

**The Bible (Unmuted) Transcript****Episode 22****Bible Education (Unmuted): An Interview with Ernesto Duke and Joshua Walker****July 18, 2023****Teacher: Matthew Halsted****Episode Summary:**

In this episode, I interview two of my Eternity Bible College colleagues, Ernesto Duke (President) and Joshua Walker (Vice President/Academic Dean). We talk about a range of things: from the rising cost of biblical education to curriculum to the virtues of thinking deeply and critical about our theological assumptions. In this honest and transparent conversation, we talk about the history, heart, and aims of Eternity Bible College. At the heart of our mission is to provide quality education in a way that is accessible (geographically/financially) to students all across the world.

To learn more about Eternity, visit [www.eternity.edu](http://www.eternity.edu)

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**Transcript:**

0:00 Hey everybody! Welcome back to another episode of the Bible Unmuted! My name is Matt Halsted and I'm excited to join you today because on today's show we have two special guests. Two of my colleagues, Ernesto Duke and Joshua Walker. These two guys I work with at Eternity Bible College and it's a delight to be able to sit down and chat with them today about all things bible education. I think you will find this episode pretty interesting because we offer kind of a glimpse of the DNA of our school, our convictions, our goals, our aims, and our mindset about bible education. So, for example we talk about the rising cost of bible education. It is just so expensive to go to college. How does that work for a bible college? And how should we as Christians push back against the rising cost of helping people understand the bible? That's such a fundamental question, but it's an important question, I believe. And we talk about our mindset about what should go into a bible education. In other words, a bible education that is good and healthy is not just about passing on biblical or theological information, but about transformation. At the end of the day our goal is to see our students not just learn more about Jesus, but become more like Jesus. So it's not just about information, but transformation. That's what education is all about. We will be the first to admit that we don't have everything figured out and we have a lot to learn. The truth is we're students ourselves. But one thing that we do know, is that we want our students to encounter the life changing, transformative power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is our number one aim. That's our number one mission. That's why we exist. We love teaching scripture for the purpose of letting that scriptural truth transform the lives, the ministries, and the families of our students. I hope you enjoy this show. I hope this is an encouragement to you. And most importantly, I pray that as we grow as Christians that we will continue to get an urge and a passion for learning about Jesus for the purpose of becoming like Jesus through the word of scripture.

2:27 MH Well, I am here with Joshua Walker and Ernesto Duke and I am super excited to have these guys on to talk about Eternity Bible College. How are you doing guys?

Both Doing great! Really good to be here. Yes, thank you.

MH So, I love this school. I have always loved this school even when I was an adjunct professor from years ago because the school has a vision and a DNA at the core of its vision that I think, in some ways unprecedented and in some ways its challenging in the way we often think a school should be run, and how a school should function and so forth. And just the curriculum itself is interesting in a number of regards. So, before we get into all of that, tell the folks what is ebc. Give us some history. How did it start? Why did it start? And Josh, maybe you could start off with that. Just give us a little history of what the school is all about.

JW I'd be happy to. So I've been here since the beginning. It's about 20 years ago. I was hired in November of 2003 to give a little perspective. The first classes were offered in August of 2004, so less than a year after that. When I was first asked to be a part of it, I asked why we would start another bible college in Southern California. There were already quite a few. And Francis Chan, whose idea it was at the beginning at Cornerstone Church, he said generically that we want to do something different. And I'm not sure at that point if he knew what that meant exactly, but that was intriguing to me. And it was intriguing to some of the other people that joined in the beginning.

So in those early days, we started fleshing out, what that means to do something different. And we pooled our collective experiences as to what from our own experiences in college, what had been beneficial and what had not been. So we could try and do things differently and combine that with some of the things we saw happening in the larger Christian educational world that we wanted to help deal with a bit. So some of the things that came out of that is that we felt like our professors who were practitioners were the best professors we ever had. And that those that weren't involved in any kind of practical life ministry with people weren't as good. And so, at the beginning we said let's try and hire faculty that are people who are involved in a life ministry all the time. And so, we've stuck with that all the way through and have found that to be very beneficial. I always find that in class it is a lot better to have someone tell you a real example of something that happened last week, then a made up, invented example they try to come up with because they don't have real life experience. That was one of them

Another big one for us, it started out with the word affordability and that was driven...well, we found out that one of the main reasons perspective missionaries weren't able to get to the field was because of college debt. So two things were happening. One is that people weren't getting into the field. The other is that missions agencies were starting drop their bible requirement for missionaries which honestly just makes no sense. I mean, how would you send people into the field that haven't been trained and assessed that they've been trained in those kind of things. But I understood why. In their minds to send them for even two years of bible education was going to cost them maybe \$20-, \$30-, \$40,000 and they didn't have the money to pay for that. So it was a regrettable situation is the way that I might put it. So we wanted to make things affordable so that people who want to be missionaries can go to college and leave without incurring college debt.

