel.

And so we're all downstream from that. But no, I mean, I, yeah, I mean, I don't want to go to, I would never argue with somebody about our personal feelings and has it been harder for other people. I would say, for example, I think it's probably harder for a lot of men who have practiced homosexuality than it is for women.

Now, you know, I'm going to get probably this might be the first controversial thing I've said on your podcast, not the last, but you know, because for the most part, women's sexuality is responsive and not initiative. So I think, I think it is harder. I think there are, there are many complexities to the way that sin makes more work for us.

But here's what I would not want for people to have. I am 61 years old. I am biblically married.

I have been married to my faithful husband and pastor for almost as long as I'm a celebrity to grow in Christ, that my single friends who struggle with homosexuality have not had. So in some ways, you might even ask the question, how could I not be more sanctified than I am right now? So I know that's a wonderful answer. And before we jump into the book, just, I would hate for me, I would hate to forget this by the end of the podcast.

So I want to ask you this now, because maybe there's somebody listening here who is mired in sexual sin, we could label the homosexual or it might be heterosexual. What would you say to the person listening or it might be a loved one they're praying for? They feel like, either I cannot really change or to, I cannot really be forgiven. What do you say to the person with sexual sin who is believed? That gets to the lies, but it's indirectly.

What do you say to those two beliefs? Absolutely. Well, to the person who's struggling, I would say that one drop of Christ's blood is sufficient to forgive us from our sins completely. And if you repent of your sin and lay hold, cling to Christ, you are getting more than one drop of his blood.

And you are getting the resurrected Christ, which means that as you struggle, and everyone does, as you cry out the way Paul did, why do I do what I don't want to do? It's the law of sin in me. You are not only clinging to Christ, but Christ is clinging to you. And Thomas Goodwin has the best word picture of that.

We are all born chained to Adam. And once we are justified by God, we are now chained to Christ. And just in the same way that you couldn't move your chain to Christ, you can't change your chain from Christ.

And then our job is to really be to tie in in the covenant of church membership with the godly church and to grow in Christ. And to remember that that proverb I think I started with, how a man thinketh in his heart so he is, the battle is in the mind, as well as the

body and as well as the body memories. But it's extremely important, especially in this particular culture.

If your struggle is homosexual sin, you need to realize how much Satan is all over this. Homosexuality is the reigning idol of our day. You probably feel like you're being torn apart by wild horses.

So don't try to find the middle road. That's right. Run deeply into the church, have them hide you and protect you and don't feel like you need to be a narrator of all things, how to help other people.

You need to just shore up in the word of God. Now, if you are the mother of someone who is still struggling or the grandmother, and those in some ways are the my audience for the book, it might not come across, but those were the people that prompted me to write this book, you need to learn how to stay connected to your loved one without becoming indoctrinated. And in some ways, the same advice is for you.

You can't find that there is no middle road. That road got washed away. And we can talk about how that road got washed away.

You need to go to the center of the church. You need to go to a church that is faithful. And you need to know that the Lord hears your prayers.

And you're dealing with not just anybody, but a prayed for child. And those of us who are covenantalists, that's a different category. So pray with hope.

That's a great segue to talk about the book. So we're talking about five lies of our anti-Christian age by crossway. Thankful for crossway.

I do want to mention crossway is one of the sponsors of LBE and a new book just to also come in by David Gibson. The there it is. If you're watching the Lord of Psalm 23, Jesus, our shepherd, companion, and host forward by Sinclair Ferguson.

David is a friend and a wonderful pastor in Scotland. And he's written this book. It's lovely in its design and content.

So check that out from crossway on Psalm 23. I want to talk about your audience. You've already mentioned that.

And you've alluded to that likely this is to be a controversial book. And as much well, both both content. And I'm sure there will be people who say tone.

So I've had the privilege of writing the foreword. And if I can read, if I can quote myself for a moment. So the book you are holding, I write is so important.

Make no mistake, this courageous book is bracing, meaning readers will have to brace

themselves. You won't agree with every sentence, but it is hard to imagine anyone who shouldn't listen to what Rosaria has to say. Strike that not what Rosaria has to say, but what God has said that Rosaria knows we need to hear.

Rosaria Butterfield is a friend of mine and she is eager to speak to you as a friend too, if you will let her. She's smart caring, self deprecating. You didn't want to hear all that.

And here's one thing I hope you'll learn to love in a world awash in softheads and brittle hearts. Rosaria isn't afraid to tell you what she really thinks. May her tribe increase.

So one of the most important sentences I think is actually the very first sentence in the preface. You say this book is for Christians, especially Christian women who aren't ashamed of the Bible and its teachings, or who are and want to change. I could imagine someone writing a book like this as an apologetic book.

And they're speaking first of all to those who are struggling with these sins, an evangelistic book, a cultural, a theological retrieval book. So there's lots of different ways. And I think some people who may criticize it may have in mind, you should have written a book that I could give to my very hurt, difficult child who needs to.

Well, there's that Rosaria who would love to sit across the table with you at a meal. And this is a different audience. Why did you address the book to those persons and why did you write it in the way you did? Those are great questions.

First of all, I addressed it to moms and grandmas because those are the people who stop me at Costco, show up at my house, show up at my church, write to my website. And they are totally befuddled by how Christians became bigots, how the word of God became harmful, how 78 genders popped up in a world that only has 26 letters of the alphabet to represent them. And also how just not how a biblical world and life view became understood as hatred.

And why we went from talking about consenting adults and leaving them alone to all of this programming targeting children. Dare I say how we went from allies to groomers. And these moms also wanted to know, and I've talked to them, I've zoomed with them or however we have been able to communicate.

One grandma said, do I really have a trans child, my grandson, or an abused one? Because my lesbian daughter is now non-binary and thinks she needs to change my grandson's name, put him in tucking underwear. If you don't know what that is, I can, you know, and raise him as a girl to save the world from toxic masculinity. And we live in, and I won't name the state.

And that's not even an exaggeration. No, no, that's speaking in hyperbole. That really, those words, those things are happening all the time.



