

OpenTheo

Afghanistan, Olympics, & Mars Hill

August 16, 2021



Life and Books and Everything - Clearly Reformed

Catching up with friends after a long summer is one of the great joys of life. In this first episode of Season 4, Kevin, Collin, and Justin chat about some of their summer activities as well as some of the events that are currently happening in our world. They range from the serious (How should we pray for the Church in Afghanistan?) to the silly (Cornhole must become an Olympic sport!) You will discover some intriguing book recommendations too.

Life and Books and Everything is sponsored by Crossway, publisher of Rediscover Church: Why the Body of Christ Is Essential, by Collin Hansen & Jonathan Leeman.

In Rediscover Church, Collin and Jonathan discuss why church is essential for believers and God's mission. Through biblical references and personal stories, they show readers God's true intention for corporate gathering: to spiritually strengthen members as individuals and the body of Christ. In an age of church-shopping and livestreamed services, rediscover why the future of the church relies on believers gathering regularly as the family of God.

In partnership with 9Marks and The Gospel Coalition, Crossway is planning to distribute 400,000 copies of Rediscover Church to Christians throughout the US and invites pastors and leaders to request 20 free print copies of the book (with free shipping) for use in their churches. Offer available while supplies last.

For 30% off this book and all other books and Bibles at Crossway, sign up for a free Crossway+ account at [crossway.org/LBE](https://www.crossway.org/LBE).

Timestamps:

Welcome Back [0:00 - 1:04]

20 Free Copies of Rediscover Church for Your Church [1:04 - 4:12]

Praying for the Church in Afghanistan [4:12 - 12:55]

Field of Dreams Game [12:55 - 21:55]

Olympics [21:55 - 32:01]

The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill [32:01 - 52:05]

Summer Book Report [52:05 - 1:07:09]

Books and Everything:

Rediscover Church: Why the Body of Christ Is Essential, by Collin Hansen & Jonathan Leeman

Collin:

Churchill: Walking with Destiny, by Andrew Roberts

Reading the Times: A Literary and Theological Inquiry into the News, by Jeffrey Bilbro

Faithful Presence: The Promise and the Peril of Faith in the Public Square, by Bill Haslam

Justin:

The Gospel according to Daniel: A Christ-Centered Approach, by Bryan Chappel

Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries), by Paul House

Hearing the Message of Daniel: Sustaining Faith in Today's World, by Christopher J.H. Wright

Transcript

Greetings and salutations, our wonderful listeners. Welcome back to Life and Books and Everything after a summer hiatus. We are back, I don't know if I can say we're better than ever, but we are back and I'm joined by Collin Hansen and Justin Taylor.

And it's good to have the band, and to be back together as we are going to spend some time today just catching up a little bit on the summer. We'll talk about things we may have seen or listened to, maybe hit on a few current events and of course if we have time we'll talk about some books. So glad that you're with us looking forward to this next season which will stretch here at the end of the summer through the fall or willing until the end of the year.

It'll be the three of us and sometimes it'll be one or two of us and interviewing others but we're looking forward to at least the three of us getting to chat and maybe some people listening. We are sponsored again by Crossway so grateful for their partnership and the

many good books that they put out and we want to mention one today near and dear to our hearts rediscover church. And it is co-authored by Collin and by Jonathan Lehman.

Collin tell us a little bit about this new Crossway book which you have co-authored. So this book has actually been in the works for a long time. Jonathan and I have been talking about a basic book that you could give to anybody in your church to be able to introduce them to what happens in the church and why it happens that way God's vision for the church that vision was really renewed with what we saw last year with COVID-19 and of course it's ongoing here and so we've talked about this since our podcast began I really haven't seen any situation like this in our churches the division, the tension, the exhaustion that we feel over racial issues, political issues, COVID now vaccines after masks on and on and on and on and on and this book we're hoping is going to be a way that church leaders can help unite their congregations around the gospel of Jesus Christ and God's vision for the church and so we cover everything about outreach to membership to discipline to the ordinances to all that kind of stuff and so we're, I mean we're excited about that we think of the timing is is right we also deal with things like virtual church and live streaming and things like that but we're excited about that but I think one of the coolest things is what crossway has done to get behind this book working along with TGC and with nine marks and so between today August 16 and August 30 crossway is going to be sending 20 copies to every church that requests one there's a way to find that through crossways website through TGC through nine marks and yeah just free of charge they will send you send in your information, they'll send you 20 free books, physical books we're also translating the book right now into 20 different languages because this is a shared situation around the world so yeah it's been in work quite a while but it's really, really exciting right now and and so while supplies last up to, I mean it's pretty amazing to say but crossways generosity means that up to 400,000 people will receive free copies of this book's pretty, it's pretty amazing so thanks to crossway and excited to see what God might do with the book to help churches.

And crossway really is generous and no there's lots of good people doing good things but I'm always impressed by how crossway really does want to think of ministry first and above all else so thank you and thank you for you and Jonathan working on that book. There's a lot of things we can talk about and as we're recording this and I imagine this is still going to be the case in the next day or two whenever this comes out, but Afghanistan is all in the news and this is not a podcast where you tune in to hear us pretend to be experts in foreign policy, but such a tragedy unfolding in real time with the persecution already underway it seems and certainly threatened of Christians and churches, not to mention women and children and others who sided with the US government over these years. We're not here to try to sort out foreign policy woes, but I just wonder at the outset before we move on to other things since this is front and center right now.