That really expanded over the years. Not to jump too far ahead, but we realized it wasn't just affordability that mattered to us, but it was accessibility. The financial was just one area of accessibility that we wanted to deal with. The way we started stating it was, we wanted a biblical education available to anyone who truly desired it. That true desire to want it was the main thing and we didn't want geography and finances or anything else to be a hurdle to hold them back from getting a solid biblical education.

Those were two of the main things. The third one is we wanted to have a partnership with local churches where we kept people involved. The way I've kind of seen it in Christian higher education is that it's easy for colleges and seminaries to treat local churches as serving them. So they view it as, graduates are our

goal. As a seminary, graduates are our goal. And what the local church does is help make better graduates. And while there is some truth to that, I think that's a backwards perspective. I think that seminaries and colleges instead should see themselves as serving churches and the churches are making disciples. And part of what the colleges and seminaries should be doing is helping them make better disciples. So that switch of perspective is important and has stuck with us all the way through as really important for us.

I'm not sure if it was exactly right at the beginning, or the experience of our first class, but we realized that a lot of times what happens with students is that as they gain knowledge it puffs them up. So we noticed that you get a lot of arrogance and pride with the more bible knowledge they get. And it's funny as I say it, you realize how ridiculous that is. But, it's very common. A lot of the experience of pastors who send or people in their church who go off to Bible College and then come back in the summer, and they come back as bible jerks. They question everything. They've had one year of Bible College and now they're going to question everything the pastor says, everything the pastor does. It's a struggle, honestly. We desire to have knowledge that produces humility in students and not pride. And I think the speed at which students learn the bible means that they can't apply everything that they are learning. So it's when you have knowledge that you haven't applied into your life that it gets bigger and bigger. I think that's one of the reason it leads to that. It's one of the on-going struggles we have. We always are trying to work on that and encourage students not to be bible jerks. And also to respect their parent, their pastors, their elders, and other people who have life experience. We try to explain to them that life experience is incredibly valuable and their bible knowledge doesn't trump that life experience. That they ought to see that as that its part of the body and the reality of the knowledge that they have and the knowledge that you have work together for great things. Don't see them as in opposition of one another or attacking each other.

I'm sure there's probably other things from the beginning. We really had a desire to have a global perspective for students to care about global ministry and care about the church globally. And we were having classes in church classrooms in Simi Valley, California at that point. That was kind of the extent of it at that point – how can we influence the people who move here. Then over the years as things have changed, we decided to pursue accreditation and if you want to talk about that we can. And the why we did that and took that direction. We eventually got accredited and the school continued to grow and change.

Then there was a major shift. I can tell you the reason that happened from the faculty side, but Ernesto will be a great example of hearing it from the student side. Because Ernesto was student of ours. He was a student that experienced the education that we offer, went to seminary, came back and began working for us. So he has a different perspective on this. In a sense, maybe I have the idealist perspective because when you put together a curriculum you have an ideal of what you are trying to create. Ernesto might have more of a realist perspective of having experience it.

One of the key things we realized maybe four years in...in the beginning we didn't know much about curriculum to be honest. What we put together for a bachelor degree was, well, let's take what we did in seminary, take out Greek and Hebrew, we'll add some Gen Ed courses and tell them to go to community college and get an associate degree and then we'll call that a bachelor degree. So real heavy on systematic theology and bible overview. We touched on a few specific bible books and looking back you can see the reformed bent that we had. The required books that we had were Romans and also a dispensational bent at that point. We had Daniel and Revelation required with charts and everything. As things started to change and we got a different perspective and saw what that produced in students... One of the thing that we realized is that a lot of our students that had a bachelor level, a surprising number of our students had never read the entire bible. I would do Old Testament survey during the first class many of the students took. I did a basic bible knowledge quiz on the first day and I would...it wasn't so much a quiz for them as it was for me to know where they are coming from...and I had a set of old testament that I asked them to put in chronological order. Adam was on the list and you would be surprised at how many students did not put Adam first (MH: hmmm.) Like they didn't even know that Adam was the

first man created. So its stuff like that which made us realize that we shouldn't be jumping straight into systematic theology. Not that there is anything wrong with systematic theology but students just need to know the narrative of the bible first and see how that structure plays out. So we got away and completely revised our curriculum around biblical theology. We decided that students ought to go through the bible at least twice because the first time through things are kind of new. So, that's where our curriculum is set up now for those that get an advanced biblical and cultural exegesis bachelor degree. They go through the entire bible once in overview and then a second time in detail. They work through once the English canon and the second time the Hebrew canon for the Old Testament for the Hebrew bible. And that was really just to get them well grounded in the bible and in the narrative. And both of you can speak into that more than I can. I was there to help design it, but both of you have – well, Ernesto has experienced it as a student and both of you have experienced it as professors. So you could certainly speak to how that works out.

