

Christ in Prophecy Q&A 14: "Religious Issues"

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Are there really many different roads to God? Is it true to say that "Islam is a religion of peace?" Do absolute truths really exist? Is the Bible truly the Word of God? For a discussion of these and other vital religious issues, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I am delighted to have two great guys on the set with me today. One is Nathan Jones who is our Web Minister. And the other is Dennis Pollock who was my colleague here at Lamb & Lion Ministries for 11 years before he decided in 2005 that he had had enough of me and he decided to form his own ministry. And that ministry is called Spirit of Grace and it is a ministry that is focused on the nation of Africa. Although he does do ministry in India, and in the Philippines. But you focus on Africa, right?

Dennis Pollock: We do.

Dr. Reagan: And in fact the last time you were in India I believe you got arrested?

Dennis Pollock: Well, not technically arrested, but detained at the police station while the Hindus and the police argued back in the forth with the Christians. We didn't know what was going on but the Lord delivered us.

Dr. Reagan: Then you found out that they had your passport.

Dennis Pollock: They took our passport and didn't want to give it back. I think they were waiting for a bribe.

Dr. Reagan: So, this foreign mission work can be exciting at times?

Dennis Pollock: Yes. Between the miserable flights and some of those things.

Dr. Reagan: Well what I want to do guys is talk about some hot button religious issues here. And I would like to get started with one of the hottest and that is the idea that there are many different roads to God. Now that is one of the things you hear everywhere today. You know I guess the touchstone of American thinking today is tolerance.

Dennis Pollock: Sure.

Dr. Reagan: We've got to be tolerant about everything. So who are we as Christians to say Christianity is the only way to God? Surely there are many different roads to God. How about it?

Dennis Pollock: Well of course what we represent, you, me, Nathan are the Evangelicals. You know we believe the Bible. We believe what Jesus said. We believe what Paul said. We

believe their words were inspired. If you hold that position there is no other conclusion you could possibly draw. I mean just looking at Jesus Himself He said, "I am the Way, I am the Truth, I am the Life and no man can come to the Father except through me." He said, "If you don't believe in me you will die in your sin." John writes, "He that has the Son has life, He who does not have the Son of God does not have life." So basically you are left with one of two options. One you believe the Bible and therefore you recognize Christianity as the only possible way, actually Jesus Christ is the only possible way to God. Or you throw out the Bible and say, "It doesn't really matter what anybody believes is fine." But the question is matter of credentials. You know if you are going to tell me that you are convinced that any religions and all religions are all equal, I would say what are your credentials? Have you ever "A" walked on water? Have you "B" ever raised dead people? Have you ever touched a leper and seen the leprosy dissolve from his skin? If you haven't I'll stick with Jesus.

Dr. Reagan: Or most important of all have you ever been resurrected from the dead?

Dennis Pollock: Yeah, there you go.

Dr. Reagan: How about it Nathan?

Nathan Jones: Well like he said there is one way and Jesus said it, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, nobody comes to the Father except through me." And it's not just the one time that it is said in the Bible 1 Timothy 2:5 says, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ." 1 John 5:5, "Who is it who overcomes the world, only he who believes in the Son of God."

Dr. Reagan: And Peter said, "There is no other name under Heaven by which a man may be saved."

Nathan Jones: So again and again the Bible says there is one way to God. Now that is hard for people they want there to be many ways to God because they want to go their own way. But that God gives a way that He sacrificed His own Son. I mean what a sacrifice for your own son to die horribly on the cross to create that way. We should be thankful that there is one way at least.

Dr. Reagan: Let me ask you this: Is Christianity a better religion than other religions?

Nathan Jones: I would say yes, particularly because we have a personal God. Now there is many ways I am sure Dennis will cover a bunch of them, but in every other religion there is no personal God. You can look at Hinduism where they have Brahma which is represented by 300 million gods.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Nathan Jones: You've got Allah of Islam who is angry and wrathful--

Dr. Reagan: Aloof.

