

OpenTheo

Too Much of "Everything"

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Life and Books and Everything - Clearly Reformed

Originally released on May 5th, 2020, this episode of 'Life and Books and Everything' admittedly covers too much of "everything," ranging from Star Wars to Mother's Day to infertility to regional U.S. differences to the COVID-19 re-open to social media as the message to how we read and retain and more.

Transcript

[Music] This is Life and Books and Everything hosted by Kevin DeYoung, Justin Taylor, and Collin Hansen.

[Music] Greetings and salutations are fine, many scores of listeners. Welcome back to Life and Books and Everything, this award-winning podcast.

Rather surreptitious, the awards have been given so far. One might even say forthcoming, proleptically absent. We identify as award-winning on this podcast and I am joined with my good friends Justin Taylor and Collin Hansen.

Welcome, good to have you here. We are recording this on May 4th Star Wars Day. So give me your most unpopular Star Wars opinion.

Collin? Star Wars is great for little kids. I think it's designed to be a very simple story of good and evil that is very captivating to children. And I mean I'm not against Star Wars.

I just kind of think all the stories begin to run together. Have I offended enough people? Justin, this is one of your top holidays I understand. I don't mean to offend all the Star Trek people out there, but I loved light savers.

I had like a plastic lightsaber when I was a kid in the 80s. And I haven't really gotten back into it since then. I remember Justin years ago, maybe you do this every year.

I don't know, you tweeted something, you know, all you Star Trek fans, you must be excited for the last Jedi to come out or something to that effect. And it's hard to tell when

you're kidding. I was just about to text you and say, "Brother, you have a whole storm approaching you if you don't get your Star Wars and Star Trek." But that's just, that's Justin being Justin.

You like to troll the Trekkies out there. I do like to troll the Trekkies. What about you, Kevin? Big fan? I have seen the three real Star Wars movies.

I'm sure hundreds of times. That's not an exaggeration. To be rivaled only, I would think, by Goonies in terms of the frequency with which I have seen a movie.

And then after that, everyone agrees, I mean, every sane person that the next three are awful. And then I think these final three, I was excited. And I went with my kids and I didn't even see the last one.

They just, they were sort of like the really bad three, but with some better special effects. They just, they weren't doing anything for me. But without Hayden Christensen, basically.

Well, and some of the fine acting, screenwriting. Now, this is pod racing. Yeah.

But my, some of my kids will watch it and they, Dad, what, what's so terrible about this? Why do you hate Jar Jar? But we're working on that element of discipleship. Did the kids like it? Yeah, I don't know if they've seen them. I mean, I do have standards, but yes, they've on TV.

Sometimes they've seen Phantom Menace and they've built the racers with their Legos. So they think it's, it's kind of cool. I should say I'm not against all fantasy stuff like an aliens and I liked Alfa lot when I was growing up.

I guess that'd be episode. It's the worst show of all time, Justin. Did you really like Alfa? I watched it.

Justin's a big fan of E.T. Figure out why this could not find Alfa. He was just always like under the table eating a pizza or something. So explain Alfa in case there are listeners who weren't born between 1977 and 1983 and don't know the fine muppetronics that was the elf show.

Very realistic back in the day. Yeah, how much time do we have on here? Okay, all right. You took a bad situation.

How much worse? Okay, just Google it. Look it up. All right.

Onto a new line of questioning. So we have been friends for a number of years and we share a lot of things in common, most importantly, faith in Christ and below that, or overarching that a lot of the same shared theological convictions evangelical, reformed ish depending on who's defining reformed. At least one of us is legit all the way down.

But Ann, which one that is. Yeah, well, I wonder who that is. That's just left for a myriad of bloggers to determine.

But we also share, I think some similar sense of humor and we've talked before about some shared sensibilities just with where we're from all Midwesterners in one sense of the word or another. But yet we, well, Justin just moved back to his hometown and he never left the Midwest. He never left it a tour of the Midwest just went from a great city to a slightly inferior city back to the Metropolis.

Just talk a little bit about, and this will scratch some of your windowberry itch, won't it? If we talk about sort of place and where we're from and how you think that it's probably a very underdeveloped aspect of thinking about identity and thought and sensibility. How does where you are from and maybe compared to where you are now shape you men as Christians, fathers, just how you think of the world, what you laugh at, what you eat. What do you think Justin back in your hometown? Yeah, it's a great question and of course Colin, like most things, has thought about it about 10,000 times more than I have.

I think growing up in Sioux City, I just assumed that I wouldn't stay here. I mean, I can't craze the very beginnings of my thought, but I went off to University of Northern Iowa and then up to Minneapolis and then Chicago suburbs. And now back and I think it's one of those things that shapes you in ways that you are largely unconscious of the ways in which it shapes you.

One of the things about living in the Chicago suburbs, I never lived in the city of Chicago, but in the suburbs, it's like you're living in a town of 30,000 people, except there's just 30,000 of those towns and they all just run into each other. So I think about working at Crossway, I would rarely run into coworkers. I mean, there's not 100 plus people at Crossway, but I would rarely run into them at the pool, at the grocery store, even at church because there's just 1,000 churches, 1,000 grocery stores, and you can have good friends living.

And you can be in one church and live an hour away from each other because one person lives a half hour to the west of the church, another half hour to the east. That's one of the things about living in a smaller place, the city's under 100,000 people. It's just that everything is more compact, more connected.

You're seeing people more regularly outside of a global pandemic where you don't see people regularly at all. But I think it shapes the norms. I think it shapes the sensibilities that we have.

I think it shapes what we expect out of people. You and I have talked to the three of us have talked about observing different people in the way they engage in discourse online. And even how they draw attention to themselves.

I think there is a Midwestern sensibility that of course the three of us probably think is superior in some regards. But I've lived in Iowa, Minnesota, and Illinois, and they're all different places. A couple of them are very large cities.

But there is a commonality about that Midwestern triangle, I think. Yeah, we've talked about this before, but I see some people retweet compliments on Twitter or just the way they to me seem to talk in self-aggrandizing terms. And I've always thought, I don't really know that I'm any humbler than people, but I do know that I'm proud enough to want to look humble at least.

And there's something maybe in that Midwestern sensibility. I mean, certainly with my parents. I mean, you get all A's.

That's nice. And here's a report card. Good job.

We're proud of you. We're not going to talk about that. You're certainly not going to talk about that with other people.

You know it and be thankful for it and move on. You didn't have your parents didn't have the bumper sticker then, Kevin? Oh, no, I didn't have the bumper sticker. When if I got a name minus, my parents would ask, "Everything okay? Something wrong?" I mean, they're great parents.

