

OpenTheo

Strategies for Making More Effective Christians, Part 1

May 8, 2022



Knight & Rose Show - Wintery Knight and Desert Rose

Last week, Wintery Knight and Desert Rose discussed how the church is falling short in evangelism and discipleship. In this episode, we discuss strategies for improving mentoring and discipleship of young Christians. We talk about how to help Christians love God more. We talk about strategies for talking about Christianity to non-Christians. We talk about forming teams to advance the gospel. We talk about which areas of knowledge can help you become a stronger, more effective Christian. Please subscribe, like, comment, and share. Show notes: <https://winteryknight.com/2022/05/08/knight-and-rose-show-episode-4-strategies-for-making-more-effective-christians-part-1>

Subscribe to the audio podcast here: <https://knightandrose.podbean.com/>

Audio RSS feed: <https://feed.podbean.com/knightandrose/feed.xml>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@knightandroseshow>

Rumble: <https://rumble.com/c/knightandroseshow>

Odysee: <https://odysee.com/@KnightAndRoseShow>

Music attribution: Strength Of The Titans by Kevin MacLeod Link:
<https://incompetech.filmmusic.io/song/5744-strength-of-the-titans> License:
<https://filmmusic.io/standard-license>

Transcript

Welcome to the Knight & Rose Show, where we discuss a wide range of topics from a Biblical worldview. I'm Wintery Knight. And I'm Desert Rose.

So last time, we took a look at some of the problems in the church that were keeping it from being effective in our current culture. We saw that many young people were leaving the church, that many Christians didn't have a well-founded Biblical worldview,

that there was a lack of mentoring and discipleship in the church, that we weren't engaging well with the culture. And we looked at the history of the evangelical church in America to find out why we had come to this point where faith is more anti-intellectual and self-serving.

So this week, I wanted to talk to you, Rose, about what we can do to change course. So let's just start with that discipleship point. We don't see a lot of mentoring going on between, you know, wiser Christians and younger Christians.

I don't remember or recall seeing any kind of concerted effort to mentor young people in most of the churches that I've been in. What do you think we can do to fix that? Rose Yeah. I haven't seen a lot of that in the churches I've been in either.

And as we talked about last week, discipleship was central to Jesus' mission. He was with a small group of men all the time, having conversations with them, making decisions, ministering alongside them, allowing them to watch and see how He did everything, turning everything into a teachable moment. He was there to speak the truth into every situation.

This is so different than what we see today with people going to a building for an hour, listening to somebody else preach, singing a few songs, maybe socializing a little bit and going home. So the most realistic discipleship scenario that would probably most closely parallel what Jesus did would be for parents to disciple their children, right? Living with them. They're living with them.

They're raising them. And so it has to start there. It's the parents' God-given responsibility.

And this will only happen if parents spend a tremendous amount of time with their children. And this doesn't happen if you send your kids off for eight hours a day to be essentially disciplined by school teachers or by somebody else. Daycare.

Daycare, right, exactly. If that's happening, then your children are being disciplined into whatever worldview the daycare workers hold or the schoolteachers hold. But beyond this, beyond the home, it needs to be an expectation of the church.

Adults need to be intentional about their time with younger people. I do a lot of mentoring of young people in my neighborhood and in the community. And we really need to be looking for teachable moments in every area of life, whether it's through throwing a ball around with a kid and seeing how they respond or react to something or asking them about what they're reading and looking for opportunities to talk about truth.

Yeah, that's a good one. Yeah, so more mature Christians need to be intentional about their time with newer Christians. And this isn't going to happen in the way that churches are dividing people up by age and marital status and number of children so that, you

know, God forbid we ever interact with somebody in a different stage of life than we're in.

I mean, that's just the epitome of foolishness. If you want to guarantee that young people don't mature, then divide them into groups like that so they only interact with other people at the same stage of life and ignorance as they are in. Yeah, how are you supposed to have a perspective on what you should be doing now if you don't have any idea about what kind of challenges you're going to face in the future? Exactly.