Those things are happening. These are the conversations. I also speak at school board meetings, Durham County School Board meetings, on the subject of transgenderism and parental rights.

And that is like going to a psych ward on the night of a full moon. And I'm not kidding. And I will often say to people, now look, I'm a former gay rights activist, if you want me to help you make your argument, I will.

But when you just go up to the microphone and scream, and I'm not kidding you, the things that you see on YouTube are actually happening. And so these moms and grandmas are writing to me and saying, what happened? And it made me realize, and specifically what they're saying is, I'm at a church, the pastor just says, let's major on the majors, but we can't agree about what the majors are. So if Christ is not divided, why is the church divided? And so the book itself really sought to answer those questions, strengthen that community.

And I came up with three reasons and five lies. And the reason for my tone is simple. These are not women who are preacher chick wannabes, just as I'm not.

These are not women who want to write book reviews on these books. These are women who like me, I get up in the morning. And if my grandson was here, there are lots of pages on the homeschool table with one line through them.

And I throw them in the garbage. You know what, he's a great artist. But if you leave it on the homeschool table in the morning and it's Monday, it goes in the garbage.

And so as harsh as this might sound, there's a lot of books out there that are just garbage. And I just want to give moms and grandmas like myself, the permission to continue doing what we're doing, throwing garbage in the garbage so we can get on with life. So three reasons, five lies.

So we're going to get to those reasons in just a moment. You you say just continue with this theme. You say that this book is the necessity of godly confrontation.

And I think you do that very well. It is a confrontation. But I think you're true to your own what you said out.

It's not your values. It's what God tells us. Godly confrontation does not include mocking to vision.

It allows Christians to seek the truth. And it might seem naive or overly simple, but is actually an act of respect. And and and that I think is sorely missing.

We especially online, lots of mocking derision, lots of owning the libs or whatever the the opposite is with the conservatives. There's lots of that, but actual godly confrontation.

And I hope people in this book and on this podcast, Rosarica can really hear your heart behind it because you are writing as a sister in Christ as a mother as a grandmother.

And as you're talking, it's not just a book for women by any means, but you do have in your mind. And you say some things that perhaps will be hard for some women to hear. And it's not that men don't run afoul of these faults either.

But for example, you say, I'm paraphrasing it's it's toward the front of the book you talk about. Instead of following, you know, almost Christian bloggers who tweet about this stuff, you know, and then at the end, I think you talk about don't women sisters don't use the online world as an opportunity to air your grievances. Now, yes, men can make these mistakes as well.

But since you're addressing women, what is it? What's the what's the draw that I think all of us recognize this is a danger. The online world becomes, you know, the sisters of perpetual grievance. And it's just the way that it's the way you get accolades.

It's the way that you get allies. And then how many women do fall prey? I like your phrase almost Christian. It's a sort of veneer of Christianity, the mommy blogger world.

And there's a lot of good ones out there. But there's some real snakes. That's not too strong a word.

What have you seen? And why do you feel so compelled to warn against these things? Right. Right. So first of all, I'm an older woman writing this book.

And I'm not on social media because I would be disqualified in the first three hours. I don't have the self control to do this. So I, you know, you might say, well, I don't know that you're a good, you know, but here's what I would say.

And I'm not going to name I sometimes do name names when I need to name names, but I'm not going to name names on this one. Although I think you'll you'll track with this. I've been a woman long enough.

And I was an advocate of feminism long enough to know that when women play hardball in the same way men do, they get chewed up spit out and they're not forgiven. So you want to make sure that you go out on what you want to say. This book might be, you know, my swan song in some ways.

I'm willing to put that out there. But don't let it be on something stupid. Okay, so know that if you're going to play hardball, young woman, for every problem that you see in the Twitter world, you will not have a playing field the way that the men who do the very same thing that you do.

And so in some ways, I'm acknowledging this book by be the last just for that reason.

And I'm okay with that. But be careful, be careful because the world does not want to hear strident angry women, even if Twitter has given you a space, as they would say for this kind of, and I think it's exhibitionism.

Right. Do you think it's true? Do you think, and I'm curious really, that these two statements are true one, that when women, you say, you know, go with all the kind of strength and vigor and attack dog as a man would do in the online world. Number one, that they do get treated, you know, even more poorly.

And number two, that women also handle it in a different way or don't. I mean, I do think, you know, there's plenty of men who handle it in ungodly ways also. But there is, there are differences between men and women.

And I think arguing like men doesn't help women in either respect. So agree or disagree with those two thoughts. Now I agree, I agree entirely.

And I would say that's actually why you're seeing such an uptick in the social contagion part of transgenderism among young women, women have more flexible ego boundaries. And they are less likely to be to find their foothold in a world where everybody gets into these five lies. And we could do an episode on each one.

And we'll just try to walk through them quickly and see hopefully to get to some of these other, you know, you have great things to say at the end about the difference between acceptance and affirmation. So there's lots of stuff I want to get into here. But five lies, number one, homosexuality is normal.

You talked about Freud and it is downstream from Freud. I've said before, you know, when we allow the world to give us the words to use, we don't realize it. So it's the same, it's the same thing, transgender, cisgender.

As soon as you start saying trans insist gender, you've given away a whole lot more than you realize you've just implicitly or explicitly put in your mind and other people's minds. Well, there's two different ways of being there equally. And then it's, well, why are you cis instead of trans or in this case, why are you heterosexual instead of homosexual? So what do you mean, Rosaria, that we've believed the lie that homosexuality is normal? Right.

Well, we, when you unhinge the gospel from the creation ordinance, you create a false gospel. Now, you know, you can have many virtuous pagans in this world as Dante, you know, describes. Unfortunately, they're all on the Inferno part of the book and not, you know, the other part.

So, yeah, right. So I mean, let's be clear, you know, that's not the comedy part that the divine pagans go in. So, so the normalization of homosexuality came about through a couple of powerful social forces.