Nathan Jones: --and aloof. You have Buddhism which really has no god whatsoever. And all these different religions there is no personal God. But Christianity has a God who was willing to put Himself on the Cross to die to reconcile us back to Him again. It's a God who loves us, who has promised a great future for us. That I think is what makes Christianity completely different than the others and the greatest.

Dr. Reagan: And one thing that certainly separates Christianity to all other religions is it is the only religion that exists where you do not work your way to Heaven.

Nathan Jones: Grace, yes.

Dr. Reagan: Every other religion you've got to do this, you've got to do this, you've got to do this, and then maybe you'll make it. But not in Christianity it's a gift of God by grace through faith.

Dennis Pollock: When you watch television you will often see in the commercials celebrity endorsements. And the manufacture of various products know that if they can get a celebrity to endorse their product it is really going to impress a lot of people. Wow, Johnny Depp says this shampoo is the best one in the world. I've got to buy a case of it.

Nathan Jones: And he's got a head of hair, yeah.

Dennis Pollock: And so you know they want to get important people, influential people to endorse their product. Well if you look at the different religions God Almighty, the King of the Universe, Creator of everything that has ever existed has endorsed only one way. He has endorsed Jesus Christ and what He has to offer, and what He had to say. The Bible says He was a man attested by God by miracles, signs and wonders. When He was baptized God said, "This is beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." When He was on the Mount of Transfiguration He said, "This is my beloved Son, hear Him." God attested over and over again and through the resurrection of Jesus Christ never to die again. He once again attested this is My Son, this is the Way, listen to Him. So that makes Christianity not just superior but really the only possible way or philosophy or religion whatever you want to call it that we can approach God.

Dr. Reagan: And to go back to what you said really the essence of Christianity is not rules and regulations and all that sort of thing, the essence is a relationship. A relationship with a person. Jesus said the essence of Christianity, of eternal life is knowing Me, and the One who sent Me.

Nathan Jones: Well Adam and Eve walked and talked and saw God face to face in the Garden of Eden. And God has been using the last few thousand years to get us back to that state where mankind walks, and talks and has fellowship with God again.

Dr. Reagan: And I think Satan has even attested to the fact that Christianity is the one and only true religion because it is the one he attacks all the time. Have you ever stopped to think about the fact that people use the name of Jesus as a curse word? He motivates people to use that name as a curse word. People don't use Mohammad as a curse word. They don't use some Hindu god.

Dennis Pollock: They get stoned if they do.

Dr. Reagan: It's just--yeah they are dead if they do.

Dennis Pollock: Yeah.

Nathan Jones: Isn't that interesting?

Dennis Pollock: Yeah, it is. Well--

Dennis Pollock: Let's come back to another religious hot button in just a moment.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of hot button religious issues. And I'd like to get right back to them with our guest Dennis Pollock, and my colleague

Nathan Jones. Well what about the Bible? Is the Bible the Word of God or is it man's search for God and therefore full of myth, legend, and superstition?

Dennis Pollock: Well as I have mentioned before Jesus Christ believed the Bible to be the Word of God. Paul believed the Bible to be the Word of God. Of course and God used him to write the Bible. And truthfully when one is born again you're immediately drawn to the Scripture. I know it was so in my case. Before I was a born again Christian I really had my doubts, you know it is a book men have written, it may have some good things, it may have some bad things. I received Christ and all of that just dissolved. I mean it was gone and I was drawn to it.

Dr. Reagan: I think that is one of the major evidences of a person being born again is that they are drawn to Scripture.

Dennis Pollock: I really do. I think so too. And Jesus quoted the different aspects of the Old Testament that people tend to disbelieve. People love to make fun of the Adam and Eve story. "Oh, Adam and Eve, yeah, sure, garden, snake, heard that before."

Dr. Reagan: Jonah and the whale.