That's right. Yeah. And I can tell you that most of my Christian maturity came from a few different sources, reading the Bible, of course, reading excellent books, and being intentionally mentored by more mature Christians.

And I was really fortunate for this to start as soon as I became a Christian in my early 20s. And there were a few different people who really poured into my life and were with me all the time, lived nearby. Give us an example.

So one example would be, there was this one woman who was in her 90s when I was in my 20s. So she had lived a lot of life, right? She was a Christian. She was raised in a Christian home.

She personally made the commitment to follow Christ at a very young age, like around 12 years old. She got married young. She lived in a different time.

So she had different blind spots than we have today. Her husband had died of a heart attack at a pretty young age, like in his 50s. And so she had to figure out, you know, what do I do from here? I think she was only in her, maybe her 40s at that time.

And so, you know, she had been through a lot of life and she knew a lot about what it takes to have an impact, what it takes to survive and get by. And she talked openly with me about what she had learned in walking with Jesus for, you know, 80 years or so. And what she had learned by watching other people fail and what she had read and what she had seen and experienced throughout her life.

I mean, this woman of God kept me from a whole lot of messes that I could have found myself in if I had not taken her wisdom seriously and learned from her mistakes. I mean, anyone who doesn't have someone like her in their life needs to go out and find an older Christian right now. Sitting in a church service will not get it done.

Jesus knew that, you know, he did not spend all of his time having his disciples, you know, just listen to a message in the synagogue. He went in the synagogue and challenged people, but he did not just, you know, gather with people once a week to listen to someone talk and then say, "Good job. Well done.

Go home." That's a time that church service is a time to thank God and to worship Him,

but it is not an environment conducive to discipleship. We have to do better. Dr. Justin Marchegiani So, yeah, that she really had, I think, a lot of awareness of who God was, who Jesus was, and, you know, she was reading books.

So, if you know who the boss is, then it's a lot easier to integrate his priorities into your decision-making. But what I'm seeing today in the churches, I see a lot of insistence on people saying, "Oh, I love God so much." But if you actually ask some questions, like, imagine this illustration. Suppose you have a man who says, you say, "I'm sorry, you married?" and he says, "Yeah, I married." And you say, "So, do you like your wife?" And he says, "Oh, I love my wife so much." And you say, "Well, what color is her hair?" And he doesn't know.

What color are her eyes? And he doesn't know. When's her birthday? He doesn't know. You know, and just you keep asking him questions.

He never knows the answer. In what sense does he really love her if he doesn't know anything about her? How is he supposed to make his decisions, respect who she is? Dr. Justin Marchegiani Yeah, that's a great analogy. Dr. Justin Marchegiani Suppose she's really passionate about a certain, you know, football team or something, and he's in a conversation where someone is saying, "That team is the worst team." If he doesn't know that she likes that team, he's not gonna stand up for her.

You know, I don't know if it's possible to really say you love God without knowing anything about him. Is that an area where we need to? Dr. Justin Marchegiani Yeah. So, if we want to know God, we have to study theology.

We have to know something about God. Theology is the study of God. It makes no sense when you say you love God, but you don't actually know God.

You don't know his attributes. You don't know what he's like, and you can't know God without spending time learning about him. Okay, it requires study.

It requires engaging the mind. Something which, as we talked about last week, has been conspicuously absent from the evangelical church since the Great Awakening. But developing an understanding of theology doesn't take a genius, but it does require some thought and some effort.

Yet it's immensely rewarding to worship God with our minds and not just our feelings, especially when our feelings are not really based on knowing him or knowing anything about him. If we get the facts right, the feelings will usually follow, but the reverse is not true. If we focus entirely on our feelings, the facts are not going to follow.