One is exactly what you describe, well meaning evangelicals, seating or yielding the moral language to the left, you know, using the left's language, sexual minority, cisgender, da, da, da. And as soon as you do that, you no longer have the moral language of the Bible. And the Bible has a moral language.

And if you don't use that, then you're actually condemning people to hell. You are not proclaiming a gospel. There is no gospel of the, of cisgenderism.

There is no gay Christianity. So one of the things that the normalization of homosexuality did or does is it demands you see the moral language to the left. It demands you accept the moral language of the Aburgafel decision.

And when I say the Aburgafel decision, I don't just mean the Supreme Court case in 2015, but all of the arguments that surrounded it. One of the biggest arguments that surrounded the Aburgafel decision, which legalized gay marriage in all 50 states, was the idea that the only reason we haven't done this before is animus. The only reason we haven't had gay marriage for, you know, thousands of years is because straight people hate gay people.

And there's this internalized homophobia. And so rolled into the Aburgafel decision was the dignitary harm clause, which said we defined harm. And it said you are hurting people who call themselves gay if you deny their identity.

And that's why people are losing jobs over transgender pronouns. So one of the things we've never seen before until right now, the normalization of homosexuality, we've never said Christians don't throw people away. We understand that sin comes in every form, it grabs you by the throat.

I'm the last person on planet earth to not tell you I can understand that. But this is the first time in the history that the anomaly has normed the norm. And so what the normalization of homosexuality has done is it's led people to believe that this is who you are, rather than how you feel because of the fall of man.

It also has created a false gospel that you see in re-voice and gay Christianity. And I talk about side A and side B and all of that might be just deep in the weeds for this conversation. But basically what I'm saying is that we have a lot of virtuous pagans, as Dante would say, running around in the evangelical church.

And that makes it extremely hard for people like the person I used to be, to actually learn how to hate your sin without hating yourself. So maybe this is, we'll work through these five lies, but you talked about side A and side B, and you can go there if you want and explain that for our listeners. But you've alluded to it several times that this book is it's trying to help Christians understand the middle ground that instinctively we want doesn't exist.

If it ever did exist, a Bergafel 2015, eight years later, it's gone. And there's a certain, and sometimes it's commendable and understandable, but a certain instinct that says, if we can just kind of get around the kindness flank, the niceness flank, and look, we don't have to get into the win some wars. I think it's a fine word in a certain way, and it's a unhelpful word in other ways.

I've used, okay, we understand. But your point is absolutely true. If we as Christians think, I can just kind of just hold lightly to this tether of, you know, marriage as a man and a woman, but I concede as much other ground as possible because that will make the gospel more attractive.

That will be the sort of welcome open door. I think in a lot of ways, your book with appropriate bracing confrontation is telling people, brothers and sisters, that middle ground, if you're standing in it, you're probably not in it. You're over on the other side.

Why do you feel so strongly? Yeah, absolutely. Well, I would say for sure that the a Bergafel decision washed out that middle ground. I don't know if that middle ground existed, but I know I loved that middle ground for years.

And I have at least two books that were written in that middle ground. And I wanted that middle ground to hold. But here's what I can tell you that after the a Bergafel decision, there was no social structure that allowed for the, you know, the flood walls to stand up.

So it doesn't exist. And that's why I'm concerned about all of these parachurch ministries that are targeting, you know, college Christians. If, if crew are you F, in her varsity does not recognize that there is no middle ground, then they I want them to know you are putting a lot of young Christians at risk.

And from the material that I've read from all of these organizations, I don't think anybody's got a clue. And specifically, you just have to know what time it is people. I mean, you and I were from the North, you know, you didn't get up in Michigan or in New York and put your, you know, your shorts on when it was 30 below zero because that was stupid.

So yeah, that's all I'm saying. Just know what time it is. Another way to put it is those three exchanges in Romans one have been codified into civil and federal law.

Yeah, that's right. So that's important to note too. We see an exchange of, of God for the creature.

We see an exchange of, of, of heterosexuality for homosexuality. And we see an exchange of truth for lies. And one of the ways you see that is take something like the word immutability.

You know, that is actually a word that we, we consider to be an attribute of God. Right.

But all of a sudden it's used as an attribute of homosexuality.

Well, as soon as an attribute of God becomes an attribute of man's sin, we see that we have an idle problem in our world. And one of the ways that that gets played out is you'll have people say, but look, I'm gay. I'm trans.

I'm made in the image of God. And that really is a category confusion because you're made in the image of God as a man or a woman. We praise God for that.

And we want you to grow in the knowledge and the righteousness and the holiness of God. But trans and gay come from the world, the flesh and the devil. There's no such thing as being made in the image of God as a gay man.

Doesn't exist. So let's go back to the college student. Say a college student stands up or says it to a group.

And you know, what would say to us, Kevin Rosaria, yeah, I agree marriage is between a man and woman. I agree homosexual behavior is wrong. But our posture is the church.

What we should lead with is we're very sorry. We've sinned against gay people. We've been guilty of the sin of homophobia.

And don't we have more to repent of shouldn't we lead with all the ways over that the church has hurt so many people. And then maybe we'll have a hearing, but we have to isn't that the way of Christ shouldn't the gospel shouldn't we talk about our own sins first. I have my response.

What would yours be? Yeah, you know, part of why I was able to publish in this book the entire dialogue that Ken Smith and I had, because he actually wrote it down like he had a lecture for me, he just said, I'm going to give you a lecture is I want people to see what happens when you have strong relationships and strong words. So in some ways, I am all about strong relationships. I am all about, you know, my dinner table is filled with I dine with sinners and I read bad books all the time.

I might have a new PhD in that. But you lead with the truth. You lead with John 8 31 32.

And if you have things to repent of, be sure to repent of them. But that's not your posture. And and having lived as a lesbian during us an era of this world where we did not have civil rights of any kind.

And during the time of the AIDS epidemic, I will tell you for all of the things that the church has done against gay people, you cannot compare it to the things that gay people have done to gay people. And I really mean that I'm using gay people and I shouldn't because I don't actually think that that is a category of personhood. But you know, being a man in your 40s needing to live in depends because of the kind of sexual

practice you've engaged in is absolutely horrific.