If there are thoughts, lessons or even just ways that you think we can be praying for the

church in Afghanistan. Anything as we get started Justin. Yeah, we are called to pray for the persecuted church to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ and of course we're called not only to pray for fellow believers but for the world that those that everyone would be able to bow the knee and confess with the tongue that Jesus is Lord.

So this is a great opportunity for us to pray a great opportunity for us to love our neighbor even our our spiritual neighbor who is far from us. But what an unmitigated disaster it seems like these days. There's such difficulty finding any common ground politically on the spectrum and this seems to be one of those rare events where no matter where you are on the the political scale you can agree that this is horrible.

You know, whatever your views on interventionism and just war, etc. The way in which this came about and the way in which we carried out this policy is just producing large scale disaster and tragedy. So our heart should go out.

We really should lament and weep with those who weep and it's a helpless feeling. Of course, it's just an ordinary citizen. It's not like you can cast some vote that will change things right now or do much of anything but praying is something.

And sometimes I find myself saying that sort of thing like I wish I could do more than pray, but prayer is something that we could do that other people can't do. They don't have the resources spiritually to appeal to the living God to act on their behalf. So let's pray.

Let's keep our eyes open and keep our hearts tender towards what's going on there. One of the things that it does throw into stark relief is how many blessings we have in this country, whatever faults and failures and in the last few years, everyone from every angle has had plenty of things to be critical about in this country. And yet you see now I know to be better than the Taliban is a pretty about as low a bar as you can have.

And yet you see that civilization as we have come to know it in Western prosperous, basically free countries is not the norm throughout history. And it's easy to think that the civilizational default is human rights, fair elections, transfer of power, a criminal justice system, which which bends and has imperfections but works most of the time and rule of law and due process and religious toleration, all of these things that we can think if we're ignorance of history, you know what, if you just sort of leave people that that's just what happens. And that's not what happens.

And it's important for us to remember whenever we're criticizing the form of society or government we have now, which we're right to do, but we always have to ask the question, compared to what? Because if the comparison is perfection, utopia, heaven, if everyone were angels, well, we can look forward to that as Christians in heaven, but that's not the alternative. What is the alternative compared to what? And certainly things can be, there's a big sliding scale between Western democracies, constitutional republics

in the Taliban. And yet, hopefully, maybe it will help all of us to one appreciate many of the blessings that we have and have had for many, many years and Lord willing are extended to more people and more people now in this country.

And those freedoms will be protected. And it also shows us sometimes how our, you know, there's, there's that joke throwaway line, first world problems, you know, I've, people have said it to me. My kids, as they're complaining about their shoes wearing out after three months or something and they need new shoes first world problems.

But it really is the case that sometimes, and I guess, Ross Douthat might call this a cultural of, culture of decadence. But the sort of things that we get animated about, the sort of things that we think are life altering, absolutely soul crushing. And then you see the Taliban, you realize just how horrendous and egregious and sinful and as many bad words as you can pile up.

Humans can be. And it gives us pause not to exaggerate our own suffering, our own offendedness. And also hopefully leads us to give thanks for many things that we do have, even as we pray most importantly as Justin has called us to so rightly.

Any other thoughts, Colin, as we get started? Yeah, a lot of times my instincts are to think about the political ramifications of something. I wonder, what does this mean for elections? I wonder, what was the Trump administration thinking when they negotiated? That's where my mind goes. But this is a different reaction for me this time.

And I'm not sure why. I just noticed my attitude about things really changes as I get older. And one of these areas is I may change by the time this podcast comes out, but I just wonder where is our president? I want to hear from the commander in chief.

That's not a political thing. I want to know what's happening. I want to know that the soldiers that we've deployed there are not going to be surrounded and cut off.

I mean, there's a lot of questions there. So for me, I'm not my instincts in this case, even though I wonder about those things. It's not primarily about what does this mean for Republicans or Democrats or Trump or Biden or midterm elections or re-elections or what are the Republicans are going to challenge Biden? What are they saying? And also, if I just wonder as an American, I'm worried.

I'm not worried for my personal safety. That's a luxury that you just talked about there, Kevin. I'm not worried for my personal safety, but this is disturbing.

And I'm just worried for those people. I watched Ken Burns Vietnam documentary and I was born. We were all born after Vietnam.

And so just watching the way everything played out with the end and the fall of Saigon and everything. I guess it just confuses me for people like President Biden who lived

through that. I want to know what's going through his head as he sees this and what his plan is.

So I hope that comes across the right way, but it's concerning. I wonder where is the president? Yeah. So please, I'm sure more information will be out.

By the time this is out there, but Justin's absolutely right. That praying can feel like a throwaway, but it's absolutely not. And God hears those prayers and we are commanded to pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters and just sharing the bonds of humanity.

Of course, we pray and don't want anyone to be tortured and the sort of absolutely horrendous terrorist activity going on. So we pray for that. I want to back up and there's no great transition from that, but this is the first time that we've been doing a podcast for several months and we've had the summer and we'll get the blow by blow.

But we all like sports and that's some of our listeners. And so you can be patient if it's not your thing. But I know we were texting last week with the field of dreams game.

So there was the movie back in '89 and it's a movie about fatherhood. It's about baseball, but it is sort of a strange movie, but it's a tearjerker and it's become sort of etched in the American pantheon of movies, I guess. And so many years in the making, they had this game right next to the set where they film this in Dyersville, Iowa, first major league baseball game, Yankees and White Sox.

I'm a lifelong White Sox fan born on the south side of Chicago. It's a great outcome for the White Sox and they went up to lose two or three of the Yankees, but we don't care about that. They blew the lead, came back to Anderson.