Great humble, Greg, Kevin. Well, it is a great humble bag. I didn't go into the SAT scores and whatnot.

I didn't say it was me. I'm just saying theoretically. Somebody you knew.

Somebody I knew. And we have all three of us have enjoyed some Jim Gaffigan humor at times. And just, you know, Gaffey, I'm just there.

You got to be discerning. Not all of it is always appropriate, but for the most part, it's pretty clean and funny. But there's certainly a Midwestern flair.

He's from Indiana and there's a sense of the way he talks about food, the way he talks about trick or treating, and a snow suit. The sort of the humor sensibility resonates with us. And Colin, I've seen this in particular with you because you moved not to the new South.

I mean, it's changed a lot. But Deep South, Birmingham, Alabama into an old southern family, which you love, of course. But it has really shaped you.

So how is that going from South Dakota to Chicago to Alabama? How is that informed sort of things you write about, think about the person you are? Yeah, I just saw somebody the other day talk about how the South has had this effect of like the whole country has become southernized in some ways. And then somebody else said, yeah,

but the South, especially the suburban South is increasingly Midwesternized. And I was thinking about Culver's restaurant and this Midwestern fast food joint that takes donations up front for the FFA, the future farmers of America.

And then I mean, all of us is there. They're also on the short list of sponsors for the show. Pizza Ranch, Culver's, and we're accepting others, donations from Kirk Cousins.

We're accepting all kinds of support. Old Country buffet. Oh, man.

I think now without kind of escalating this and getting into too much history here, there's a very different approach toward work. And it's not all different parts of the South. It's especially true of the upper class South.

And think about this, my perspectives on work are deeply shaped by people who, you know, if your immigrant family comes from Europe in the 1920s, things aren't probably going too well for them. I mean, that's pretty late for a lot of Midwestern European immigration. And so that's my family.

And that's how you end up in South Dakota. Lovely place. Not exactly the easiest place to live, otherwise, and otherwise.

And so my views are very much shaped by an expectation that work is a matter of survival and a matter of deep pride. But if you think about that way, a lot of the deep old South developed, it was views that work was beneath you. Work was something that other people do to be able to serve you, or work is something, I mean, obviously including slavery.

So what I've noticed is that people where I live now tend to really lead out with their recreational pursuits. They don't tend to talk much about the work that they do. They don't tend to wear that on their sleeve.

They don't really seem to identify that as part of who they are and how they present themselves to each other. They tend to talk about just what they like to do for fun. And I think that's built on a bit of a difference, a class difference, and also a regional difference.

And so you'll see it in different ways, like the Midwest isn't like the bigger cities, like New York City when it comes to work, because there's also, you really can't brag about your work. It's more or less just an assumed, you work really hard and you're really busy. And if you don't, then there's something wrong with you.

But if you work too hard, i.e., you think that you're too special, then we have to cut you down. And that's another thing that's been very sort of influential in my life, is that the Midwest in my experience very much put a lot of pressure. And this is coming from the rural Midwest, especially.

I put a lot of pressure on conformity, not a lot of pursuit of individuality. Whereas the deep south in my experience actually, there's a category for eccentricity in the south that I didn't find as much in the Midwest. So all kinds of differences that come into play there, but those are a few just off the top of my head.

Kevin, I'm curious how things have been different for you being a recent transplant to the south. Like in terms of your application right there in trouble. I was born outside of Chicago in South Holland, Illinois, and then I moved to Grand Rapids area when I was a kid, went to school in Holland, Michigan.

I was a pastor in Orange City, Iowa. You can trace all of the Dutch names there. And then East Lansing, which I mean so many times outside of Michigan, I would meet people.

They just know Michigan and know De Jong and that's Dutch and they just assumed my church was in Grand Rapids. And even if I'd say East Lansing, they'd assume that was just maybe the outskirts of Grand Rapids. It was an hour away, but it was a very different place than West Michigan, Dutch West Michigan in terms of values, philanthropy.

And then moving down to Charlotte three years ago has certainly been different, but I think as you already alluded to, there are so many Midwestern transplants. It is not exaggeration. Every day, you know, I see a car with Ohio State bumper sticker, Michigan bumper sticker.

Whenever I do a new members class, there's people from a lot of people from Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, New Jersey. New Jersey isn't the Midwest, although the Big Ten would like you to believe that it is. But yours.

Yes. So it's different. It's the new South and there's so many transplants that I feel like it's been a not a difficult transition to Charlotte.

And of course, it's different for me because I'm moving to a big church where I'm the senior pastor. And so there's a built in network of people wanting to support us to encourage us to welcome us here. But yeah, some, I mean, there are some differences.

I mean, on a superficial level, I remember when my church in Michigan, when we had a couple move up from South Carolina, I think it was Charleston. And the woman just couldn't get over how underdressed all of the women were. She said, I just had to shelve, you know, half of my wardrobe because you never get that fancy.

What I would wear to church, you're wearing to weddings. And what I would wear to, you know, an evening social event, you're wearing to church. So I just had to knock everything down a step or two.

And that certainly is the case and Charlotte, if people know Charlotte, one of the strengths and weaknesses of it is it is image conscious. And you can drive around for

miles and miles in South Charlotte and think, how are all of these people making this much money? And, you know, there's a lot of prosperity and there's blessings in that for sure, but there's also a real sense of keeping up with others. And even more dangerous than that is the way that a certain amount of wealth and even to use a loaded word privilege can seem normal.

It doesn't take long before you think, yeah, this is pretty much how people live until you realize, no, it's pretty much how no one has lived in history and how most people don't live in this country and a whole lot of people don't live in this city. I think if we were outside of Charlotte, you would find, you know, bigger differences. You know, our church has people who hunt and fish, but that's not the thing that people are talking about on a Sunday morning like you would if you were just a little bit out and here.

But then again, if you get too far, if you get up into northern Michigan, Ted Nugent country, it feels like the South. I mean, their country music, NASCAR, Confederate flags at gas stations. It's a weird mix of rural identity that you find in different parts of the country separated by miles and miles.

Yeah, I didn't, my first introduction to seeing Confederate flags did not come from Alabama. That came from my classmates flying them in rural South Dakota, which wasn't even a state in the Civil War. So you see all these different identities that overlap in a media culture that is national.

It's not exactly like there are these boundaries the same way that there used to be. And also because of some major factors that have changed the way we, you know, wear just physically where we live now. So, Kevin, you mentioned that all these people are moving to Charlotte from a lot of these Midwestern states.