Being a woman who is, you know, riddled with seizures now because of years of testosterone during your trans confusion is not a kindness. And having people say that all you need is a sticker and a parade to deal with these ensnares of the day of the devil is like, that's barbaric. So I would say, no, don't start there.

And don't make it about you. Lead with the truth. Christ loves his created world and his created order.

And there is no feeling so strong that God can't re you know, reshape that through repentance on to life so that you can live in fullness. And you will live in the fullness of Christ. Some of people will live as single people.

Some people will live as married people. But a world that grows in homosexuality and transgenderism is a world condemned, not a world that's flourishing. And the whole moniker of pride should tell us something.

It's it is the whole world trying to convince itself that the exchange of the truth for a lie can be justified. In fact, we need the whole world to throw us to throw a parade to convince ourselves. And I like what you said, you know, for the Christian out there, very sincere, who's maybe thinking, well, we got to lead with the church's sin in our sin of homophobia.

That word has problems in itself. With all due respect, I you know, I think 90% of the time that's a rhetorical posture more than it is a heartfelt repentance. I would want to say to that friend, what what sin are you confronting? Are you repenting of? I think of C.S. Lewis's famous essay, *The Danger of National Repentance*, where he was saying in his day in World War II, he's saying, if you want to repent broadly of a group sin, let it be the sin that your particular age and your generation is guilty of.

It's easy. So he was saying, it's easy to say we repent of imperialism in his day and all these things. He said, you never felt drawn to those things.

Why don't you repent of not obeying your parents? Why don't you repent of your snobbery? That's what Lewis was saying. And in the same way, it's like the, you know, the old from *Blue Like Jazz*, you know, the college students who went and set up a confessional booth to apologize to people for the Crusades. That's pretty cheap repentance quote unquote, because you're actually, you're actually condemning other Christians for something they did.

So lead with love by all means, and you're a model of this as much more than anyone with hospitality and love. But there's something different when we're talking about how we love versus can I just publicly repent of other people's sins. Right.

Absolutely. And that actually, Thomas Watson calls that counterfeit repentance. Yeah.

So it actually is condemning you. One of the experiences I've had, I wonder if you've had this and I wonder if it'll come up at CrossCon, I have all kinds of students who come to me one by one, but they don't want me to talk to their group. And I've had, you know, young people say, I just don't think you're connecting with us anymore.

And I'll say, no, I'm connecting. I'm connecting the way the spanking spoon once connected with your rod behind. I'm pretty confident I'm connecting with you.

But you know what, what, and I think we have to like think about what the end is in mind. And I think this is where it's really hard for evangelicals. Ken Smith said to me recently, this is the 96 year old pastor of the Lord used in my conversion who walked me down the aisle when I got married.

Ken Smith said, you know, we're sorry, it's just hard to get evangelicals in a fighting mood. And he said this to me last month. And I'm like, you know, he still is like the profit of my world.

But we have to realize that, you know, if the end in mind is actually liberating people from the snares of Satan, we've got to find our backbone. That's right. So you've already been talking about this.

Anything more you want to say about line number two, being a spiritual person is kinder than being a biblical Christian. Just just that you must lead with the truth. And, and the spiritual person, you know, that's the, you know, the anagram and, and you know that that can it is one of the things I've seen from this actually, I will tell you one of the consequences.

If there's one Titus to, you know, trope I've had in the last two months, it's having to say to young women, I think you need to fire your anti, you're almost Christian feminist therapist and listen to your elders. Because one of the things you get if you believe that paganism is kind is you get redefinitions of trauma and abuse. Right.

And you start to believe that you don't need to repent of sin because somebody sinned against you. Well, newsflash, you can be both a victim and a sinner at the same time. And most of us were.

And with that language, you know, he said it the redefinition of harm and abuse and trauma. And here's the, you know, my caveat, yes, abuse is a real thing. Trauma is a real thing.

But the vocabulary has become so expansive and so ill-defined and ambiguous. And it's almost entirely upon the person's experience to define or to self-label. So what may be necessary discipline or maybe run of the mill sin that needs to be overlooked because



it's a glory to overlooking offense, everything is now received.

This is why we have mental health crisis. One of the reasons is because we don't know what to do with normal states of frustration, disappointment, hurt, or even understanding that sometimes we bring the hurt upon ourselves or it's you have to break the bone before you can reset it in place. How do you talk to people about this with all of the, you know, the necessary guardrails that people genuinely can be hurt and sinned against.

And yet we're living in a time where just a lot of silliness it seems to me. It is and it's very dangerous for women. It's extremely dangerous for a woman to go around thinking that she's been traumatized when actually, you know, she's in an adulterous relationship and she needs to get out and repent and there's full forgiveness and repentance.

So it's extremely dangerous and it's extremely dangerous for the church. I mean, as a pastor's wife for many decades, I will tell you that Satan's widest angle on your church is its most unhinged woman. So and the way that women get unhinged right now is all of this kindness therapy.

And so I spent a lot of time saying to young women, get a grip, get a grip. And how do they respond to that? Well, I do it one by one. You know, I think that you if you have a strong relationship with a person, you can have strong words.

But I think we need to be willing to hear strong words because it's impossible. I mean, I know one woman who is truly, you know, like we had, well, you know, churches are a mess. So our church is no different than anybody else's.

But you know, my husband's the pastor and he'll say, you know, so and so says she doesn't want to hear, you know, hard things from the word of God. She just wants a hug and he's like, yeah, but if I gave her a hug, she'd say, I sexually abused her. So I can, you know, I mean, like, you know, you can't win.

So I think, I think, I think Titus too. I think we need mature women. And that's why I wrote this book, mature women, we need to take younger women under our wings and say, get a grip, have reasonable expectations and and expect it to be hard.

Hard isn't bad. That doesn't mean there's a problem. So what advice do you give for me as a pastor for other pastors? Because I hear what you're saying and I think so as I preach God's word, I need to, I need to preach it all.