Great script. The ambiance was, I mean, I am not a crier, so I didn't literally cry. Wasn't like when it wept tears over Miley Cyrus's career direction.

No, I didn't actually, but I was watching it and for an advertisement, I was getting the feelings, I was getting moved and it was overwrought, but it worked and the music and the Kevin Costner's stare. And I felt like, and I tweeted this, I felt like maybe there was just a little glimmer, a glimpse of some piece of Americana that we could celebrate. I was in nostalgia, but it was also looking to the future.

You have teams that are filled with white and black and lots of Hispanics and Dominicans and you have a great ending to it. And it just, it felt like something that everyone was excited about. Urban meets rural and a simple fun and let alone that lowans were there.

So I loved it and it was nice to see something that seemed like just grown men playing baseball. And that's sort of the spirit of the movie. They really seemed to think this was really cool.

And to hear Joe Buck say, and another one into the corn. I mean, it was a great tagline to see them. And did you hear that they had to go in after they had a storm and they put metal rods in the corn out there so it would look proper? I mean, well, well done MLB and well done Iowa.

Justin, I can't believe you fled your own state to Chicago when this was happening. Yeah, I've never been to the field of dreams and I don't really like baseball. So I'm a great man.

I actually got a text, I think from Kevin saying like, how can you be out of town because I went to Chicago during that and didn't know that it was coming. But yeah, dire fills about four hours, exactly east of here on Highway 20. And so I could drive by it at some point and get all the nostalgia and cry like a Dutchman upon a view of corn.

You're really killing the vibe here. Yeah, I think you are wrong with America. Did you listen to James Earl Joan baseball.

I do. I mean, one of my thoughts was it would be great to age as well as Kevin Costner has that would be kind of like on the ball. We all do wish we were movie stars and had those looks and those resources.

Even he had the untucked t-shirt. I don't know if it was an official untuck it. They can be in a sponsor.

But I mean, it just, it just looked good. And I just think. Yeah, I'm our Midwestern flair would not carry as well.

I'm afraid. Did you enjoy the spectacle? Well, I mean, I think our, I love our listeners love hearing from you guys. You guys all know that we were Midwestern guys and, and, and it does have a special resonance.

I mean, I, I played, I played baseball surrounded by cornfields growing up. I, I played baseball. I played football.

You with, with cornstalk flying in our faces and things like that. So there's going to be a special resonance there. And especially also, I mean, I was eight years old when Field to Dreams came out and I, I rewatched it recently.

I don't think I was even thinking about this. But that movie hits you completely differently as a dad. Yeah, it does.

Completely differently as a dad, especially when your, when your kids are playing baseball and thinking that way. And, yeah, so I, I just, I was really impressed with what they did. The moment of them walking out of the corn.

Oh, really well done. That was pretty, was pretty darn cool. And I'm like you, Kevin, in that I thought of it as, as kind of a template for some things that can work if we're trying

to figure out a way to move forward in unity because no one wants to go back to that time of the early 20th century for a variety of reasons.

We, we want things the way they are in terms of the, the people who get to play. I was just at the Negro League Museum in Kansas City this last weekend and how exciting to see Aaron Judge and Tim Anderson be heroes in that game. So nobody wants to go back to that part.

And yet there is something that we can recover from the past that is unifying and is beneficial and part of that's the continuity of the game of baseball in the inclusiveness of baseball now, especially as it spread. And, and the way it comes in and spread to a place like Japan of all places and, and I think that's something that's worth celebrating and building on and I'm just at a stage of life when I see something like that. I put the Olympics in the same category.

When I say something like that, I want to celebrate it. I want to appreciate it for what it is. I want to just enjoy the game.

And I don't want to try to pick it to death, which by the way, is a good way to watch the movie field of dreams. Do not think about it too. Do not try to be logical about it.

And that that's just kind of similar here. I want to appreciate it for what it is. And I want to start dreaming about, wow, what if they came to America's oldest ballpark Rickwood Field in Birmingham.

What if they did a game there. That'd be great. Anyway, so that's what I was thinking Kevin.

Yeah, I think there is the, if there's any way in which we have some semblance of unity as a country and healing to use that term. It seems to me it has to be in not trying to move back to the past, but not telling people you have to eradicate the past or hate the past for hating it. And so I showed you an article that somebody had written that was more largely negative about the event.

And his whole argument was we're celebrating an event that celebrates a movie that celebrates a baseball player who comes from a time in major league history when African Americans weren't even allowed to be in the same integrated league. Well, that is true factually. And we can lament that.

And yet that seems a profound mistake to me and no way to move forward to essentially say a movie because it has Schuster Joe Jackson as a central theme. And it comes from an era where America was racist and then segregation. And baseball was not integrated.

Therefore, anything from that gone. Shame on you. I mean, the logical implication of that is untenable, unworkable, not just rationally, but just from the human spirit you can't just

say that that part of history.

You can't have it you can't like anything from it you can't celebrate anything from it. We have to be able to say what is good, what is good but still imperfect. But we're not saying let's get in the time machine and go live there and everything was great if we could just be back with, you know, Charles Kamiskey who seemed to be a horrendous person as he was the owner for the white socks.

And I enjoyed it, especially as a Sox fan in the home run but you mentioned the Olympics Justin Colin I watched tons of Olympics. It's one time. Say I'm not, I'm not going to feel bad I'm going to turn the TV on let my kids stay up we're going to try to watch as much as we can.

What were some of the high points for the Olympics for you guys. Justin did you watch it did you know it was happening I don't know where you paying attention did you see that I knew it was happening but I'm like a terrible co host today for these stuff. I thought you like sports you're just on like Huskers 24 seven.