Well, in Illinois has lost a lot of population and continues to lose a lot of population. Michigan, I think it's already kind of been through the worst, but it's lost a lot of population as well. And part of it, I don't know if people, sometimes the obvious things are the ones that things that we overlook.

But people were not going to move to the South, not as long as it was segregated. Even whites were going to have a major problem. Many of them moving to a segregated South, moving to Birmingham in the 1960s for me would have been unthinkable versus now.

And second, air conditioning. Yeah, I mean, it is not easy to live in the South without air conditioning. And those hit at roughly about the same time.

So no wonder people are moving into climates that tend to be more conducive. And also it's precisely because a lot of those cultural barriers have fallen that now it does feel more comfortable for me or for you to be able to move from the Midwest into the South.

All right.

We're going to talk about books and a little bit and maybe a couple of coronavirus questions, but a different topic coming up this, this, this Sunday, at least in the United States is Mother's Day. So this may be a foolhardy enterprise. They have us three men talk about mothers, but perhaps it would be salutarian.

Not looking for us to tell stories about our wives. I don't think any of them would appreciate that. Or our mothers would likely not appreciate that.

But just talk about motherhood and think biblically. It's cliché to use the line from the tale of two cities, but it does feel like you could make the case that it's the best of times and the worst of times for mothers. On the one hand, there are all sorts of things that probably our mother certainly our grandmothers didn't have.

You have Bible studies galore and the materials available for moms, for women in general is, I think, by any objective measure, richer, better, more access to lots of good materials. So that's good. I think it's less lonely and isolating.

At least that's been our experience. If you want to find it, there are tons of play dates and groups and support and lots of things that you can do for relationships. Certainly in general, there's been a lift.

There's been a tide of prosperity that generally increases, though. I know that's not across the board. And though not wanting to hold any of us up as examples in this regard, but I think just generally it's true.

That husbands, I'm thinking of Christian husbands, are generally probably sharing more of the child rearing in the housework than they did a generation ago. It's not a knock on our dads or grandfathers, but I think they could count on one hand, the number of diapers they changed or the number of times that they were alone watching the kids. Although my wife gets rightfully upset with me if my kids say, "Is dad babysitting tonight?" No, no, he's your father.

He doesn't babysit. He's parenting when I go out, which isn't all that often. So there are lots of things that you could say are blessings and advantages.

And yet, on the other hand, I've heard people remark that if you think about just time-saving devices for managing a household or a family, that nothing of significant time-saving value has entered the household for a generation. I mean, there's robotic vacuum cleaners, I guess, but basically, what do you use? Dishwasher, vacuum cleaner, washer and dryer. The same sorts of things that have been microwaved or in toaster.

There's been a round for a long time, so there's homes have gotten bigger. There's just as much work to do, and there's certainly more demands upon a mother's time. We talk

about the advantage of Bible studies and play dates, but all the kids are in some kind of sports and/or music and high demands, usually at school and high relational demands, lots of volunteering at church.

So the amount that is expected of a mother is tremendous. And just anecdotally, and then I'll let you guys jump in, but you look at the books that tend to be bestsellers, and they're often directed towards women, and they often have a general sort of theme. I'm not even going to mention them, but you know which ones I'm talking about.

And the general theme is, "Girl, you're flipping awesome, and don't let anybody tell you otherwise." Now, the fact that that continues to be a perennially bestseller suggests that there's something in the experience of, whether it's wife, mother, or womanhood, that is often drawn to that sort of message. In fact, when I was reading the biography of Norman Vincent Peale, it was clear over and over again that the main support for guideposts, for power of positive thinking, were midwestern, middle-class women. That was the main staple of his support.

And it was that same kind of message, "You can do it, believe in yourself, it's going to be okay, don't let anybody put you down." And so whether that is amplified in our generation or is something endemic to the human spirit or a particular challenge for women, we could debate. But how do you assess, maybe we'll talk more specifically, but just in a general way, the best of times, worst of times, for being a Christian mother. Justin? Well, just from the publishing standpoint, which is, of course, something that I naturally gravitate towards in terms of thinking about various topics, I often think about the best of times, worst of times, when it comes to publishing.

I mean, I think we have more good resources, more good commentaries, more things specifically addressing specific needs than we have ever before. I mean, maybe going back to Puritan days or something like that, but there's just great resources on almost every topic imaginable. And many of them pitched specifically for women.

And then you've already alluded to the fact that there's really bad publishing out there, that's gimmicky, that is trying to appeal to itchy ears. And I think many women end up being susceptible to that because of the marketing and the branding and the promise. We're all hardwired to think, wouldn't it be great if I could lose all of this weight tomorrow rather than a strenuous thing? Wouldn't it be great if I could get in great shape tomorrow? It would be great if I could, and I'm not even talking about women in particular, wouldn't it be great if I could just get organized tomorrow? So books that come along that promise quick fixes, I think all of us just by virtue of being human are susceptible to them.

And then the unique age in which we live with the combination of social media, the distance that we have from one another. We're not most of us in neighborhood churches and most of us are separated from family. I think all those dynamics make things more

challenging for women.

And I think in particular of the fact that a stay at home mom, and I know that not all moms are stay at home moms, but for those who are, especially with young children, they're surrounded by little people who are immature the entire day. So that's a common thing that I hear from my wife and from other women, just they lack for meaningful conversation during the day and meaningful fellowship. So where do you find that? You might find it online.

You might find it through texting. Hopefully you can find it through meaningful face-to-face conversations. But I think that opens up a pathway to try to find that through highly relational authors who come across as very identifiable.

And with the right teacher, it can be really wonderful and it can also be really problematic. And there's often enough of a veneer of the gospel in these books to, you know, probably fortuitously, a number of Christian women take it in and they supply their own gospel lens to it. And the book ends up being better than it really is as it comes across their ears.

But there's often enough of a near just to make it dangerous. God loves you unconditionally or your identity is in Christ and sort of things that are half true or all true and powerful. And yet it's usually devoid from any sort of idea of repentance in following Christ or obedience or that you might quench or grieve the Holy Spirit or God might be disciplining you.

It tends to be a very flat one dimensional sort of understand how awesome you really are. And that's going to set you free. Colin, how do you see this in the best of times worst of times as we approach Mother's Day 2020.

Let me ask you guys what you pick up on this because it seems to me that whatever side of the mom wars the mommy wars that you're talking about here either the working side or the home side. That there's a sense on both sides that just pervasively women are not enough. That's what I just want to keep coming across and I don't know where that that's such a discouraging message and I don't know quite where it comes from because on the one side, the domestic side you have this perspective that.