I need to preach the whole council of God, I need to apply it to men and women. I also think it would be unwise of me to say from the pulpit, young ladies, get a grip. Because that lands on people in a different way.

And instinctively, I feel like there's a different way I should communicate. Is that do you

think that's pastors being sensitive to male female dynamics? Or are they too cowardly? Who can tell young women to get a grip? Is it 61 year old women? Is it everyone? I think it can be everyone. I don't know.

Kevin, I'm 5'2", 115 pounds. I don't think you can actually stand behind me. I don't think I can protect you.

We've been on the stage before. You're a big guy. You played basketball.

Are you frustrated by this? Are you frustrated? You look at the Presbyterian world. Does it feel like there are men who are, Rosario, you go out in front and you say it and we'll get behind you? Well, I usually poke at the people who do that. And I say just what I just said to you.

So I don't mind it. I think this is a pretty, we're in a pretty scrappy place right now. But I think the word of God equips everyone, especially preachers to preach it powerfully and well.

And I would say you can do that with appropriate caveats and even with, but I think the weak link, I don't know, but I'm married to a pastor. I am so grateful to be married to a pastor. I can't tell you, I need daily biblical counseling sometimes hourly.

So you could pray for Kent and all that. But what I do know is that there's a, the missing link I would say is the women of my generation. Mature women need to take younger women in tightest two fashion and say value what is good.

Love your husbands. Submit to your husbands. If you don't have a husband desire to have a husband, that is a very good thing.

Don't listen to what the church is. I mean, there's a particular way that the church is valorizing singleness and loneliness that is bizarre to me. It is so baffling to me.

And so don't be afraid to just give people, you know, be the grownups. The grownups need to enter the room. And we need to enter the room of the church and the room of the podcast and the room of the school board.

And we just need to be the grownups entering the room now. And you know what? People are not going to be happy. Right.

Let me mention here, we're, I want to get to several other things. So let me mention these lies three, four and five. You can hit on all of them or pick which one you think would be most important.

We've already touched on all of them. Line number three, feminism is good for the world and the church. Line number four, transgenderism is normal.

And we really haven't talked about line number five. modesty is an outdated burden that serves male dominance and holds women back. Which one do you want to talk about? Well, I'm going to make the link between those three things.

Yeah. Okay. The link is a feminist understanding that biological sex and cultural gender are separate and that they can operate in separate spheres and that you can create an identity based on your, you know, your gifts, your cultural understanding of yourself that is separate from your biological sex.

So that is the, the, the theoretical foundation of feminism because feminism ultimately needed to find a go around for a woman's creation potential. Right. These, you know, the men and babies are the problem Kevin.

And so they had to, we've got to find some way of dealing, you know, I've been a big problem maker. You have been a nine. Yeah.

Yeah. You definitely and praise God for that. You know, I think a wonderful book is by Christopher Gordon, the new Reformation Catechism on human sexuality, you probably, but you know, one of the things that he says in here that is very helpful to me as I think through how to connect these three things is, you know, God established a natural order in the creation of male and female that is good for us as image bearers of God to introduce gender as a new category of personhood separate from the biological category of sex in pursuit of a different sexual identity or even in pursuit of a career.

Okay. He didn't say I said that part is unnatural to the creation order and harmful to the purposes for which God made us. So feminism is, it is a lie that feminism is good for the church in the world.

The useful, you know, additions from the first wave of feminism, right to vote, right to education are actually part of the gospel anyway. You didn't need feminism to get there in my opinion. But what you see is what you actually see in this insistence that culture is separate, gender is separate from sex is the end of feminism because feminism ultimately takes aim against biblical patriarchy.

And you might notice that the kind of patriarchy you're dealing with today is not biblical. It's men in dresses. It's transgender patriarchy.

And so in some ways, I think women just have to figure it out. Like, what do you want? Do you want godly men in charge? Or do you want drag queen story hour in charge? Because you're given a picture right now, pretty clear picture of what your options look like. So to rail against the creation ordinance, which is a feminist watchword has resulted in a world where in the world feminism is dead, transgenderism killed it.

Look at title nine. Look at JK Rowling. Yeah.

Look at JK Rowling. Yeah. The only place feminism is alive and well is in the squishy, soft, broad evangelical church, which simply proves that broad evangelicalism is not leading the world.

It's just in a 10 K race, you know, a couple of miles behind. And exhibitionism is in there because part of the whole cultural mandate was use your gifts. I can't tell you how many people have told me, but you're you're such a good public speaker.

Have you never been called to preach? No, I've I've sinned in so many other ways. I don't need to sin in that way. Thank you very much.

You know, I'm yeah. So so so no, you know, this idea exhibitionism is simply an idea that you would, you know, exhibitionism is the replacement of modesty. And it's the idea that you need to run with your gifts.

No, you need to run with the gods created order and what his purposes are. It is fascinating and tragic, the ways in which modern or third wave or whatever wave we're on, sex positive feminism, all of that in a kind of, you know, horseshoe comes around to various what would have been called chauvinist ideas. So I saw from some left leaning corporation or group, I don't remember, they refer to women as bleeding persons.

I mean, can you imagine the what derogatory terms or the sex positive feminists that, you know, you I won't even say the sort of slogans that they say, but they they involve we should be able to not wear our shirts. We should be able to show whatever we want all the time. You know, who used to like that? A lot of men.

Right. These are not ideas that bring true freedom to women. No, absolutely.

And again, if you happen to just have nothing to do on a Thursday night and want to come to a Durham County School Board meeting, you know, the people who are talking are the men in dresses. So I mean, you know, it's it's it's a pretty clear problem out there. But again, what, you know, one more thing I'd like to say about all of this, especially on the transgender issue, you know, the a secular conservative perspective, which you see at writ large in the, you know, school board and the legislature, are very happy to hold up pictures of like women who have had mastectomies, 14 year old boys who have been castrated.