So, when we're so focused on our feelings like the modern evangelical church is, that we fail to cultivate any depth of understanding about God or about his revelation, the church really becomes nothing more than a sappy concert. I often think of this analogy, I've

used this analogy many times, that going to church often feels like being 40-something years old and in kindergarten and being told, "You have to stay in kindergarten until for the rest of your life. You will never be able to graduate from kindergarten." Someone might say in response, "Why don't you like kindergarten? I mean, you get to sing fun songs, but I've been singing Puff the Magic Dragon, which has no theological depth and really does nothing for me and really, I don't think is all that honoring to God." Or something even, I think, possibly more deceptive than Puff the Magic Dragon, like singing about God being my lover who gives me a sloppy, wet kiss and some of the... makes everything work out.

Exactly. That's his job, I mean, to make you feel good, to make all of your plans work out, to fulfill all of your needs. Yeah, that's what you would get from most churches today, right? It's about making you feel good, making all your plans work out the way you want.

You decide your dreams for making yourself happy and then you ask God to come along and bless it. Yeah, that's one of the things I like about apologetics is, you know, you really... what you put into it, it's really just preparing yourself for engaging with people. And there's not a lot of apologetics in the church, even when there is.

It tends to be very presuppositioning. It's very professional and not evidential because to use evidence means you have to read evidence so that you have those tools available to you. So let me give you an example of what I'm talking about.

So I like to talk about Christian things with my co-workers. I'm a software engineer. I've been working in information technology for different companies for over 20 years now.

And so after I had just completed a project with a guy, a project manager, I decided to just take him aside into a conference room and say, "You know, we've been working together for a long time and I wanted to get to know you a little better." So, you know, I explained I was a Christian and how I'd become one. And I said, "So what's your faith story? How did you come to the worldview that you have?" And he said, "Well, I was raised Christian, but I lost my faith in college." And I said, "Well, what caused you to do that?" He said, "Oh, well, they showed us a paper talking about how the presence of evil in the world was not compatible with an all-powerful, all-good God." And I said, "Oh, yes, the paper by J.L. Mackey on the deductive problem of evil." He goes, "That's it." And I said, "That's a decent argument. That's a decent argument, but I can defeat that with Alvin Plantinga's free will defense.

But I know an even better argument. There's an inductive problem of evil by William Rowe." And he goes, "Oh, good." And I said, "Yeah, but I can defeat that one too. But let's have a conversation about it." That's awesome.

So you gave him an even better argument for his side and then defeated it? Yes. I mean, that's what's convincing to them is that you know their stuff. I can argue for atheism

better than pretty much any atheist I've ever met because I'm reading their material in order to learn how to defend it.

And I think that's what's so challenging to the church. I think they have this fear that if they read Richard Dawkins as the blind watchmaker, everyone is going to turn into an atheist. That book is the stupidest book ever written.

Yeah, I agree. So, yeah, so like how would you like to see this work out in the church? For one thing, most Christians cannot do what you did in that work scenario. I love that you do that.

I love that you're able to do that. I love that you have equipped your mind and your character to be willing and able to do that. But you know, I hate to say it, but I think that the reputation that Christians have earned as anti-intellectual is actually deserved.

I really hate to say that. But I mean, there are a lot of very bright people doing very high level work. I mean, you know, we both read Stephen C. Meyer and Michael B. Hee.

You mentioned Alvin Plantinga. He's done some phenomenal work in the area of philosophy. A lot of Christians who study philosophy, a lot of people who study philosophy have become Christians or at least take it seriously as a worldview, as a result of his work, which is just outstanding.

But most Christians don't have any idea who these people are. They don't have any idea why Christianity is true or even how to make an argument for why it might be true. Several people have told me that I put too much emphasis on apologetics because very few people commit to following Christ through apologetics.

But first of all, it's commanded and modeled throughout Scripture. So there's that. And then also, as many people have come to faith through apologetics as any other way, I mean, the whole, you know, you can just love them into the kingdom.

That's clearly not working. But the point I want to make here is that getting people to convert to Christianity is not the only reason to use apologetics. I mean, apologetics silences our own doubts.