He's been just it's just Huskers and Justin Fields. Those are the only things that Justin Taylor cares about. So you didn't watch the Olympics you didn't pay attention any.

I hardly watch and it was interesting to see somebody speculate on Twitter why the ratings were so terrible for it. You know is it because of cord cutting with people not having cable anymore is because of the time differences is it because of knowing in advance if you wanted to know who was going to win or lose was it some of the no fans elements yeah no fans to it. I mean just changes the dynamics I know you really enjoyed it.

But it just kind of felt like work to be able to go and find it watch it invest in it so I didn't watch very much at all. So I think Kevin's chagrin. Shame on you.

All right. Well from the Russian Olympic Committee to Colin. That 400 meter final.

I mean how amazing. Yeah the hurdles. Thank you.

Yes. Yes exactly. Thank you.

I mean I'm not going to pretend I'm not like Kevin Kevin and his kids I mean who actually no running do this and are good at it competitively read the magazines all that sort of stuff. I'm just your I'm just your show up and whoa there's a guy from Norway who's really good. Yeah he's been good.

Yeah. I'm just going to go to the home. Okay well that that's fascinating but also oh but gosh but wait a minute so he breaks the world record but so does the American.

Yeah exactly which is absolutely amazing and I think I don't know if it's because of

COVID-19 again I don't know if it was because I have kids but I have a greater appreciation for sports which seems kind of crazy that I would people who know me including you guys would know that I love sports already but I really cherished being able to see all of the human stories that the competitiveness drawing the best out of people rising to the occasion improving themselves pushing the boundaries of what's possible but also I felt like there was generally a lot of a lot of camaraderie among the athletes even within rivalry including with Warholm there still seemed to be I mean that you could tell there was clear rivalry but at the same time there seemed to be respect and there was there was pushing and so I mean typical for where we are as a country right now everything was obsessed with Simone Biles and in a few I mean nothing wrong with Simone Biles being obsessed with her she's great but just the her decision I think it should have been an opportunity for us to just talk about how we shouldn't take these things for granted how fragile it is mentally and physically and again this is something probably because I get older now I'm struck not only by the people who succeed but now and the underdog stories but now I'm struck by the people who fail and the parents who are there and all they've invested in the devastation especially with the Olympics every four of this case five years sometimes a false start or a slip or a drop and you've been working the agony of defeat seems to stand out for me than it used to and I'm not so much judgmental including in a Simone Biles case I'm just more sympathetic of like how you work so hard every day so much has been invested into this for this one moment and then it doesn't happen it helps you appreciate greatness because you're able to see how fragile it can be even with the greatest of all time as Simone Biles Yeah when I we won't talk about the day that Kevin DeYoung tried to break the internet on accident but I was on vacation and the timing was bad I didn't know all that was going to happen on the same day but when I tweeted then a couple weeks later and I just tried to make a light of it and said did I miss anything on the internet and I did see that somebody wrote or tweeted at me and said well basically half of the country is really mad at Simone Biles right now and the other half is really mad at you and they're different they didn't overlap who was mad at Simone so I Justin once you figured out the schedule if you would have looked up the track and field schedule you could have got the exact start time for every event Justin and you realize that the timing was actually pretty good because the evening events in Tokyo aired live here central time from about six in the morning till 8 30 and then the morning finals aired about 8 to 10 30 in the evening and so we were able to watch it Swimming and track are the ones that we watched almost every second that we could what was your highlight what was your what was your favorite part so because yes we are a bit of a track and field we know and I'm not a person but we know all the names we follow we were going to watch the Diamond League I'm sure this there's a whole track season out there folks the Diamond League in or it's the prefontaine classic out in Oregon this Saturday you can see should carry Richardson's going to race the 100 against the three Jamaicans who won lots of good people still race so we follow this stuff There's certain of the American Olympians that we've really come to like so I think Mo is amazing 19 year old Wow Southern Sudan family immigrated but she's

lived almost or maybe her whole life in New Jersey is amazing yeah the 400 hurdles on the women's side Sydney McLaughlin who acquits herself very well and seems to be giving a you know wonderful credible profession of faith and glory to God in the midst of this and the little Muhammad is really professional about it so I love watching the two of them as they go back and forth and break world records almost anything and some of the I mean and the swimming side Caleb Dressel is the you know on the male side the American who wins almost everything that he's in but he hadn't won in the individual gold and when he did his first here's this big huge hulking sort of guy and he's just a flutter of tears and but of joy so that was even moving to me to see the genuine expressions of joy and as cheesy as it seemed at first you know they would set up a little screen and you would you would see your family back home watching you and to see on the Olympians immediately when they saw their family or heard their family or their hometown cheering for them just tears and joy and how much it meant to have other people and their family who couldn't be there in person those were you know those were touching moments so I enjoyed watching it and I would have to imagine the ratings are down for all those reasons Justin and people just it's not it's not like even 20 years ago okay everyone click on NBC and let's watch this you have it's diffused across several NBC platforms it is unless you go looking it's sort of hard to tell where can I find what's happening live what's going on and people just have it does take something away of the energy of you're all cheering I mean you could still hear you know a handful of people in the crowd so I'm always sad when the Olympics go the winner Olympics just and I mean that's something but a lot of people just flying down hills of ice and shoot things and ski around but it was it was great I enjoyed it okay we should know that I saw on Twitter that they're talking about making cornhole into an Olympic sport which from you know Midwestern middle age guys there's a wave of hope switching sweeping across the heartland right well I told you that my one of my sons I will just eat 12 said and I think they should make spike ball Olympic sport and I don't think we need horse trotting a dressage that was pretty cool that was one of the highlight that was one of the like highlight clips in there I will I will say anybody who doesn't think cornholes and Olympic sport which okay is all that different from cornhole and with the same demographic of people who seem to succeed in it yes what is some gaffigan's line about smoke about bowling if you can smoke while you're doing it it's not really a little bit more cornhole you know well it was what's it Boris Johnson's line a few Olympics ago that when the UK was winning said we really excel at sports where you're sitting down because they looked and they were good at you know rowing and cycling and anything that involved you can remain seated the UK the Brits were really good at it I wonder just that this could be a whole podcast unto itself but in Colin you've already weighed in publicly at least on one of the episodes but I know like many people we've all been listening to them the rise and fall of Mars Hill podcast that Mike cost per is doing and doing very excellently what are your quick takeaways what do you like about it things you disagree about it Justin what do you think you know like many listeners I'm riveted to it and can't wait till the next one comes out and I hope that's kind of like kind of like life and books and everything I