And of course, these are supposed to be glamour pictures and they're holding them up as like just examples of what not to be. And I just want to remind all of us that we need Christians to show up in these spaces because we don't throw people away. We don't hold up a picture of a mangled body and say, see, see, example of what not to be.

We say, behold your Lord who will resurrect your body, you who repent of your sin and commit your life to him so that you cannot mock him, even if you did when you were 14, the saddest person in the world I've ever met is the father of the of the 14 year old son

who thought castrating his son was a good idea. He needs the gospel. That's right.

Do you have time to go past an hour? I sure do. Absolutely. I have some more questions I want to talk about.

I do want to mention from *Desiring God*, they also sponsor life books and everything and mentioning today don't waste your life 20th anniversary. Can you believe that this sermon and book now has been out for 20 years? So you can get a copy from our friends at Westminster bookstore today. If you haven't read it.

And now, I was growing up when this sermon happened or out of college. Now I need to give it to my college students. So don't waste your life published by Crossway but *Desiring God*.

So thank you. A couple of very practical things I want to talk to you about from your book. So here's one of them, which is very provocative.

And and I agree with you and it's easy for me to say I've thought this for a long time. You won't know if it's true or not. But but I have and you're you're helping me now to bring it out.

But you give this very counter cult, not books countercultural, but this is even counter cultural for for Christians. You question the whole idea of coming out of the closet. So I think for many Christians, the idea has been you live with this shame.

You need to okay you're you're not going to you know embrace your homosexuality. But you need to come out. You need to share it with others.

You need to embrace it because other people will help you and it will be an example. And I've often thought we need someone maybe Rosaria when you don't get canceled for this book your next book. I even have the title for you.

Stigma speaks louder than dogma or something to that effect. Because I think Christians we don't know we just think stigma is a bad thing. And it can be.

But stigma is also a good thing. There are all sorts of stick racism is a huge stigma. So whereas it used to be we make it to heaven and well we won't find out because it won't matter in heaven.

But if we did, we might find out some great heroes from the past were quote struggled with same-sex attraction and never and you say you know what do share with a close friend share with a group of people who can pray for you. It's not that you have to have this sin struggle alone but you're questioning the the impulse that says you know what I should really tell my whole church. I should tell everyone and this should be a part of my

identity.

Should anyone do that or what's the danger there? No and I should have written the first book in a pseudonym too. But because you've now you've you've shared that but but you shared as something in the past. Right.

Which is which is very different in the past many many years in the past. But no I think the two things first of all we as Christians do value modesty which means we value privacy. Things that happen in privacy are valued friendships, intimate conversations, things that but but we live in a world where everything is blogged about and tweeted about and we are just we are we're such exhibitionists we can't get anything done in privacy.

So so but the other is I think when I said that and the gay Christians you know got very upset with me you really saw why because they really are proud of their and and I can give you examples if I'm speaking too generally or even harshly right now I can I can explain what I can because some some would would you agree there are some who have identified as having same-sex attraction. Well let's take want to repent of it. Yes yes but let me give some examples let's take somebody like West Hill who says I don't I don't need to repent of my homosexuality because this is how God made me.

Right. I need to sublimate it and use it to the glory of God and and furthermore we all need to come out of the closet because we are the new we are the Gentiles of the new church. We are that we we gay people quote-unquote are the Gentiles coming into the kingdom and so in some ways when I said that I provoked people like West Hill and Nate Collins and Greg Johnson to show that actually what they don't want to do is repent of a sin and they don't want to repent of a sin because well I don't know why I can't I can't speak for them but here's what I can say and again just quoting Thomas Watson if you don't repent of sin then you aren't a Christian.

I mean let me say that really clearly I can't read your heart but I can read your books and if you coddle your sin and say well this is the no-fly zone you can't touch me here it's not a sin I'm not having sex no but desire is an action the Westminster Confession of Faith makes it a helpful distinction between an unchaste and sin and the motion of our sinful heart. It says both are sin all the motions thereof and if I can if I can say that I think the PCA Sexuality Study Report did a did a good job on this I know other denominations have done reports too I was a part of that one but I think it it we stated very clearly that we don't as Protestants hold to the Roman Catholic view of Cupa sense that you have this kind of tender box of the heart and it only becomes sin when you give knowing volitional assent to it even the motions thereof of sin. Some I've put it like this and maybe I got it from someone else I don't remember it's homosexuality gift disability or sin so for some people it's it's a it's a gift okay I'm not gonna act on it but it's a it's a gift to the world it's a gift to show the you know obedience to Christ or is it a disability

it's like you know some people have dyslexia some people have a limp or is it a sin because that puts it in the category of something that can be repented needs to be repented of and also here's the good news that can be changed maybe not fully in this life maybe not quickly but God gives no promise that he heals broken bones he does give a promise to change us from one degree of glory to the next to become more like Christ and put our sins to death and live in him.

Right and I would say one other thing we would hear about more people who had struggled against homosexual desires repented grew in the grace of God are now biblically married have a bunch of kids are very happy we would hear about that if we didn't have such condemnation around that so I talk privately with a boatload of people from that situation and I would say I mean because we do believe in we do believe that can keep us since we do believe that sin is sin and that we must repent of it whether we you know you know chose the form of of original sin that Adam thumb printed on us but I would say something else too and that is has to do with this this cultural momentum that says people don't change changes impossible you know I don't know anybody biblically married who isn't a sinner I'm a pastor's wife for a while I just don't know anybody biblically who didn't come into their marriage with some indwelling sin that needed to be dealt with and I want to just challenge people to understand that the indwelling sin of an unchosen homosexual desire is actually no difference it's God can handle that and God can handle that and bless your marriage I want to share one other thing and that is the disability camp is very quickly becoming the side a let's get married and someone very dear to me very dear to me from that camp someone who would yeah I'll just leave it at that because she probably doesn't want me to say anything that would would would make it known who she is but she came to me not so recently and said rizaria it makes me really sad so she's now quote unquote you know gay married and part of a gay activist church and she said rizaria it makes me really sad that one of us is going to hell and I thought well it does make me sad but I'm just really curious why do you think I'm going to hell yeah which one and why do you think I'm going to hell and she said well because you lay heavy burdens on the necks of gay people by asking them to repent of a sin that isn't a sin and I realized when she said that that the real the real area that Christians need to move into is the area of anthropology if you believe there is such a thing as a gay person you don't believe the gospel you don't believe genesis 127 you don't believe the seeds of the gospel are in the garden and you don't actually believe that you need to love your enemies you just need to think you just think you need to pretend your enemies are your friends so I agree with I agree with you let me push for some clarification because I could hear somebody would say what do you mean gay people my daughter my son came out he he's gay that's what he that's what he is right so you're you're not denying the existence of people who do who have homosexual experiences or feelings right you're saying something about I was one that's right so what do you mean a gay person yeah not identity I mean I don't I mean I that's that's something we could talk about I'm talking about anthropology I'm talking about ontology