Dennis Pollock: Jonah and the whale, and Jesus believed these things. So, the Scriptures are clearly inspired in Jesus understanding they should be in ours. If you know Christ you will. You know there was I heard a story of a lady who was at a museum she looked at a famous painting and there was a museum director leading her and a group around and she just didn't like the painting at all. She said, "That is the ugliest thing." The museum director was highly insulted. He said, "Ma'am, I'll have you to know you don't judge this painting, this painting judges you." In other words if you're so stupid to think that this is a lousy painting you just revealed how stupid you really are. Well let me moderate that a little bit but let me say you don't judge the Bible, the Bible judges you. If your heart is all messed up and if you really have a lot of ugliness in your life you won't have much use for the Bible. But if your heart is right with Christ, if you love God, if you are a person of prayer you will be drawn to the Bible.

Dr. Reagan: What about it Nathan, what evidence do we have that the Bible really is the Word of God?

Nathan Jones: I think people forget that the Bible isn't just one book, it is 66 books, it was written over 1,500 years by 40 some authors. It's actually written in three different languages but no matter what across all 66 books there is one theme, and that is the restoration of man to God through the salvation by Jesus Christ for the glory of God. It is a unifying theme that crosses all the languages, the time periods, and the different authors. To me that is the strongest case that the Bible is the Word of God and we can trust it. And I love 2 Peter 1:20-21, "First of all you should know this that no prophecy of Scripture comes from one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the will of man, instead men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." So it was the Holy Spirit that wrote through the men and I think that is the best testimony for the Bible is the fact that it's got that theme that runs throughout all of them by the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Reagan: Well certainly there are a lot of good testimonies. One would be the impact of the Bible on lives all through history and today.

Dennis Pollock: Absolutely

Nathan Jones: Oh, yes.

Dr. Reagan: Our colleague Jack Hollingsworth who lived on the streets for 20 years in an alcoholic daze and suddenly he comes to know Jesus Christ, gets into the Word and now he's

an evangelist. It is amazing the impact. Of course the one thing that nobody's mentioned and I am surprised is Bible prophecy and the fact that the Bible is full of prophecies, I mean 100's prophecies. Not just about the Messiah.

Nathan Jones: I hinted at it a little.

Dr. Reagan: Cities, towns, nations, empires, individuals all of which came true.

Dennis Pollock: Yes.

Dr. Reagan: And you know the amazing thing about that there is no other religious book in the world that contains fulfilled prophecies. There is not a single one in the Koran. Not a single one in the book of Mormon. But the Bible is full of prophecies that has to be supernatural.

Nathan Jones: And specific prophecies, not the general ones that Mormons and Muslims always say.

Dr. Reagan: Very specific not things like Nostradamus this kind of weird stuff that you could interpret in a hundred different ways. Specific prophecies and they're there.

Dennis Pollock: It is interesting that one of the accusations or one of the reasons that some of the Jewish leaders didn't believe in Jesus was they said, "Ah, you are from Galilee, no prophet is going to come from Galilee. We know where the Messiah is going to come from He is going to come from Bethlehem where David was. But you Galilean peasants you have no right to claim Messiah." They just didn't know the reality was of course as we know he was born in Bethlehem.

Dr. Reagan: There you go.

Dennis Pollock: So, all these prophecies were filled in the Lord Jesus the first time around and as we understand and know and are convinced they will also be fulfilled the second time.

Dr. Reagan: Ok, I mentioned at the beginning of the program one of the most popular things going around today in religion is that there are many different roads to God. But another one that is right up there at the top with it is the idea that everything is relative there are no such things are absolute truths. In fact there are evangelicals in the Emergent Church Movement today who are taking that position that there is no such thing as absolutes, everything is relative. What about it?

Nathan Jones: Well did you know that Dennis does not believe in gravity? He doesn't.

Dr. Reagan: He doesn't?

Nathan Jones: He believes that gravity does not affect him whatsoever. So if anyone tries to drop anything onto Dennis because Dennis believes gravity doesn't exist it will just float away. Well, now we know that is absolute nonsense, we cannot fight the laws of gravity. It is just like saying that a chicken can give birth to something more than just an egg. We know chickens can only give birth to eggs. So there are absolute truths. But it is interesting as we get to be more and more of an affluent society in the West how we've decided that we can create the universe around us based on our image. So we can create what we believe what is truth and what is false. And we should just accept that of people.