You're not enough because you're taking a shortcut or you're privileged or you know on and on and on that you could say that or you don't have you don't do all the Pinterest things that you're supposed to be doing there. You're not whether it be cooking or whatever else. And on the other side, there's a sense of okay, you're not doing enough with your kids.

You're not balancing everything. And so in that publishing that you described there Kevin. I don't know that I would say it's so affirmative because I think it's almost like a

velvet glove.

The velvet is the affirmative but the fist behind it is, but only if you do all of these things to add up. And so the stories that are held up of the woman who does everything. So even if you want to look at the sort of mothers who excel in the domestic sphere within a kind of marketing context.

They also tend to be major business leaders, or they tend to have major charitable functions and responsibilities there. So it's like wherever you look you're just, you're not enough. And I just can't imagine how discouraging that is for a lot of mothers.

And I wonder what we as husbands and fathers can do. Because that's a lot of what Mother's Day is doing of course is honoring your own mother and then honoring your wife, the mother of your own children. What can we do to discourage or not not to in an atmosphere of discouragement, encourage them that they are more than enough in Christ, washed by the blood of Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit and beloved by the by the Heavenly Father.

And you're right, you can look at even the women that often have a large following, whether it's the Bible study teacher or home improvement. I mean there's, you know, they're, this doesn't sound bad, but it's just, you know, they're pretty or they're dressed nicely. Or, you know, it's, it's women want to be attractive to men, but at a level that's very different from, from men, they want to be attracted to other women, not not in the sexual sense, just in a sense of they notice when other women are dressed nicely, look nice in a way that most men are ignorant of with other men.

I can just, just give you an example of that, Kevin, to, you know, a way to, to look at that. I wasn't fishing for compliments for us, Colin, but just go ahead. Well, I don't, you know, I'm planning major conferences for thousands of people with speakers.

I don't ever have somebody comment to me about what any man wears. But frequently, there'll be comments about what women wear. And that's coming usually from other women there.

There's a certain level of negative. Well, usually negative. I'm getting the comments.

So they're just seems to be revealing or too fashionable. Oh, no, just, just like, or too dowdy. There's also, I'll put it this way.

It's part of a whole presentation, because it's also, it tends to be connected to personality. So if you wear something that's to this, it means this about your personality, or if it's like this over here, it means this about your personality. For some reason, there just seems to be a lot of comparison there.

And I'm only speaking out of experience here of trying to plan these events. That seems

to weigh very heavily in ways that are unfair toward women compared to men. There's doesn't seem to be that same expectation there.

Yeah. And here's one of my, because I've thought about this, whether it's right or not. One of my theories is, okay, when you're, let's talk about motherhood.

Motherhood undoubtedly affects women in a way more profoundly than fatherhood affects men. We're fathers. We love being fathers.

And whether, I think that's how God designed us. And I think that's, you know, there's mothers who have adopted children. And then most moms have, have born those children.

So that's a unique experience that men do not share. So women feel this identity, whether they love being a mom or it's a challenge or they work outside the home. I think they, they instinctively feel this identity as mothers.

And that means that anytime you are around other mothers, which is going to be most other women that you're around, there is instinctively comparison. And I think when I'm with other pastors, so that's my job. That's what I do.

And I love being around other, but there's something encouraging. We share the same experiences. We can talk freely with one another.

And, you know, it's easy for there to be little hints of, well, how big is your church and are things really going well? And do I know as much as you and who do you? I mean, because you have the same job that I have in a way that I'm talking to a general contractor high school. I'm not comparing myself. Interesting what you do.

So it would be like if every man you talk to, almost every man you talk to, had the same job you did. Well, there'd be something really bonding in that and something really threatening in that. And so I think part of the unique gift and challenge of motherhood is to constantly navigate this.

There's a world around me where nearly half of the population have or have had or will have my job. And they're probably thinking that they're doing it better or they did do it better or they could do it better. And I think that means we have a unique responsibility as dads and husbands to encourage our wives to verbally encourage them to come alongside them to remind them of the things that they know are true in the gospel and to do it in a robust way, not the way that the world does that just constantly says, you're amazing.

Nothing you've done has ever been a mistake in that rings hollow in time. But we need to find ways to honor moms. And I think that the church has tried to do that, but has often done it in a sort of clumsy over the top way that ends up alienating a whole bunch

of people on Mother's Day Sunday, even as they're trying to provide some of the honor that mom so richly deserve.

What do you think Justin? Yeah, I think there's a lot to what you say there Kevin and that's an insightful comparison. You know, as I think about my job and my wife's job as a stay at home mom, I mean she will point out. I may be working many hours and I may be putting out fires and it may be stressful, but it's just a different level of stressfulness when you're dealing with, especially with small children and challenging children and.

You know, with her job, she loves our children in a deeper way than I love my coworkers, but you know I don't go to the office and have my co workers systematically follow me around and undo everything that I've done. At least they're not that cross way any longer. Exactly.

He was fired about two years ago now. So there's something I think, especially with little kids and with babies and Kevin is the expert here as the one of progeny, but sort of inherently frustrating. I mean they don't do what they're told they they don't eat when you want them to they don't sleep when you want them to.

They're serious they're sinful. So I think there's something to the comparison game, but I think there's also something to the fact of just you're dealing with bodies and souls in a way that we're just not quite dealing with in our other locations, whether we're contractors or high school teachers or pastors or publishers. It is a unique and high calling and I think one of the privileges that we have as husbands and fathers is to be encouragement and there can be a temptation to come home and to see everything that's wrong or that's discouraging or how the kids are misbehaving or somebody's criticizing you and I want to come in with a mindset of how can I encourage them in Christ and how can I build them up.

How can I point them to Christ I mean I I fail at that regularly. But there is I mean I several years ago a blogger tried to do like a year of living according to what Oprah told her to do was just for fun, but she just watched every episode and wrote down like this is all the things Oprah told me to do today. And it's just a free car.

Yeah get a free car. Start this exercise regime. Start your dream board.

Start this business and you just can't do it so on the one hand Oprah's telling you you are enough. You're special just the way you are, but the implicit message is you've really got to do all these things in order to be good and to be fine and I think the Christian world can ape that mentality so as husbands if we can come alongside our wives and point them not to just some mantra of you are special you are enough, but to ground it in the word and to approach it from a Christian worldview of of God has created you for this calling. And it's a high and holy calling even when it's painful even when it's messy even when it's discouraging.

Yeah, I mean you talk about taking care of little ones and I often have not just on Star Wars day often have the picture from Empire Strikes Back where Luke goes to the end of the day. He's just going in and taking out all of his food and Luke is what are you doing? He's just that that's what I feel like life is like here as I've been reminded of it in the quarantine just little people getting into stuff constantly and they can't even raise spaceships with their mental cognition. So they're hardly worth it.