I'm talking about personhood and image-bearing God did not create anyone to be gay right God created male and female genesis 127 28 for a pro-creative purpose and God doesn't create a I mean you talk about in your wonderful book patterns that preach right patterns are purposeful they they aren't just there as a museum piece and so there is no bearing the image of God as a gay person so that I'm talking about anthropology not not phenomenology or lived reality but this is going to be the terrain the church has to deal with and let me get back to our parachurch ministries on college campuses because I you know there are people who who flee from those and they show up at the Butterfields and and they share what's going on and then we say why don't you invite that person to church and they say well our you know so-and-so director says don't ever bring so-and-so to the Butterfields you know why we might they might change you know that you might actually hear the gospel I'm telling you it could happen if you've got ears to hear so anthropology biblical anthropology is the that is the war zone right now and campus ministries better wake up this is not 1999 this is 2023 and Satan is all over you and all over your people and I'm watching that's right and God's watching and God's what more important but yes and if there are people writing books doing ministries on apologetics cultural apologetics and you're not talking about this you can talk about evolution matters you can talk about scientism you can talk about atheism you can talk about and all you know evidence is for the resurrection we need all of that and but if you are not talking about anthropology sex gender marriage you are not talking about the number one objection to christian and the number one area in which thinking like a true christian is going to come completely at odds with the way of our world which is the way it was in the first century kyle harper's important book on the you know he doesn't call it this but really the the first sexual revolution in late roman antiquity as christianity took hundreds of years their sexual ethic was from the very beginning very different and it was one of the things in becoming a christian almost you know one of the most important things you had to count the cost was i am coming into a world and an organization called the church and a that has a very different view of sex marriage gender and that's the world that we inhabit now and especially college students because the older you are we kind of have some cultural memory of the way things were and that allows you to sort of well the world's mad and you kind of remember it wasn't always this crazy but if you've just grown up and crazy you need a whole lot of intentional discipleship to help you not be crazy because you're crazier than you think right and that means that the church needs to not just talk about what it believes in but it needs to say what it defies and it needs to help other people see those boundaries and please don't think that young people who are not struggling with homosexuality are not affected by this i do a lot i talk to a lot of young people and there are a lot of young women who actually also are under this kind of delusion that in order to be biblically married i need to be wowed by my spouse no you need use god's pattern for your godly marriage and don't listen to the lies that the world and the church sometimes and specifically the parrot church i mean let me say this is the other thing and i you know you and i know this because we we know these things um you are a pastor i am married to a pastor and our denomination our pastors



take about a die for the biblical doctrine um you are not a higher link cat butterfield is not a higher link people think i'm bold you should hear the preaching i sit under and you know i listen to your sermon so i know you know i know what good preaching is um parrot church ministries are not are not run i'm sorry they are not run by men who offered to die for the doctrine um and this is a particular moment in history when higherlings are really being tossed to and fro so be careful be careful christian love your church more than your parrot church and flee to it and let us not be led by any higherlings or any good people out there in the parrot church let it not be so of you let me ask you to let me talk about two if time for two other things one i think this is really important you hit on this you quote this therapist talking to someone about transgender daughter would you rather have a dead daughter or a living son now you have had this thrown at you i have had it thrown at me we've had it thrown at our our church and our school for standing for biblical sexuality and it goes all the way back in the sexual revolution from the very beginning and i think it's the hardest on a visceral level for christians to know how to respond to because it goes like this whether it's homosexuality or now transgenderism but do you understand that if the way you think and the things you're saying are going to lead people like me to self-harm or my friends are going to commit suicide and and christians or just human beings don't know what to do okay the last thing i want is to is to have someone's tragic death that blood on my hands and so the instinct there is to recoil okay i'll back way up i can't talk about any of this because you're about to commit self-harm or the people you know and so i guess i guess we'll just have to go underground with this whole conversation i think that very practically is one of the biggest defeaters and how do you how do you address it i have two answers to that um if i'm speaking to the church and i have like a mom coming to me and saying this is what my daughter's saying i'll say yeah black mail is hard isn't it first of all that's black mail and you know i just yeah it's very hard it's hard when you know when when you're when somebody's trying to blackmail you but um no the bible says cut off your evil desires not cut off your testicles you know seriously you're not supposed to cut off your body parts you're supposed to cut you are supposed to cut something off because the sin of transgenderism sin not yourself the sin of transgenderism is the sin of envy the sin of covetousness these are really serious things but when i'm before the legislature and i have you know equality north carolina in my face and the camera's rolling i quote the american psychological association that says in 73 percent of the times gender anxiety among children is restored naturally by natal puberty if social transitioning hormone blockers and surgery is not introduced and then i remind them the apa is a pretty liberal organization i only quote it when i have to talk to people like you right okay my numbers are bigger but i'm going to scare you anyway how do you account for that right and then they cry and i'm not kidding you i mean you know because you get your three minutes at the microphone we had this at the last school board meeting the woman who came behind me just literally stood up at the microphone and screamed um and afterwards i went up to her and i gave her my phone number i said i am so sorry i obviously hurt you very much and i don't mean to but i can't understand a word you said