Dr. Reagan: But your point is really good because it is strange to think that we believe in absolute truths in every aspect of life except religion.

Dennis Pollock: Right.

Nathan Jones: Yes, morality.

Dr. Reagan: Morality and that sort of thing. I mean there are absolute truth. Oh yeah there is absolute truth in flying an airplane, in performing surgery, prescribing medicine. We don't want anybody who is a relativist doing those things.

Nathan Jones: You tell the IRS I don't quite believe I should have to pay taxes, and therefore I'm not.

Dr. Reagan: But in the area of morality and religion suddenly no absolute truth.

Nathan Jones: None at all.

Dr. Reagan: What about it?

Dennis Pollock: Well nature as you said is filled with absolutes. Imagine that you decide you want to save money, in your freezer you want ice cubes but you are going to set it at 40 degrees and you are just going to meditated and think about the fact that water is going to freeze at 40 degrees. Well you can meditate all you want it will not freeze until it gets down to 32. And there are so many absolutes just like that. And God says there are a lot of moral absolutes too. And one of the big ones is whatever a man sows that shall he also reap.

Dr. Reagan: Now you often make a point in your years of preaching and I've heard it over and over and I want you to make now and it relates to something you said when you were talking about gravity. You know if you step off a building you fall.

Dennis Pollock: Right.

Dr. Reagan: But if you commit adultery there may not be any immediate effect, there might be but there may not be. This might go on for a long period of time. In the area of morality there are absolutes but you don't always feel the immediate result of that error that you make. Expand on that.

Dennis Pollock: Yeah. Well the reality is there will be the kickback. You know, when I was a, I don't know maybe a 13, 14 years old I fired my first shotgun and I was shocked, I didn't expect what I was going to get.

Dr. Reagan: Boom.

Dennis Pollock: Because that thing just kicked me something fierce and about knocked me over. And I didn't like it much at all. I liked the idea of me being big hunter, you know, and shooting a gun, but I didn't like the kick. But there is very much a scientific principle behind that and that is for every reaction there will be an equal and opposite reaction. That is true in the moral area as well. With the exception of the blood of Christ which takes the reaction on Himself rather than putting it on us.

Dr. Reagan: Well said.

Dennis Pollock: For every sin there will be a payback. For every wicked deed you do either you will judged, or that judgment will fall on Christ. And but because you don't see it immediately, you tend to think it's not true. And one of the illustrations I've used was if every time a person cursed a ball peen hammer would materialize over their head and rap them three times I mean cursing would go immediately. But you can curse and no hammer. You can lie and you may feel just as healthy and fine as ever. You can commit adultery with your neighbor's wife and you maybe fat and sassy and may get a raise the next day. And you say, "Well there is no God. He would surely be punishing me wouldn't he?" No not necessarily He may wait until the

end. You know you've got an appointment with Him. And he will deal with you later. Now with His children He tends to be a little quicker to discipline because they are His children. But with those that are not His children a lot times it's I'll see you later on.

Dr. Reagan: I always think of an illustration that you used one time when you said that on July the 4th when everybody is out in their backyard barbequing that Madeleine Murray O'Hare would get up on a stepladder so everybody could see her and shake her fists at the heaven and say, "God if you're real strike me dead."

Dennis Pollock: Yeah.

Dr. Reagan: And you said it is a good thing you weren't God.

Dennis Pollock: Yeah, well most of us would be a little more eager to you know kind of be a little more flashy. God is a little subdued in some ways. He is a little on the quiet side. So much so that people can disbelieve. But that is part of the plan because He wants us to walk by faith.

Dr. Reagan: There you go.

Dennis Pollock: And every time you committed a sin He'd immediately you know you'd get judged and punished for it there would be no need for faith. But we Christians say, "We believe."

Dr. Reagan: Good point.

Dennis Pollock: That there is a God. He'll deal with sin. We are going to walk by faith we are going to live through Christ.