It keeps people from walking away from God for stupid reasons. And it causes non-Christians to take us seriously. You know, when I'm having conversations with non-Christians and providing evidence, my goal is rarely to see them commit to following Christ.

That's great if it goes there and it has gone there sometimes. And I praise God for that. But I have a goal of giving non-Christians a perspective that they haven't seen and haven't heard that will actually convince them to take us seriously, to take our position seriously.

And that goal is quite frequently attained in my conversations with non-Christians. I have a neighbor who is a scientist who thought that Christianity was an absolute joke. It was like believing in the flying spaghetti monster.

I've had about a dozen or so conversations with him about science and Christianity. And now he is the first to say, "Yes, there are good scientific reasons to believe Christianity is true." He's not a Christian, but now he knows. Now he knows it's not just a laughing matter.

Right. That happens to me all the time. So those are my favorite arguments to bring up in the workplace.

And there are a lot of people who are senior engineers and senior architects that I have to deal with. And many of them have advanced degrees in physics. One of the guys I used to work with in my last company had a couple of degrees from Vanderbilt in physics.

So they often have a good scientific background. But the problem is that just like your guy, they don't know the science that applies to questions about God's existence and the design of the universe. So when you're talking to them about the origin of the universe, they haven't even thought about that.

But that is the question that determines whether God exists. And then the cosmic fine tuning. So they don't know the science or the origin of life.

I remember being in my first company that I started with, like a startup, and I was explaining to them how to calculate the probability of forming a functional protein by chaining together amino acids on a whiteboard and running product rule calculations. This is what you learn in your probabilities class for them. And some of these guys had PhDs from Ivy League universities, and they just were not aware of the science that was specifically related to this issue.

Exactly. You know, you mentioned we've talked about science. The science is not the only area of course, where Christianity has something valuable to say.

I mean, actually, speaking of science, I think it's worth noting that the reason modern science exists is because Christians who were studying science were convinced that the world was not random, that it was not created by a whimsical, arbitrary God, but rather it was created by a God of order, and it was created with some structure and some predictability and reliability. And because God is knowable and because God is a God of order, His creation can be known, it can be explored, and there is some sort of dependability with the way things work. And so it's worth exploring.

It's not like things are just going to change radically tomorrow and there will be no, you know, no gravity, for example, or something like that. So it's because of the God of

orders, because of worshipping a God of order, that the scientists really began to explore science as a reasonable, rational, and practical area of study. There's probably a lot of areas like that that are related to the Christian worldview, where taking God seriously as a creator has an impact on different areas.

Absolutely. I mean, there, yeah, every, I mean, just about every area, I would say probably every area, Christianity has something to say about how we should view certain, every field, every hobby, everything that really that we do and think and say. So Christianity has something to say about work, right? A lot of people today think, well, work is just this miserable, horrible thing that we need to find a way to avoid.

And maybe if we can just take the money from the people who got lucky and give it to the people who don't want to work, then we can create some sort of utopia. But the Bible says that work is good. Adam and Eve were given work to do before the fall.

In Thessalonians, Paul talks about how he who won't work will not eat. That's the way it goes under Christianity. If you're not willing to work, you don't eat.

I love Philipians. Philipians is my favorite book of the Bible. And y'all should go out and read it.

He talks about partnering with people for the gospel. And the giving and exchanging of gifts is the core of these kind of joint enterprises that he's forming with other people. So if you see earning money and having money available to support and supply your friends who are engaging in different Christian enterprises, like, my goodness, I've mentored people who have gone on to organize apologetics conferences in multiple cities, you know, bringing speakers to campus and so on.

And the reason I'm able to fund those kinds of things is because I've been careful about what I'm going to study and what work I'm going to do. So the obligation to engage in charity should cause you to be more deliberate about what you're going to study, where you're going to work and how you're going to steward your funds because your money is literally your way of forming these kinds of fellowships, these alliances with other Christians for the gospel. Mm-hmm.