imagine if we're if we're an hour late people are just all over us online I've had two female friends say to me independently I love your podcast I fast forward all of the sports parts but so welcome back to their love they're going to love my soliloquy to corn about how many wonderful things we owe in life to corn okay we'll do that another time but on this episode yeah we should do this live from the corn palace and Mitchell someday the enchanted Dell Museum you're glad blizzards at the DQ across the street oh that's right now you're talking rise and fall of Mars Hill it's I think for the three of us it's not an academic abstract arms length thing to listen to because all of us knew Mark at some level and had some involvement in the movement that he was a part of so it's interesting to listen to something that you actually it's not ancient history to us or listening to you know podcast on the Jesus people where we didn't have any intersection with any of the players so it's it's sad and it's as you said Kevin Mike does a really good job just apart from content the the narrative flow of it the fact that you can actually listen to people you know this could have been a serialized set of articles or it could have been a book but to actually hear Mark's voice and to hear other people talking about their experiences it's it's very very interesting and it's very sad I think especially when you put together things that have happened over a couple decades and compress them together to hear some of the outlandish and abusive things that he said kind of play those back to back I think in terms of judging how the whole podcast holds together I want to reserve judgment until Mike's able to complete the whole thing because he's going somewhere and he has more episodes planned so people are dissecting it on Twitter but you know why why isn't he talking about this why is he interviewed this person and so we'll want to wait to see kind of where he's going here and what sort of angles he's going to cover in the future but yeah as you said Kevin we could devote an entire episode just to talking about this podcast Colin your quick thoughts yeah quick thoughts so I a couple different things one of them is that if you're looking at this from a Christian media perspective which we're all in in different ways but I think we're going to see a before and after this podcast this will be revolutionary in terms of Christian media when you're one of the top four podcasts in the entire world which this is that's that's quite a that's quite a statement and so I would say this is probably the biggest phenomenon I've seen in Christian media in the last 11 years since veggie tales exactly so so this is a big deal to be able to show people within a Christian space the power of narrative podcasts so we're going to see a lot of imitations of it that are not going to be nearly as good I do think that this is a perfect storm of Mike's abilities with Christianity today's investment in it with that particular story which Mike knows really well personally which gives him a lot of ability there the timing that it took to be able to do this and also the broad appeal to people outside the church of all different kinds of traditions to former angry you know grew up evangelicals disenchanted to reformed guys like us who want to know how it plays out who lived with it so really just quite a phenomenon second I will say in the church in some ways it's going to be before and after this podcast because just a wide scale we're talking 600,000 plus listeners on this thing the wild wide scale listening of it at congregational levels elders pastors means that this is going to be

in the ether as people think about leadership in the church and so I don't know quite exactly what all the implications are going to be but it's certainly going to contribute to probably a very healthy skepticism toward certain types of leadership that we've all seen tolerated too much but it's it's going to have some bad effects as well in terms of bringing heightened skepticism toward proper abuse uses a biblical authority that's that's one thing so we'll it's it's that kind of a big deal but one last thing just to say is I'm not a lot of people I see them really wrestling with these things for the first time because they just didn't know this stuff. Of course we we've known a lot of this for a long time and so you'll see a lot of people who've seen a lot of people talk about the need for a reckoning in the church. But it's not like this podcast is introducing these concepts or forcing this.

That reckoning actually started as far as I can tell in 2010. This reckoning has been going on for 11 years in terms of people like us talking with debating praying about arguing over the implications of all of this stuff happening and the other situations that you know that could be the fodder for future podcasts. So I don't I hope that actually comes as an encouragement to people but this is not like.

Oh yeah and then for a decade or something like that just sat dormant now. Actually had a lot of people spending a lot of time trying to think about the implications of this I don't know what you guys think about that but that's one thing I just I hope yeah yeah. I'll just give a few quick thoughts.

Number one, as you already said the production value is is high everyone recognize that the way it's it's Malcolm Gladwell ask that's very high praise and weaving together original archival footage and interviews and Mike is a is a good narrator in between. So it deserves high praise for that it's very well done it's riveting. I know when I get relatives and grandparents and people who are asking when when's the next one coming out it's hit an audience that wouldn't normally just listen to a podcast like this number two you talked about stories I think you're right Colin I think we will see many other stories like this I mean there'll somebody's somebody working on the Crystal Cathedral and Robert Schuler as someone working on Bill Hybels and Willow Creek.

There's all sorts is someone just going to do something like this more broadly on reform resurgence young restless reform your book well I'm mind book Colin but I'll give you credit for it. Of course it was James McDonald. Yes, yes, I know that story.