You know, one of the one of the texts that I love and I don't know if I've actually preached this on a Mother's Day before is Exodus one and two. And it's a great example of the story of God's redemptive history moving forward through women seeking to care for children. I've never seen this before but you have Shifran Pua, of course the midwives who aren't going to obey the unjust edict so they hide the children of the Hebrew women.

And you have then Moses' mom who wants to save her baby and so she devises this plan and then you have Miriam who's looking out for her little brother in the bull rushes and then talks to Pharaoh's daughter and then Pharaoh's daughter has pity on it. You have the action all moving forward in this grand meta narrative which is going to be the archetype for our redemption. And for that first chapter or more in Exodus the entire plan of redemption is moving forward singularly by women whose interest is in caring for providing for and protecting children.

And there's a powerful reminder there to the honor that we give to women as mothers. Again, not just a hallmark card, sort of everybody's awesome way but in a deeply theological, biblical way. As we live in these great times where there are all sorts of theological resources for women and we've, we've, you know, we understand that there's more to growing as a woman in Christ than just traditional women's sort of issues.

Yet we don't want to swing so far in the other way that with our publishing, with our conferences, with our blog content that we're not addressing women in their primary God given role which for most of them will be as wives and mothers and helping them. I mean, Titus too has implications for all sorts of women teaching women but, you know, quite explicitly at the front of it is to help train younger women by older women that they might be faithful wives and mothers in the home. And we should not apologize for that.

It is an honorable work and it's one that is precious in God's eyes and should be in ours. If we could just stay on this for just a few more minutes and, you know, I've said before that I don't generally run topics by Colin and Justin, we just have a free for all conversation but I did ask them if they would be okay if I just ask about this because it's always a subject that comes up on Mother's Day and that's that many couples more than we ever think when we're young and naive have difficulty conceiving children. You know, you have some people that produce children quite easily, won't name any names, but

that's not the norm and both of you, you husbands and fathers have had issues in your own life.

Dealing with infertility and that struggle with your wives and I'm sure it would be a help to any of our listeners to just talk what you can, what you feel comfortable, you know, and maybe rather than trying to, you know, explain your wife's opinion, though you certainly welcome to do that but just your experience as a husband and as a father as there have been times in both of your lives where conceiving children has been difficult, if not impossible. Let's start with Colin and Justin. Yeah, Kevin, you were asking which passage I would or just kind of asking us to think biblically and for all of our friends who walked with us, including you guys through years of infertility.

One of the passages that continues to come up, which is of course very significant in a grand redemptive sense and also is just very encouraging is the prayers of Hannah for the prophet Samuel. So when Carter was born in 2015, we've very much tried to, in a very straightforward way, adopt for Samuel one 27 and 28, Hannah's comments there for this child I prayed and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. I have lent him to the Lord and as long as he lives he has lent to the Lord and I think that's one thing that when you are not quite as, you know, easily reproducible as other people might be.

So you come to understand how much this is of the Lord, that unless the Lord wills, the womb is not full. And then you realize also that these children do not belong to you as if they are some kind of possession. Ultimately they are their own, they're their individuals who are made in the image of God and they have been entrusted to us as parents but ultimately they belong to the Lord.

That's something that was just very encouraging us to us in that whole process but I think maybe it would be fun just to talk a little bit about that process, especially in the birth of our son Carter though our daughter Elise was kind of similar but I think one thing you guys really do to help me as friends is you push me back instead of just talking about issues and talking about people, Justin I think especially appreciate you in this. You push me to talk about Jesus and to talk about God as he's actually here among us and he's actually working and so, I don't know, years ago Justin we had that conversation that's just stuck with me ever since and we live in such an era that just pushes against that even among Christians but I don't want to lose that and the reason I say that is because one of the most clear examples of God working in a miraculous way was through our son Carter. And as a pastor and as a minister you're trained pretty clearly, you don't know, like you said Kevin you don't know how much to expect infertility but you can basically put two and two together to realize what things you should not say generally.

And the number one thing you're told not to say is, oh don't worry I'm sure you'll have a

baby. You have no grounds to be able to promise that and it actually ends up creating a sense of guilt or even anger because the another thing that's helpful for me to think about when it comes to infertility is that we're so often disappointed by God not giving us what he never promised to give us. And children are not a guarantee for any of us just like marriage is not a guarantee just like any number of things are not a guarantee for us even if they're a very good thing and something that we're commanded to do.

So you can imagine when in 2014 my wife's former boss tells her the Holy Spirit told me that in this is about I think February or March that by mid May you're going to conceive a child. Given the I mean given that we've never we had not to great advertisement for cessationism. Yeah exactly so so now he tells us this but here's what happened of course it did happen.

That's the crazy thing. It did happen. A good argument against it.

So what what happened in that case is just an amazingly miraculous situation where a close friend and mentor of my wife says the one thing you're never supposed to say. And yet and then my wife finds out that he's died. And then she says wait a minute something's been different this month.

Well and when and let me go check his email what was the last thing he said to me the last thing he emailed to me several months ago was you're going to conceive a child in mid May. Wait a minute it's mid May. Let me go take a pregnancy test and she's pregnant.

I mean there's not of course there can be any number of coincidences but if we believe in a God who hears our prayers we believe in a God who loves us and cares for us even if it's not something that God ever promises to us or guarantees to us. We still know him to be a good father and I can't think of many gifts that have been better to me than the gift of of our son Carter who's now five and then also his sister Elise who was. I mean who came also under sort of auspicious circumstances but you can't really top that and by the way our son Paul Carter who goes by Carter is named for this man.

So as a way of honoring that go ahead. No that's a really powerful story but you would still say. Don't say it.

Don't say that. No don't say it. Don't say it and whatever you know theologically.

Don't say it. Don't say it but I believe in supernatural surprises but even I think as a continuationist would say that's a. Now praise the Lord that your wife was pregnant and whatever we make of that statement but to to claim those promises for other people is. For every Colin Hanson story there are probably lots of.

That's what I mean. That's what I mean just about you can't ever bank on a promise that God never gave you. And the I point this out just to say that there's multiple ways to go

wrong in this process by guaranteeing a child for somebody else unless the Holy Spirit has truly told you such a thing as it was in this case.

And one of those classic Old Testament prophecies that if it's wrong. There's a clear test you would have stoned for it exactly. Okay well we won't we won't go down that but we won't go down that one.