Absolutely. Yeah. And that would kind of take a step back and say, "Well, how do I get to that point?" That would inform how we would approach an education, right? An education is not just a place to send your kids to be entertained or indoctrinated or whatever the case may be several hours a day.

Mm-hmm. Or just to get a fancy degree, you know, like from a, you know, to get an English degree from like, you know, Harvard is probably not as useful as getting a computer science degree from some local state university like Texas Tech or Tennessee Tech or something like that. Absolutely.

Yeah. And the Christian worldview has plenty to say about education as well. You know, education is about learning about God, learning about his world, learning to think critically, learning to be able to discern truth from lies, learning foundational knowledge that will allow you to be a contributing member of society later on so that you can work, so that you can earn an income rather than be dependent on the government taking from others to give to you.

Mm-hmm. So it's an opportunity to train up your children in the way they should go. Yeah.

And so that they can do the same, there's no place in the Christian worldview for sending your children away from the home to be indoctrinated with anti-Christian lies, just to get good grades by putting down the answer that the teacher wants them to put down. And that was a lot of what my education was like, was... Memorizing stuff and just regurgitating it for the teacher, but you don't put any of it to use so then you just forget about it. Yep, exactly.

Yeah. I've met so many Christian people who told me, now that I see that all the action is in the origin of the universe and the fine tuning and the laws of logic and conditional proofs and all these kinds of things, if I had known that chemistry and physics and biology were relevant to my faith the way that we see when we pick up on apologetics books, I would have paid so much more attention to mathematics. Yeah.

I would have paid so much more attention to probability. I would have put in so much more effort, but it's because they don't connect it to anything important that they just forget everything and let everything go. Exactly.

And similarly, Christianity has something to say about every other area as well. I mean, you're talking about getting a job and not being dependent on government. I mean, that's a really difficult thing to do in countries where the tax rate is really high or there aren't enough entrepreneurs starting businesses who want to hire you.

So we have to think about economic policy. We have to think about which policies are going to allow us to be able to find work and particularly work that not only lets us keep what we earn, but also doesn't infringe on our conscience rights. So there are lots of books.

Hey, Thomas Sowell has a ton of books out there on economics and Christian people. He's outstanding. Yep.

I recommend him to every single person. But Jay Richards is a... Jay Richards does that. Yes.

That's what I was going to say. He hasn't. Yeah.

He's got an excellent book out there, Money, Greet and God, that talks about what Christians should know about economic policy and things like that. We could go on and on. Even Wayne Grudem has a lot to say about economics.

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. And when was the last time you heard a whole lot of wisdom coming out of the church about what to look for in a marriage partner, for example, or how to live out your marriage other than don't commit adultery, don't sleep with people before you're married to them, but with no explanation of why, without even engaging the studies that show how that is likely to impact your future marriage.

What works better to keep your marriage more stable or give higher quality communication or what? I love that stuff. I'm constantly hanging out at this website online called the Institute for Family Studies. And they just keep putting out all these papers from people like Brad Wilcox.

And if you ever wanted to understand marriage the way that a car mechanic understands an engine, you really need to be delving into these studies. Basically, it will teach you what to do in terms of best practices. If you're sitting down to have a marriage, they will tell you what makes a difference.

But people just don't have a vision for what they want to achieve with marriage. They kind of treat it like something that is for their benefit. But we'll have many, many, many, many shows about that.

I cannot wait to talk about that. Yes, we will indeed. Yeah.

In another area I was thinking about with regard to Christian worldview is even the arts. This came up in a conversation I was having with some neighborhood kids recently. They were outside coloring and they say that they're Christians, their parents say they're Christians.

So I'm not shy at all about talking to them about Christian things. They were coloring and I asked them what Christianity has to say about the arts. They had absolutely no idea, which is fine.