So I think there will be many others and some of those stories will be worth telling and some will be told well and then some won't and then third category here yes there's a lot of lessons and maybe when it's wrapped up. You're right Justin maybe we see the total picture worth revisiting on this podcast some of the lessons from it. Certainly we see many of the elements of Marcell has a cautionary tale.

Though I think for the most part I know I would you know Mike better than than I do I

don't know if I've met him before Justin but for the most part I think Mike has been trying to be really is trying to be fair with. And a lot of good things happened. And Mark said a lot of I mean some of the earlier episodes there's a few of them.

I had to remind myself. Oh yeah the story ends badly because. Wow that was courageous I'm glad he brought that up I'm glad he said that I'm glad he was well there and when you were in that moment, especially if you didn't if you were just you didn't have a front row seat you had a bleacher seat.

You really saw well this. Yeah there's some bombast and there's some I wouldn't say things quite the same way and there's an edginess but. Well Mark is saying things that need to be said and he's saying the right things and he's coming down on the right side of an erancy and propitiation and all sorts of reform theology.

And so it's easy now to want to say who knew what when and how could people let this happen. Oh and and at times he seems really humble to learn and to be a part of other people's lives and you don't know everything that's maybe happening and I think that's a really good change so I think Mike's done a nice job of trying to present the genuine positives along with many cautionary tales of poor leadership and I mean the the episode that is the hardest to listen to and probably raises the most questions and maybe one that we might I would at least disagree with some of the framing is episode five talking about men's and women's at times it seems like the only criticisms were coming from the left and that hey it's complimentarianism really the problem here when there were many critics especially when the marriage book came out in those talks started coming up criticisms from the right but I hear what you're saying just into to let Mike finish what he wants to do and who he wants to talk to and sometimes it's a problem who's willing to talk to him on the record and record with things so that's the other thing is I sometimes the framing of the issues I would put a different way but it is a riveting story there are many cautionary tales in there there are also genuine words I mean I have a friend who was there for part of it and he has a hard time listening to it because his experience was mainly good and what he learned about Jesus and things that were helpful in that context and then the last thing I say and this isn't a little bit of a question but I think there's a question maybe so much a criticism of the podcast as it is just a caution for each of us in our human hearts I know I can feel at times I'm not sure if I can get the edge for me Mark Driscoll is still a living human being he's still doing ministry I don't know what it's like I hear things that don't sound good but he's he's there and he's a real person and not just a historical artifact it seems one thing to publicly critique public statements and sermons and books and other things and not that it's out of place to hear people's private stories and telling what happened but I just have more of a caution because I know that hey I have stories I could share and you know what there's people who could share stories about me that look good and don't look as good hopefully would not look as bad as some of these stories look but I just want us to be careful in our Christian hearts that there could be a way or could be a way that we're

drawn to the story as one is drawn in a worldly sense to any kind of soap opera to any sort of juicy tidbits about someone's life and about the things that happen and that's not necessarily wrong we gravitate towards stories and we learn from those stories but it's just a caution that we don't end up we don't want to foster a sense of gossip or everybody who's got a private story to tell let's hear am I being overly sensitive to that caution? Well, one I think that's another topic that we could do a whole episode on and I wonder if that distinction that you make between a living person and subject and a dead person actually is a legitimate distinction. In other words, why is it okay I've read some stuff about Abraham Lincoln that Abraham Lincoln would be mortified anybody passed along and I don't know if it's 100% true but somebody said it back in the 1820s or whatever why is that okay but it's not okay to say private stuff now or should we use more discretion even in our historical work.

I think it's a really tricky subject to think through that I would say I wasn't that's a good point and I wasn't saying that if someone dies then you can say private thing my point in March and mentioning that Marcus the living person was just to give us some heart level pause that we're we are talking about a real human being who professes faith in Christ for whatever massive flaws that we can point out. It's easy to think that's that's not a real person so that's all I was saying about that that Mark Driscoll is not just the fulfillment of all that is went wrong for a period of time and evangelicalism but as a real person with a wife and kids and a human being so that's one issue and then the at the secondary issue is yeah when when do we do the public in private so go ahead Justin. No that's an important reminder and how to think through all of that I think is just complicated because I think I can imagine people listening to this and thinking.

Well that's precisely the way in which abuse thrives people don't talk about what they experience in private so I think there's a legitimate point there and we do need to think through I'll just say from my own heart. I have to thank God for people who are exposing abuse you know it has kind of lurk beneath the surfaces and been covered up in the past and there are people who are working diligently to bring the evil to light of day. And yet my I can find my own heart drawn towards things that obviously seem like gossip and that my heart is more inclined to read about what some pastor did terribly than what some pastor did well.

And so that's for me it's a heart issue and probably all of us need to think through what are we inclined towards what are we you know what gets our juices flowing to some degree. Yeah, I don't have it solved. That's what I was going to say Justin was I don't know about the living or dead distinction but I would just we know that this is getting a lot of attention because it's like a car crash.

It's just it's so mangled and horrific you just can't turn away. And so if we want to say this podcast is good and necessary because it's going to help root out abuse in the church well I can certainly say God using it to do that and I'll give thanks for that we've,

we've been in a situation where so many of us, I can see myself in this at least have tolerated Christian leaders who don't show basic qualifications for leadership that God lays out in scripture. So if it has that effect that I'm grateful.

I could also say that if what we need is a podcast to be able to help us to root out abuse or to show how to avoid that. I could also say I could introduce people to dozens we all could dozens and dozens and dozens and dozens of pastors who would be positive examples of how to not do this. But see of course that would never get any attention.