Dr. Reagan: Ok, let's shift gears here and go to another topic homosexuality has become one of the major issues in our society affecting everybody. And the number one argument in behalf of it is that homosexuals were born that way. What about that?

Dennis Pollock: Well number one it is not necessarily true. There have been a lot of men who have married, have had children. Clearly have had at least some attraction to women. And then they announce, "I'm a homosexual. I am going to leave my wife I'm going to desert my family and I am going to live with Frank, or whoever."

Dr. Reagan: It's also gone the other way.

Dennis Pollock: Yeah.

Dr. Reagan: Where homosexuals have quit that life.

Dennis Pollock: Right. So but the point I'm making is that clearly they had at least some attraction to women.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Dennis Pollock: But even if you say from the time I was seven years old I was drawn to guys. That doesn't really prove anything. There are people from their youth that were filled with anger. There are people from their youth that have all kinds of issues and that doesn't necessarily make it right. The truth is we are born in sin.

Dr. Reagan: There you go.

Dennis Pollock: And just because you have something that is ugly in your life doesn't mean you have to yield to it. Let's consider a heterosexual situation. Let's say a young man gets married and he says to himself, "Well I know that now I am married I'll never be attracted to

another women. I'll never find another women the least bit attractive. I'll only have eyes for my wife." Suddenly he sees a beautiful lady at the office. She flirts with him. He finds some attraction. What does he say? "Well I guess I got an adultery gene in me so I better just yield to it. I guess I was really born with a roving eye so I might as well give in and enjoy myself." No, you say, that's not right. I may feel something toward this lady, but I'm married to this lady and I am going to be true.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Dennis Pollock: That's what godly people have done all the way down the line. Being godly doesn't mean you don't ever feel a temptation to do wrong. It means you refuse to yield to it through the power of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Reagan: Right. And you know the problem too with this argument, that well I was born that way. You could use that same argument to justify pedophile.

Dennis Pollock: Sure, you absolutely could.

Nathan Jones: They do say it.

Dr. Reagan: I mean a pedophile could just say I was born that way.

Dennis Pollock: Yeah.

Dr. Reagan: So what's the difference?

Dennis Pollock: Well you know Adolf Hitler was a very angry little boy. In school they had all kinds of problems with him. He was born with anger, and aggressive obnoxious personality so should we not judge Hitler. Well the poor little guy, he was just doing what's natural.

Dr. Reagan: Well I don't know. But I think it's right we are all born with a sin nature.

Dennis Pollock: Sure.

Dr. Reagan: That sin nature manifests itself in different ways in a different person. You can say that some people are natural born liars, natural born adulterers, natural born thieves, natural born this or that or whatever.

Dennis Pollock: Right.

Dr. Reagan: But that doesn't mean that gives you a license to just go out and live that way.

Dennis Pollock: Yeah, and Jesus said you must be born again which means you get a new start, a new birth, a new nature. And the flesh will still be around there may be a battle, there may be a struggle and a war but you don't have to yield.

Dr. Reagan: Right. Anything?

Nathan Jones: Well I think what Jesus said He defined what marriage is. He defined what a sexual union is in Matthew 19:4-5, "And that in the beginning the Creator made them both male and female," and he said, "for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh." So the way God created it is that one man, one woman they marry for life. Anything outside of that, and we are not just talking homosexuality here we are talking fornication which is sex outside of marriage, we are talking about polygamy. Any kind of the sexual sins is outside what God has created.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Nathan Jones: So that we are saying that God created people as homosexuals would be against what the Creator meant. God does not create people to go against what He has created. But like you said the sin nature is what changed that.

Dr. Reagan: Another very divisive issue in our society is abortion. And so let me ask you the question: Shouldn't a women have the right of privacy to choose an abortion if she wants one?

Dennis Pollock: It reminds me of a debate between a couple of politicians I won't mention who they were it happened sometime ago. But the liberal one said to his conservative opponent, "I want you to repeat this statement. I want you to say" of course he knew he would never say it, "I want you to say, 'I believe in a woman's right to choose.'" Well I was watching the debate and I was thinking, "Oh, I wish I could be in his shoes for a minute and just answer that." Because what I would have said would be, "You didn't finish the sentence."