They're young kids, although I think most adults could not articulate a single thing about a Christian worldview of the arts. But I explained to the kids, well, I asked the kids, who was the first artist? Who was the first creator? Who was the first to create? And they, well, actually the boy at first said, was it Leonardo da Vinci? Kids. Which is, yeah, kind of funny.

But I said, well, you know, no, think many, many thousands of years before that, one of the other kids said, God? Jesus is the answer to every question at Sunday School. So we talked about how God was the first creator. He is the creative master.

We are his masterpieces, according to Ephesians. And when we create paintings, write plays, when we write novels, engaged in any sort of artistic work, we are living out our imago dei of the image of God within us. But there's a way to engage in the arts that honors God.

And there is certainly a way to engage in the arts that is vulgar and distasteful. I mean, I would say even evil. And that tends to be what we're seeing the most of today is, you know, the arts as vulgarity and such.

But we also, I don't see churches engaging people very much with... You have to know the difference. Exactly. You have to know the purpose of it.

And then you can decide, you have to have the criterion so you can say, this one is good, this one's bad. By the way, since you mentioned God as a creator, I just want to say that a lot of people have a lot of different jobs. I'm a software engineer.

I just want to point out that God is a software engineer, that this is the best kind of job, the best kind of work. And that's because of course he makes DNA. He sequenced his amino acids.

Yes. So I just have to throw that in there. It's exactly what I do for a living, except he did it first and better.

But you mentioned art and I have this, I have a bit of reputation for my online writing at winterynight.com, where I pick on people who don't do STEM degrees. And people imagine from that, that I don't know anything about art or literature and nothing could be further from the truth. I can testify to that.

You bring up classical books and paintings and movies in just about every conversation we have. Indeed. And so I think what I'm trying to say to people is don't do this for a living, particularly when it's so politicized.

But you can get a lot of insight into your Christian worldview and how to live it out from good art. I remember I wrote a post about William Lang Craig's wife a while back, Jan, because he had given a lecture about how he became a Christian and things like that. And he mentioned his wife.

And so I did a post about it and they actually picked that up on the reasonable faith podcast. And he said, he and Kevin were talking about it and they were saying, "And so he actually chose a really nice painting to illustrate his post. And we really liked that painting.

The girl looks just like Jan and she's tying her scarf on a medieval knight who's about to go out into battle." So that's a painting by Edmund Blair Layton called Godspeed. It's my favorite painting. So there are wonderful paintings out there that illustrate aspects of

Christianity like that.

In this case, how do a man and woman relate in marriage? Certainly there are classical books. You can read things from Christian authors like Jane Austen and Elizabeth Gaskell that really illustrate character lessons, lessons about men and women and so on. I love Cyrano as Cyrano de Bergerac as a play that I think has a lot to say about certain aspects of being a masculine in Christianity.

And there's wonderful classical movies. If you go to my about page on the blog, I list out a whole bunch of movies that have impacted me. One of the books I really like is a book by C.S. Forrester called Rifleman Dodd.

And I found this book on the, when I first came to America, I'm a legal immigrant. I was reading through the Marine Corps Commandant's recommended reading list for Marines to find out how to be an American. And he had Rifleman Dodd on the list.

And Rifleman Dodd is a book about a British soldier serving under the Duke of Wellington, fighting against Napoleon in the Peninsular War. And he is separated from his unit because the British retreat from the French. And he is, he's separated.

And this is one of Wellington's famous riflemen. And he doesn't get confused when he's separated from his commanding officer, but what he should do. Instead, he thinks about who his commanding officer is like, and what his priorities are.

And he keeps taking action every day to achieve the things that he thinks his commanding officer would like. And I think that's really useful for Christians. Because I feel that Christians don't take the initiative enough to learn about the character of God so that they can sort of sense opportunities when they have the opportunity to take action and do something for their boss.

Absolutely. And let's get back on topic. Do you see a space for the, first of all, is this idea that Christians should take the initiative even biblical? And then secondly, how do you see the church making that a priority? Or do you think they should? Yeah, I love that you brought up rifleman Dodd, because one of the things I think the church really needs to do better is to present the biblical view of the Christian life as war against evil.