Justin. Well let me just finish that up real quick on that one. I had another pastor who came to me after we had after we knew we were pregnant with Carter and he said well Colin you know that a third of pregnancies and in miscarriage right.

And he said well that's what we want to do. And he said well that's what we want to do. And he said well that's what we want to do.

And he said well that's what we want to do. And he said well that's what we want to do. And he said well that's what we want to do.

And he said well that's what we want to do. And he said well that's what we want to do. And he said well that's what we want to do.

And he said well that's what we want to do. And in the US we took home all five of them each of them from the hospital at 48 hours old or something like that. So yeah infertility is part of our story.

I think Colin's exactly right. You you might notionally know that God doesn't promise children. Doesn't promise natural childbirth.

And yet when it happens to you it's you know sort of think well that happens to other people and and then when you experience that it can be disorienting it can be discouraging it can be perplexing. It is one of those phenomenon that is throughout scripture and it's very clear that the Lord opens the womb and closes the womb. And that it's not a punishment that there are godly people who are suffering from infertility.

It's also interesting kind of looking at the biblical storyline because it seems like the onus of the infertility implication seems to be even if it's not directly stated to be something is gone wrong physically with the woman. But we know medically that you know that men contribute as well. I think there's also something a little bit easier for women perhaps to talk with other women about infertility, whereas for men tends to be more of a silent thing.

You know if you were to Google infertility and women Christianity I'm sure there's many many hits compared to resources by fathers and forefathers. So it is a difficult subject I think it's worthy of grief. And yet for us the Lord has blessed us through adoption and we are so thankful to the Lord for giving us children both my wife and I wanted children our whole lives and he has given us children he's given us children in a different way.

Sometimes I think it's just helpful to remember that and this is very obvious this is theology 101. There would be no fertility infertility without the fall. This was not the way that it was designed to be.

And yet the same is true about our spiritual adoption there would be no adoption into the kingdom without the fall. And so it's part of God's grand design. He doesn't call all who struggle with infertility to adoption.

I think he I don't think that's a necessary conclusion, but for us we feel that the Lord has blessed us through that gift of having five wonderful kids. It comes with its own challenges, but all children come with challenges. Talk about things that people shouldn't say virtually anybody who talks about adoption.

I think there's somebody out there who says, well I know a story of a couple that was going to adopt and lo and behold they got pregnant. Praise the Lord which great. Yeah, that happened all the time, but you saying that doesn't mean well wink wink.

It was just you didn't become pregnant because of stress and once you abandoned that idea, then it will happen. I mean that's one of those unhelpful things to say. Another one that almost everybody seems to say is they know some situation where an adoption produced a very challenging situation.

So that's just a little tip to listeners that may not be the most encouraging thing to tell your your difficult story that you heard about or know about when somebody. And it's a good reminder just passed early, but just as Christian friends, you know, we when we hear news we instinctively we want to relate it to something we've experienced or we've heard and that can be good and natural. But to give people the gift of our curiosity, first of all, and ask questions and doesn't mean you have to drop into level 10 lamentation anytime someone shares that news, but it's very true we tend to say, hey, I know somebody who knew.

And whether it's a great story or a bad story, I mean what, you know, what I hear from folks sometimes, which is so discouraging. You know, I'll be talking about how challenging it is with our kids and and somebody will say, well, just wait till they're a little bit older, you know, little people, little problems, big kids, big problems. And oh, I'm sorry, if I could go back and just have them all under one roof when they were just little kids those were the golden, I think, what, what a wrong headed selfish thing to say.

I try to make a point to, and it's genuine, people will say, I don't know how you guys do it. You have eight kids and actually Tricia is pregnant with number nine. News flash.

Yeah, news flash and it's going on the ticker on the bottom. But I don't know how you do it. And I always tell people said, you know what, the biggest adjustment was from zero to one.

And, you know, looking back with eight kids, you think, well, why was one stressful, why there's twice as many of us as there were of them instead of four times as many of them as us one kid right now. I mean, give me, give me three kids. I'll go, I'll go, yeah, I'll be shackled in.

I'll go to anything. I mean, three kids is just easy, but, but it doesn't feel that way. So I, I, and I really mean it.

That was the hardest adjustment was from zero to one. And then the next hardest adjustment was probably from one to two. And I want people to know, hey, you are, this isn't a comparison.

And you're right to feel stressed and anxious or if not right to the natural to. And we don't want our comparison of grief to be a way to minimize what other people are experiencing. We don't have to answer.

Well, we don't do it as we cancer, do we? You find out you have cancer and you say, yeah, I knew a friend who had cancer. He died. It was really bad.

I just, I don't know what the difference is, Justin. Yeah, I have heard Kevin that going from eight to nine is, is really the hardest. That's.

Well, yeah, it is. We're going to have a baseball team. It's going to be great.

Okay, we can, feck end that was, I was trying to figure out a way to say feck end on this. That's, that's right. It is.

There was, I think in an article in the financial times or something about 10 years ago, and it was about the return of conservatives and it was about. It had this right militant fecundity. Outbreeding everyone else.

And I don't know if that's really taking place, but we are doing our part. Okay, we have, we have talked about a lot of things. And I do want to just ask one.

Coronavirus related question and then end with just a few minutes of books. I know we're trying not to talk all day. But like we said, if you've made it an hour, you, you want an hour.

15. We know that's true. Might as well.

Okay, so we're coming to a lot of the states reopening at various paces. And now one of the challenges we're going to have in Christian ministry, but just friends and family. How do we navigate people having vastly different opinions about how we should do this? It, you know, weeks ago, everyone was an epidemiologist and then they were experts in mathematical modeling.

And now there are really strong opinions about the right way or the wrong way to open. You're going to find Christians who are gravitating toward this whole thing was a really overblown and we sacrificed our liberties and we've been under lock and key. And we better get out and then there's going to be folks saying we're going to people aren't taking this seriously.

We're jumping the gun too soon. And in real life situations among friends, family and churches are going to be affected by very strong opinions. Why are we already meeting together as a church? We're not ready.

Or why are you abiding by the guidelines? It's not a law. It's just a guideline the government's given us. And shouldn't we live in faith and shouldn't we be back to our full strength on Sunday morning? What sort of counsel do you guys have for Christians or Christian leaders as we navigate the different opinions about this reopening? Justin, we'll start with you since you've been getting less here to four.

I prefer to hear Collins wisdom and then I can confirm it or deny it. Oh, and Justin talks. I get time to research.

So I appreciate that. Okay, good. Colin is googling away right now.

Yeah, I would love to hear what you guys think because I don't know the answer to that question. I think one principle that I have just in my personal life, if somebody wants to engage me on the issue, that's one thing. It's another thing to kind of try to pick arguments with family and with friends.