she did say she was a licensed Durham school teacher that should give everybody excitement about sending your kids to the public schools but anyway um i i gave her my phone number i said if you would like to come and just tell me what's going on i'll meet you any but you just have to use your words and i want to hear what's on your heart got back in the car my 20 year old son was with me and he said mom the last time he told me to use my words i was four use your words yeah do you see so what i'm saying again don't be afraid to answer people's questions church they need to hear that they need to hear that there's an argument to be made and one of the other you don't need the bible to make this argument is the the various studies in other countries which are by all accounts even more permissive these rates of of suicide and anxiety and self-harm they don't go down right so it it can't simply be attributed to cultural pressure right and you have the very common sense argument why are these things happening when this country has never been more permissive right more celebratory right of these things than it is right now and yet now you're telling me it's an absolute crisis and epidemic it's of course right this is where it's so hard for Christians because Christians we we want to care we want to be compassionate let's be honest we also want to make sure people see us as caring and compassionate and that sometimes is is more of the motivation but we have to have just the the common sense and the calmness with this particular rejoinder to say you your brother or not brother sister but friend uh your threat of what you might do to yourself or others is according to your own human agency and your own volition absolutely i do i am not encouraging that in fact i would be happy to give you all the counsel that you need to discourage you from that right you cannot lay that at the feet right of other people's beliefs and views and here's why Christians need to be in the public sphere with an absolute not going to be blackmailed here's the truth not buying it no way because again you have conservative legislators who will write to rizaria or kevin and say do you know any d-transitioner who will come and share their sad story i know a lot of them and you're not getting their phone numbers and here's why the same mental health issues that caused them to want to harm their body didn't go away because they did so you're not getting them you're getting me and that's all there is to it and so Christians need to be willing to protect the people who are in harm's way around this conversation and it's not the activists that's right and and so i mean i would say to that and my husband is now preached three sermons on why transgenderism is a sin and we have people in our church who had been trapped in that who would say things like i wish that i heard this sermon when i was in the here we are Christians need to get right up to the microphone yeah and say okay bring it on bring it on what what's your question okay here's a clean x let's stay with it use your words use your words use your words so let let's let's end here you've already been talking about it but again five lives of our anti-Christian age wonderful book the afterword is really really good and some people will want to go right to the afterword or consult it because it's really practical and you get to uh and we don't have time to get into it but you have some great responses some principles to apply as you seek to accept without approving your prodigal so that's where many parents and grandparents are you also go through with just helpful a paragraph or

two some of these things don't need a whole book they need just a wise two paragraphs should i attend the gay wedding of my son my daughter and her lesbian partner are having a baby by artificial assimilation should i go to the the birthday celebration my son and quote husband want to come home for for christmas but my other kids don't want to watch all these very practical questions so consult the afterword but the general theme of this afterword and it's throughout this whole book and it's been a part of our conversation so i'll give you the last word on this topic how do we as christians do what you say right here and that is to find the difference between acceptance and approval that's where so many people are because we know people we love who are enmeshed in these sins right what's the difference and how do we apply it right right right you know that was one of the first conversations ken smith had with me you know many decades ago rizaria i can accept you as a lesbian i just don't approve right i can see you're in front of me i accept that yeah you exist and i accept that you're yes you're not a blank slate you have reasons for why you are where you are your person with feelings and thoughts and a person worth getting to know and talk to and so this element is not god's image in you you are an image bear all those things right all those things all those things but part of why this is so important is because children are trying to blackmail their parents using the law of the land and the the the satanic you know churches that are that have you know i mean all of that and and i think one of the things that we need to realize and it's i think it's you know proverbs i think 29 the fear of man is a snare and the fear of the lord is safe so parents don't fear your child it's a snare a snare is an it's an instrument of execution from which you can't extract yourself so don't fear your child fear the lord is pure it is it is clean and and it and so there's i've two appendices in the back one is how to read the word of god and one is how to deal with your prodigal and they go together they go together and i'm so glad all the pushback i get from this book ultimately the biggest is like well she thinks the word of god is the word of christ she you know and i'm so glad i'm like thank you thank you miss you know egalitarian for arriving at that conclusion that's right what we're really disagreeing about is how to read the bible and then our disagreements about women and men and homosexuality and transgenderism that all comes downstream from how to read the bible but what i tell parents all the time is you get to be sanctified in your ignorance okay you do you need to be you you need to be um you don't need to have a phd in queer theory and in fact i strongly recommend that you don't you don't that's not gonna be helpful for you that's not the answer to helping your daughter no it is not you can be sanctified in your ignorance you can see if your daughter has a new gender pronoun you she better define it for you because she's in a rough spot because we only have 26 letters to describe 78 realities apparently that's tough um so you can let you can you need to be sanctified in the word of god the pure word of god but each of those uh uh you know questions the parents asked me are the repeated questions i didn't put anything in that appendix that i haven't been asked you know more times than i have fingers and toes so hopefully that will be helpful to people um the word of god is your guide be in a good church be faithful in a church you know repent of your own sin but don't be beleaguered by what the world

calls a sin the world we're in an upside-down world we're in a world where the the codifications of Romans 1 have now been you know you know in law of the land so you know know what's right and stay there and surround yourself with a pastor who can really help you in that way that's a great place to end because it's so clear in your book and it's a real note of hopefulness these are it's easy to see these are dark times these are confusing times and yet in that little closing monologue and shot throughout your book is this realization you know what in the deepest level it's not new and the answers are are not revolutionary believe the word of christ worship christ be in a good church pray be surrounded by good influences grow and godly wisdom repent of your sins so just to to the people out there who and everyone you know we all know people we love who are who are struggling with these sins you don't have to get a phd in these things it please don't please do need to be a growing godly courageous christian and that's why i so strongly commend this book i was glad to write the forward for it thank you rosaria five lies of our anti-christian age thank you for being with us thank you kevin lord bless you thank you for listening to life and books and everything the ministry of clearly reformed you can get episodes like this and many other resources at clearly reformed dot o rg until next time glorify god enjoy him forever and read a good book