So you really can't separate the car crash element of this from the lesson from it. And that's just, I don't know if that's our human hearts our media ecosystem I'm not really sure, but that's what it is right now. I don't think we're disagreeing Justin I just want to clarify again let somebody hear me saying.

Yeah, abuse victims shouldn't speak out that that's that's not at all what I'm saying. I'm not saying that in life nor am I saying that in this podcast. And just like, you know, a good journalist would spend months or years and uncovering a story and talk to victims and get their story and, and things that so it's not that private things are off limits for public knowledge.

What I want to say is, I guess I put it like this I think I'll put it very personally, practically. Well, no one reached out to me I'm not a, I mean, I was in for some of this but I don't need to, I'm not a necessary voice in this podcast. But I think what someone said, would you want to come on and do you have any Mark Driscoll stories.

I think Mike's doing it better than that I'm sure, but that was it I think well yeah I could. I could share a couple stories and I could give you my three or four anecdotes and. And I don't know that that would be appropriate or would be helpful or would be the best way just every anybody got a story about.

Hanging out with Mark Driscoll and something he said in particular something that was bad or that's what I'm saying is. I think a danger lurking in the human heart when you do something that is focused and could become just an opportunity for. So most of the the podcast isn't like that but there have been a time or two where there's a long story about.

Yeah, that seems pretty, pretty bad and puts him in a bad light and I just find myself, hey, give me more of those stories and there's something in my heart that I want to be cautious about when I start getting that feeling. Well, last word on that. No, I'll let you have the last word.

Good word. All right, as we wrap up life and books and everything. We haven't talked about books.

So, were you guys able to read some books over the summer? I know you're both

working while all of us were working on some different writing projects and that. Maybe took up a lot of their time but Colin give us a few books from this summer. So, I know we've talked about this before but I want to encourage people again that audio books are a major secret that can help you with your reading.

I know some people don't think of it that way and I do a lot of reading that's not audio books but I have been in a season of the most intense writing of my life and it's been something. And so audio books have been a real blessing during that time and so one audio book that I appreciated was Andrew Roberts Churchill walking with Destiny which we've talked about on this podcast before so spent this summer that's an 1100 page book. It's a 30, no maybe 50 hour, maybe I think it's a 50 hour audio book.

But yeah that's but that was great. It's everybody says it's great. It is great.

Second two books that I did read and that hopefully I'll be able to talk about in my gospel bound podcast but one of them is Jeff, Jeffrey Bill Bros reading the times, a literary and theological inquiry into the news. If listeners out there have appreciated some of the comments that we often discuss media and our interaction media including podcasts here. Bill bro is doing that really well from that perspective one of the best books.

I've read a long time that direct relates to to my vocation and all of our consumption and use of of media in this in this time. So that was that was that was great and then next month I'll be interviewing former Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam about his book Faithful Presence the promise and the peril of faith in the public square really appreciated him when he was in office and was very popular and successful in office and as far as I know as a member of a PCA congregation if I remember correctly Kevin, but you'll recognize Faithful Presence from James Davidson Hunter's work to change the world from 2010. But this book is a it's coming full circle to what we talked about of discouragement confusion in politics.

It's helpful to see a devout Christian reflect in very thoughtful ways about how to lead through elected office. So three three books I really enjoyed reading and then one I listened to over the summer. Justin, what have you been reading? Yeah, I haven't read the summer so just getting you didn't watch the Olympics.

He hates baseball. He didn't read. I don't know how we're friends, but it's all pairs all the time.

I was able to get into a few books. I'm reading multiple books at once dipping here and there at a spiritual level. I'm trying to find Chappell's book, The Gospel According to Daniel, a Christ centered approach.

It's kind of surprised when I picked it up and realized I had a blurb on the back of it, but it's time to read the whole thing. Paul House has a tendale commentary on the old test

on the book of Daniel replacing Joyce Baldwin's and Christopher Wright has commentary. Christopher Wright is a really good writer.

I don't follow all of his stuff on mission, but his books of the Old Testament. If you ever picked them up are really good. And they started as sermons.

He's a bonafide Old Testament scholar, but has a sermonic touch as well. So Daniel's one of those books. I get the big picture of what's going on as it gets into later chapters and gets more eschatological in terms of prophecies.

I couldn't defend the omeleennial view, which I hold. So just want to, in terms of spiritual work, work through Daniel. Crossway has just republished.

You guys have probably noticed this several books by John, by J.I. Packer, also by Francis Schafer. What we've been doing there is taking books that are published by other publishers that are in paperback and licensing hardcover editions to them. Doing it in the crossway type setting with crossway hard covers with jackets.

So on vacation I brought Keep and Step with the Spirit by Packer, which really like Mark Jones' description on the back where he calls it a polemically ironic. He says seeking to promote peace in the church Packer also desire purity in this book he offers an argument against certain opinions of the spirit with a greater goal in mind. The peace of God's people as they share a unified understanding of the Holy Spirit's work.

If his Irenasism is the end, his polemics are the means. Mark Dever blurb the book too, but it's fascinating to go through and watch how Packer argues. When you're reading the things that the Charismatics get right that they do better than the Reformed, more traditionalist, and then showing what's deficient and then proposing, we could call it a third way to move forward.

It also strikes me rating Packer all of the comments about evangelicalism and how partisan it is and the closing of the evangelical mind and how deficient it is. I mean if if anyone else follows the same sort of Twitter accounts that we do it's a constant theme, but then I read Packer to think this is evangelicalism. This is evangelicalism kind of at its best and Packer just doesn't fit any of those caricature so it's good to work through some of the charismatic issues with Packer as a guide.