It just feels pointless and I feel like the farther along we go in this, the less I know. I mean, I don't want to become a relativist like how do we know anything? But who do we trust? We're talking about predicting the future. We're talking about an enormously complex situation.

So, you know, dispositionally, I try to want to stay away from kind of the extremes of either side. I'm real open to kind of dialoguing and learning with people who want to dialogue. But if somebody just kind of wants to shout on Facebook, it just seems like kind of a waste of time.

I mean, it did dawn on me the other day that we could have a quarter of a million Americans die. And quite easily, I mean, it would be 1500 to 2,000 people a day for the rest of the year. And it would just seem normal.

It wouldn't seem like anything tragic was happening. And it would be a quarter of a million people. Right.

And I think there would be people who would still say this is just a respiratory issue like the flu. And they would point to this new study that just came out in that study. And so

that's one of my concerns about all of the discourse is, and I think I even tweeted this a while back.

If your perspective is not falsifiable by any new developments, like if there's nothing that could happen that could convince you that you're wrong about the infection rates and the lethality of this and the wisdom of the programs. So I don't know the best way to navigate it. I think you're right.

We're talking about real time decisions that it's kind of gone from the luxury of we can just debate this on Facebook to you're either going to open the church or you're not going to. And I think those decisions become easier for someone who's in a church like I'm in that's got, you know, maybe 100 people gathering, but has a gym and they can do social distancing. The questions become much more pertinent for mega churches with limited amount of space.

So at some point, I'd be interested Kevin to hear how you're going to try to navigate all of that. Well, we're right in the middle of it in trying to talk to our elders and pastors and then communicate with our congregation. And it is hard because I think some people are surprised, but I've been, I don't want to be the bearer of bad news, but I've been trying to tell our folks look.

It's best case scenario. It's going to be a long time before we have 1500 people back in our sanctuary on Sunday morning. And there are real strengths to having a big church.

You know, there are things we can do with technology better than others. There are resources we have. So we're in a good position and yet one of the downsides is, it's going to be hard to get all of us together again.

I mean, 1500 people in one place. I don't know when the guidelines are going to allow for 1500 people, but it seems like that's not coming right around the corner. And so one of the most important things I think is leaders.

I'm not so interested in convincing people, you know, that they're too cautious or not cautious enough. But I do want to help people see this decision is in the category of wisdom. And sometimes we have the strongest opinions on the things that have the least firm answers.

There's a reason for that. And so I just want, I want to help our people see your leaders are trying to get the best information we can be as wise as we can. I do think there is wisdom to, I mean, you have a lot of people and it's, I think it's right to lean toward the side of caution.

Everyone can debate whether you're doing that foolishly or hyper cautious. But I think as a leader with a lot of people under your care, you have to realize that the worst danger. Now, this is a little different for people whose jobs are at stake and how you open up.

But just think you have church leaders to err on the side of caution, I think presents the less of a risk. And so I want to help our people see you may not agree, you may have different information. And so it's an opportunity to forebear with one another as we try to be as wise and as prudent as we can.

Colin, what would you say? I have the approach to this question that I do a lot of different times in my job. And I would love to see this approach adopted more often. So we tend to argue about things as if the question is whether A or Z will prevail.

And basically good or evil, we have that dichotomy. The problem is a lot of questions that you deal with, like you said Kevin in the wisdom category, are not about whether you should draw the line A or Z. It's about where to draw the line, not whether, but where. We would take a lot of heat out of this conversation if we said, how many deaths are you willing to tolerate to be able to help the economy and help other people with their mental health and things like that.

And people would say, wait a minute, no, I wouldn't tolerate any deaths. It's like, no, you tolerate lots of deaths for lots of different things. In fact, there's no society unless you tolerate some measure of risk and thus, and thus death.

So I don't know, are we going to say that that number is a thousand or the number is 2000 deaths per day or 3000 deaths per day. And are we going to break that down based on region of the country? How about county within each state? How about different, whether it's a business, whether it's a, you know, a church, whether it's this or that? Okay, well, if we could just acknowledge that this is not a right or wrong, good or bad question, then all of a sudden it feels like we could actually have a debate and you realize that a lot of our markers are fairly arbitrary. And if they're fairly arbitrary, then they can be open to persuasion, as Justin said, right there.

And so I don't know how many deaths we should tolerate. I just know that it looks like we're going to have to tolerate some death. We're not trying to reach zero here.

That's not going to happen. So how do we have that conversation? Like I said, I feel like this happens a lot in debates, but the problem is that kind of nuance and wisdom doesn't play well on Twitter. It doesn't play well in politics.

And thus it's not very popular. And yet it's the essence of how we all make decisions in life. Yeah, because you're talking about trade-offs.

You're talking about... Exactly. And about unknowns. And that's not how you sell things.

It's not how you get clicks. It's not how you get ratings. It's not how you get elected.

You get elected by saying, that's all evil. This is all good. A kind of mannequin view of the universe.

And I heard somebody comment earlier that this is probably worth his own conversation another time, but you know the Marshall McLuhan dictum that the medium is the message that we tend to think... The message is the same. We just get it out in a different way. And we don't think about how the medium actually is shaping the message.

And so for example, print media tied to the rise of Protestantism, religion of the book, and a different kind of worship through the book. Interestingly, he commented, he said radio was tied to the rise of totalitarianism. It was a medium that was well suited for that sort of stirring up of the masses without maybe seeing their frenzied faces, but powerful oratory.

And you can say that the way that the presidency has been transformed, famously the Nixon JFK debates first aired on television, that television hasn't been a medium that has transformed what it means to do politics. And then you look at social media, which is a medium that not only is an exponent of, but a shaper of populism. Of course, we would be having populist movements across the world with the explosion of social media because the two go together.

It's radically anti-authority. It's radically anti-athlete, anti-authority. No gatekeepers.

Exactly. It's set up to be a, we should talk about this a separate conversation. It's set up, Kevin, precisely so that somebody puts forward a thesis and then everybody else fancies themselves superior through their response to knock down that authority.

That's not a new thing. You cannot do that with a newspaper or with television or with radio the same way. That is new to blogs, right? And then to social media.

And their strengths, and of course, there's massive weaknesses. And we see them both during this pandemic. We have access to, I mean, it's amazing the information we've access to.

You scroll through Twitter for 15 minutes and you're going to find some hot dumpster fire garbage and you're going to find some really amazing new paper that, you know, five scientists just put out 10 minutes ago and you just click it and it's there and you get it for free. So it's amazing. We've talked about life and everything and we haven't talked about books and we're almost out of time.