We are in a war for people's souls. We are in a battle. We are in a war against evil.

We have a real enemy who wants to harm us, to destroy us. He wants to destroy God. He doesn't have the power to, of course.

But the battles are very, very real. And yet, in church, we hear all these feel-good messages make me comfortable. God's role is to be my cosmic butler, to steal a term that you've used several times.

I love that. Yes. In contrast to that, the apostle Paul tells Timothy to wage the good warfare.

There is a warfare that is good, and it needs to be waged. We are at war. Your Romans... Where is that? Have you got the citation? Yeah, 1 Timothy 1, 18 and 19, I believe.

Romans 8, verse 37 talks about how we are more than conquerors and nothing can separate us from the love of God. And it lists things like tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword. Paul writes that we are as sheep to be slaughtered.

Right? This is a very different perspective than what we are likely to hear in church. We are as sheep to be slaughtered. And I think one thing the church needs to do is present this side of things, that we are actually in a very real battle.

You can't equip people to take the initiative or achieve goals in a battle if people don't even know that they're in a battle. Yeah, they're not going to take on anything that's difficult for them if they don't think that they're in a conflict. Right, exactly.

Yeah. And then we need to encourage Christians to think about and create war-like strategies, not strategies to hurt other people, but strategies to defeat lies, to demolish arguments against God, as 2 Corinthians 10, 5 says. We need to develop strategies to develop righteousness within ourselves and among those that God has entrusted to our care.

We need to defeat evil. We need to seek to defeat evil by thinking about it. You can't defeat evil just by going about your selfish, anti-intellectual life, absorbing maybe even subconsciously what the culture tells you is important, and then just expect that you're going to be the type of Christian that we read about in the Bible.

That's not going to happen. We need to intentionally strategize, again, to demolish arguments, to praise men who strategize, to build up their wives and their children, to have big wins for the kingdom, equip people with the right education like we already talked about, books we've mentioned a few times, whatever they need, help people plan, help people prepare for debates, help people make a budget. I had two different experiences last week with debates.

One was a personal debate that was informal and it just kind of happened somewhat, well, somewhat unexpectedly. And another was somebody else debating. And the two debates were drastically different.

In the one, I knew that I had prepared really well for whenever this debate would happen because I had prepared and only because I had prepared, not only for hours in the days before that, but because of what I was reading, but also in the decades before this conversation came up, I was prepared and it went really, really well. I mean, the Bible says you should be prepared. 1 Peter 3 15, right? Yeah.

Always be ready to give an answer. And that being ready means being prepared. Yep, exactly.

And then a few days later, I watched a formal debate where one person was just a whole lot more prepared than the other. And it was just really, really obvious. There were various reasons why the one person was more prepared.

I mean, they were a lot older, they were a lot more experienced, but it kind of looked like the other person in the formal debate had maybe... It was his first debate. He said it was his first debate. Yeah, exactly.

I know the one you're talking about. Right. And so kudos to him for stepping up and being willing to enter the ring.

I mean, that's awesome. I have nothing but respect for that. And we need more of that.

We need more debate among Christians. And it sharpens us. It certainly defeats this anti-intellectualism.

And we need to hold up people who are willing to get into the ring, as it were, to debate other people. But the point is that the results are often going to be proportionate to how much pre-debate strategy and practice and such is involved. And that we need to live, we need to equip Christians in the church to live as if there is a real war going on, which there is, and to be prepared in every way by encouraging them to think about things not just once we're challenged or once there's a huge problem, but before the threat arises.

Let's call it there. If you like the content listeners, please like, comment, and share. As always, you can find the references for this episode on winterynight.com. That's W-I-N-T-E-R-Y-K-N-I-G-H-T.com. We appreciate you taking the time to listen, and we'll see you again in the next one.

[MUSIC]