Another book I bought on vacation, an author that I enjoy reading Hampton Sides in the Kingdom of Ice the grand and terrible polar voyage of the USS Jeanette. I read that one, read that one I think earlier this year. Hampton Sides wrote one of my favorite books on the assassination of Martin Luther King.

And he's just a master of the narrative nonfiction form and Candace Millard who also is a good author of that in her blurb she says, as soon as I finish the book I flipped to the first page and begin reading again. So that kind of book which is high praise obviously. And

the last book that I've started to dip into is by Michael Ward who of course did the groundbreaking work on CS Lewis and Narnia books and the planets and the deeper meaning there has published after humanity a guide to CS Lewis is the abolition of man.

And long concurred with the belief that abolition of man is a classic of 20th century natural law concisely done a profound work and the sort of work that it's really helpful to have a guide to help you see the philosophical underpinnings and the sort of things that Lewis assumed so eager to get into Michael Ward's book and the publisher published a little version of abolition of man to go along with it so you can read the original classic and read words guide to it as well. For the first time this year, I guess a hat tip to as an Andrew Wilson do this but I'm keeping a list of all the books that I'm reading this year. I don't know if I'll publish it at the end of the year or not that serves people or not.

I read books in different ways we've talked about that before some very carefully some quickly to get the gist of it sometimes will say here's a big book I'm going to give it two hours I'm going to get as much as I can and then other times it's a, it's your companion for many months as I was reading through the two volumes on Princeton seminary from David Calhoun, but I finished a number of books I started some others but I'll limit myself to just three from this summer. And this is a book I had read years ago it's a little book I picked it up again. Steven osmond who is a very well respected historian from Harvard he has a little book ancestors the loving family of old Europe, which was in some ways there's a book but it was some ways a distillation of a work he had published in the 80s with the, with the auspicious title when fathers ruled and it was about basically about life and marriage and family life in pre Reformation and Reformation Europe Well, this is a shorter version ancestors the loving family and old Europe, it's just fascinating because here's a top notch historian looking at primary sources and you know he has woodcuts he has, you know some old illustrations.

It's really fascinating to see oh here's an illustration from Germany in the 16th century of a pregnant woman and they label all the things that happens to a pregnant woman or here's a manual of child re and you just, you see things that are very much the same that you see things that look really different, but one of the themes and osmond's work on family and marriage in 15 16th century Europe was to push against some of the scholarship that basically said it was just unremitting horrors and stark authoritarianism and he's trying to, trying to say they were more like us in some ways and unlike us in other ways so really fascinating and maybe I'll maybe we'll bring that in a topic I've been reading just as a future thoughts percolating on book ideas years down the line and reading a lot about family life about marriage about both current and historical so that was an interesting book and another history book Gary Stewart you know Gary right Justin from your time at Bethlehem yep we were a classmate together at Bethlehem in 1998 so this is his published dissertation I think I had read the dissertation or looked through it briefly when I was working on my PhD but now it's published in the book of Oxford or Cambridge but congratulations Gary it's called justifying revolution American

clergy's argument for public resistance was basically what was the Christian argument for revolution in the colonies it's a published dissertation so it's thick and it's footnote but it's not that long and it's really helpful to think about it and I guess I'm partial to it because maybe I'm a small part of this project along with Paul Hellseth and a number of other people who are trying to push back against what some of the older historiography said namely that the Christian support for America and for the new republic and for revolution was a capitulation to enlightenment ideas or is really selling out their reformed birthright for republicanism and Stuart's book does a good job saying well whether we agree with him or not there were careful Christian theological arguments to justify the colonists revolution and so he has five or six different chapters looking at different people so I found that very interesting and then book I blogged about earlier in the summer heralds of God by James S Stewart so he's a church of Scotland ministry wrote this book I think in the 40s and the discerning reader will wonder where he was theologically on a few things but put that aside it's as a preacher I love I try to read each summer a book on preaching sometimes I'll go back to Lloyd Jones preaching in preachers but this is when I hadn't read before I heard that I found it very invigorating for the pastoral preaching task and that's one of my goals with whatever writing I have each summer is to come back and feel reenergized and reinvigorated for preaching I've been talking about that earlier in the summer because I think one of the great struggles we face as pastors is it can feel like intellectually we know preaching matters and yet it feels like well blogging matters podcast matter Twitter matters books matter conferences matter hot takes matter who's shaping people who's who are our people talking about during the week they're talking about an article that they read from this place or that they're talking about and hopefully we're not part of the problem so all of those things can be good but it can feel like as a pastor is the task of preaching does that really I know the answer but does it really work does it really matter and so I found that book helpful some practical things but more just at a heart level and one of the things that's humbling and encouraging at the same times it's been like this for years when I come back from my summer study break I'm very sure that I'm there the very first Sunday that we plan our vacation so we can be back the first Sunday you're back and it's not because of me but they'll say that's going to be maybe your best sermon of the year because you've had rest your fresh your reinvigorated there's a new energy that's encouraging it's also humbling and it's good for those of us who are pastors and preachers to realize sometimes we get more worn down and then we realize so lots of other books that we can talk about but Justin and Colin very good to be with you again looking forward in the weeks ahead I have an interview with Jim Newheiser in our next episode Lord willing and who's a teacher's counseling at RTS and going to talk to him about abuse so that will be a good conversation we're trying to light up some other interviews throughout the fall and of course all three of us will be together so thank you good to be with you friends and for our listeners, Lord if I got enjoying forever and until then read a good book

[Music]