Dr. Reagan: There you go.

Dennis Pollock: You said a woman's right to choose? Choose what? Choose a red purse versus a blue purse. No what you really mean is a women's right to choose to have a doctor go in and inject a saline solution into her body, and scold that unborn baby to death. Or in the case of the late term abortion to go in and slice that baby into pieces and pull the pieces out. Is that what you are telling me a women should have the right to choose? And of course nobody in their right mind could accept that.

Dr. Reagan: Very well done. Because what really you are saying a women should have the right to choose to murder her child.

Dennis Pollock: Yeah. Let me give you another example. A lot of people make a big deal of the child of a rape.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Dennis Pollock: And the fetus as the result of a rape. And they say, "Oh, well of course any reasonable person would know we have to put it to death." But let's put it a little differently suppose the mother gives birth to the child, a little girl, and she is now one year old she is dressed in a cute little pink dress with ribbons in her hair. And the mother looks at the little one year old girl and says, "This girl reminds me of the fact I was raped and she is the product of a rape." And the mother pulls out a knife and kills her baby. The police hall her off to prison. She stands before a judge. The judge says, "What were you thinking of killing your baby?" She says, "You honor, don't you understand this was the product of a rape. And no product of a rape has the right to exist." What judge in this entire country would listen to such an argument? Is it any different when that child is inside the womb as opposed to outside the womb? I don't believe in God's eyes there is a bit of difference.

Dr. Reagan: It just makes me shudder to think that we have the blood of almost 60 million children on our hands in the nation. And God is not going to let that pass by.

Dennis Pollock: No.

Dr. Reagan: This nation is under judgment.

Dennis Pollock: The blood of the innocent is crying out to God for judgment and it will, it will come.

Dr. Reagan: I remember a statement by Ronald Reagan one time he wrote a whole book about abortion and why he was opposed to it and in the book he made the comment, "I find it very interesting that all those are in favor of abortion have already been born."

Dennis Pollock: Yeah.

Nathan Jones: Well said.

Dr. Reagan: He had a way of getting to the heart of issues. Oh, my goodness. Well we are certainly constantly bombarded with questions about what is the Christian response to this, and the Christian response. I am amazed I get e-mails, "Well what should be the Christian response to this? The Christian response to that?" It's as if the average Christian has no concept of what a Christian worldview is. What is a worldview? And what would be the Christian worldview?

Nathan Jones: Well I would go with the Christian worldview or the worldview is actual is a German term it is called weltanschauung, go back to my old German. And it means a comprehensive conception or image of the universe and of humanities relationship to it. In other words how we see the world. What the color of the sunglasses you put on.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Nathan Jones: Is the color that affects the world. There are three main worldviews. There is the humanist worldview a worldview that sees there is no God affecting us and that we, humanity, are the ultimate and then we judge the world based on what is best for us. The second one which is the religious worldview, and that is there is a deity out there we don't know what it is and we need to work our way towards understanding that deity. And then there is the third and that is the biblical worldview and that looks at the world through the lens of the Bible, what the Bible teaches, what it says. And so those three worldviews cover all the worldviews of humanity and they affect how we relate to each other, how we view the universe, and what things we see.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy. And I want to thank Dennis Pollock our special guest today for being with us and sharing your insights. Always a joy to have you with us Dennis.

Dennis Pollock: Thanks, Dave.

Dr. Reagan: How about telling the viewers how they can get in touch with you?

Dennis Pollock: Sure, you can find at the website: spiritofgrace.org.

Dr. Reagan: Thank you. Well folks that is our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you. I hope you will be back with us next week the Lord willing when we will be discussing major Bible prophecy issues; like whether or not the Pre-Tribulation Rapture concept is too new to be true? Until then this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries saying, "Look up, be watchful for our redemption is drawing near."

End of Program