So I had so many questions about books. Last time we talked about fiction. I don't think we have time to, I wanted to ask you for some favorite books for pastors.

I know you're not pastors, but we probably have pastors listening. Let's do that next time. Maybe you think about that.

But just a general question as we wrap up to think about books. And actually we've

gotten some, some listener mail. Oh my.

Or at least an email or two. Maybe we are going to be award winning award winning for sure. Don't say what the awards are.

But interestingly, a number of people and by number, I mean, a small number, but yet a number have asked us to talk about not so much the books that we're reading, though that's good. But some of our habits, how do we find time to read? What are our habits of learning what we read? It could look like we just read whatever we want all day long. We remember everything.

Well, of course that's not true. We have to be selective. So as we wrap up here and we'll just go around the horn and try to be brief.

Just maybe think along those two lines. How do you make time to read? And then how do you try to recall either organically or through some system, the things that you are reading? Justin will start with you. Be like Luther and redeem your toilet time would be one strategy.

Yeah. And that's my entire strategy. I'll just end there.

Very good. That's it. Moving on.

I put on Twitter actually last maybe over the weekend that if you struggle to find time to read or to complete books that one idea and something that I try to do is to think in terms of completing chapters. You know, can set a small goal. Can you complete one chapter today? And like anything, if you do that five or six days a week and you do that for a whole year, you end up reading a couple of dozen books.

But that at least has a goal like you're on page 37 and you're trying to get to page 52. And so that might encourage you to spend an extra five more minutes than you would have. Also gives you a place where you can feel like you can stop.

So just to try to read a chapter at a time would be one strategy that I have. And then I'm almost constitutionally incapable of reading without a pen and underlining, making a star next to something. Back in my more academic days, I would actually index a book.

So if there was something I would write in the back, make my own index. Obviously, that way slows down the time amount of time it takes to read through a book, but I find then that I can pick up the book and not think, "Oh, all of this looks unfamiliar to me, but I can quickly look through a chapter and kind of get the highlights or what stood out to me or what I want to remember later." So rarely am I taking notes outside of a book, but it's sort of like keeping notes inside every book that I write. So those are a couple strategies.

Try to read a chapter at a time when I can, and then try to underline. But I literally

almost can't read a book. I suppose fiction would be in a different category without underlining.

It's like I am reviewing and embedding it into my memory by putting the underline underneath something that I found out. I found a pretty good recall, Justin, of the things that you do read or underline, or are you one of the guys who can picture it? I remember reading it, and it was on the right hand page at the top, and I need to go back and I can find it. Yeah, with some things, but not with most.

And I think both of you have better recall and memories than I do, so I wish I had a better memory. And maybe I wouldn't need to do the underlining if I could just kind of mentally take a snapshot of what I've read, but unfortunately I can't. Yeah, I tend to have similar practices.

I don't have an elaborate strategy of taking notes, filing notes, a system. Even when I was, you know, I took my last preaching, required preaching course in seminary pass/fail, because I didn't want to do the project of collecting 100 different sermon illustrations and filing them, which, that's another topic, you know, has some pluses in mind. But I don't do that with sermons, and I don't do that with reading books, but I'm like you, Justin, unless it's fiction or something that's really more for pleasure, I'm always underlining even in nice hardcover books that cost a lot of money.

I mean, I've hesitated with some of them, like when I bought the Chad Van Dixhorn 5 volumes on the papers of the Westminster Assembly, which is an expensive way to buy a doorstep, but it's a really monumental achievement. Thank you, Chad. And I hesitated whether I should write in that, but I have, and it's really amazing how much I go back to old books that, and just to be able to flip through, and in 10 or 15 minutes see what I underlined, brings back a lot of recalls.

Sometimes I'll write notes in the margins, I'll put stars and a little bit, usually just underlines, and it really refreshes my mind in what the big idea was, where to find something. I have fairly good recall of, yes, I read it in this book, and I think it's somewhere in this part of the book on this kind of the page, which is one reason why I'm thankful for people who read digital books. I tried it, I can't do it, I think I've read three or four books digitally, and it feels like I didn't even read it, because the pages have no sense to me.

The tactile nature of the book, I was reading a biography of St. Francis of Assisi, and I felt like I don't even know what's going on or where I am, I needed to have, because the page changed every time that I turned it on, maybe they're, you know, I'm sure you can get them different now. So I very much like to hold the book in my hand and be able to put it on the shelf, and there it is, it's a recollection, not only of what someone's written, but what I've learned in that book. And as far as having time to read, I don't like calling wrap us up, but I think it depends on if the person listening, if you're saying, if reading

for you is like, you know, I want to run a mile a day, and it's kind of, I know I should.

And so I need to find time to do it. That's one level of discipline. I'm taking it that probably the people asking this question are more like, I love to run, but I just can't find the time to do it.

And I wish I had a better answer, because I get asked the question a lot, how do you find time to read? And there's something for some discipline, so big, thick books, I try to read through a systematic theology each year, and that's three to five pages in the morning before I read my Bible, and I can get through an old, big book. But there's only so much that that kind of discipline can get you. And so most of the other times it's in the cracks of life.

And yeah, there are some things, you know, my job as a pastor allows me to read, but really most of that time is during the workday is I'm reading commentaries or preparing for the next thing I need to teach. But all the other things that I want to read, it's bathroom planes. I mean, that's, that's about the only good thing about plane rides.

Anytime I might have to wait in line somewhere, try not when I'm driving, but like one of the worst fears in life is to be somewhere for 10 minutes and not have a book with you to be waiting in the doctor's office and not have something to read. You know, I can waste my time with email and social media like anybody else. I don't, I don't binge watch Netflix.

I don't watch hardly any movies or TV. But it's on in the background in our house, fairly often so I'm not austere in that way. But just to give yourself to reading in the cracks of life is been a passion of mine for ever since I was an adult and that's how I get through most of the things that I get through.

And it's like anything to just do a little bit in consistent amounts adds up to a lot over time. I mean, you can read a lot just instead of 20 minutes scrolling through your phone at night, 20 minutes in a book gets you a lot of books over the course of the year. Colin, you give us your sense.

You took all my advice except one thing. Don't watch Goonies hundreds of times. Well, that was before I like to read.

That's that's all I had. So that's it. You guys covered it.

Well, very good. Well, next time we'll talk about some specific books and always enjoy being with you guys. It's fun to get to do this and hope you have a great week.

Happy Mother's Day. Let's try to do one or two of the nice things we said we were going to do. And until next time, we'll be with you.

Thanks guys.

[Music]

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