Especially, I think one of the things that makes us unique is not just the biblical theology focus, but the emphasis on Old Testament. So students get six units of overview and another eighteen units of detailed study. So, that's twenty-four credits of a degree that's all focused in the Old Testament. And I think that's way, way beyond what most places are ever going to do. And it's why we changed the name of our degree. It's not just biblical studies. It's more than that. There is a lot of advanced study in it.

14:30 MH Yeah, I want to chat further about the curriculum and the vision behind the curriculum that we have. And it would be fun to get Ernesto's take as a student because he was a student here. But before we jump into that, I want to tease up this whole idea of accessibility and affordability because I think it's something. And I hope this isn't too bad of a word to use, but it's a bit of a scandal how expensive education is. It's out of reach for a lot of people. I remember when I was 18 years old and finishing high school. I didn't really know what I wanted to do, and most 18 year olds don't know what they want to do and yet we ask them to spend an exorbitant amount of money investing in a career path that they'll end up changing their minds about later. And I found myself at 18 getting admitted into a private Christian school. I ended up not going with it, and I don't quite remember why I didn't, but I suspect that the finances were going to be way too steep. I don't remember thinking that, maybe I'm projecting that, but looking back I'm thankful I didn't go with that. I ended up going to a community college at first for a couple of years. And just looking back, had I gone to that particular school, I would've been neck into debt. That probably would have hindered graduate school and a whole lot of other things. Even family – getting married not too long after that. And that would've just paralyzed us. I don't think scandal is too much of a word here to use because a lot of young people are going into tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. And we are talking even of those who are getting a biblical education. I think for us, and I'm not trying to speak for any one of you guys, but I get this feeling that in any one of our conversations and meetings, for us this issue is more to it than just "hey, let's be competitive and be cheaper." For us it's a really a matter of justice almost. Like what is right. What is the right thing to do? I really wish that people could listen to our meetings and inner conversations because we really see this as a matter of righteousness and justice. Social and economic justice. I don't know – do you want to speak into that....

JW I think in general, higher education and the cost of higher education, and the way that they give out loans – that's a scandal in itself. But to me, I look at it like, we live in a capitalist country and I kind of expect that. And as much as I wish they wouldn't... and there is an ideal part of me that wish that institutes of higher education would not behave that way, there is part of me that thinks "well, they're going to do what they're going to do." But to me, the scandal is that the Christian universities are doing the exact same thing. They are participating in the same predatory behaviors. Not all of them – clearly there are some that aren't. And I'm not saying we are the only ones trying to do things differently, but to me that's the bigger scandal. Why aren't we as Christians trying to do thing differently than everyone else is doing? And there are all kinds of scams involved in that. I call them scams. It's almost like a game they play to get as much financial aid from the government as possible. They basically manipulate tuition prices. They charge more than they actually are really charging as a way to get more financial aid. They just play games like that. And Christian colleges play the same games. They just see it as the norm. Its normal

thing that everyone does and I think it's dishonest. And yeah, you said we almost see it as an issue of justice. And you started to strengthen that, but I would strengthen that - we do see it as an issue of justice.

Now we struggle. We've got to pay bills. That's the business side of it. There is a business side of it. But we try to keep that as inexpensive as possible so that we can pass it on to students. And of course we have donors that help supplement things as well. Our desire in that has grown. We want students in other countries to be able to afford tuition even if they live in a country where they maybe make \$50 a month. We want them to be able to afford tuition. So we have tuition that scales for people in different economic situations around the world. For us to be able to afford that as a school is difficult. But, as you know, we have chosen that difficulty. We could've chosen things that would've made it easier for us, but harder for students. And that would've cut people out. I think for the most part, we've made decisions that say, "No, we are going taken on that burden. We are going to take on that difficulty ourselves in order to make that work for students."

MH I was talking to one of our students the other day. I don't remember the context of our conversation but we were just talking about the school...I can't even remember exactly. But anyway, I made the statement of, "We try to keep costs down, because every time we raise costs that passes down either to our donors or our students. And you pay for that. That is why we really try to keep costs down as best as possible." And it's funny because especially when it comes to Christian colleges, universities and seminaries, I think it's interesting that we probably don't have this larger conversation about how money is supposed to operate within our Christian faith. When in these same institutions we teach the prophets. I mean, I don't care who you are, when you read the prophets, these guys are angry at economic injustice. You read Revelation – there is a whole chapter dedicated to the Babylon of John's era exploiting people economically, socially and everything. It is really funny how we don't think critically enough about money practices and yet still teach the prophets. (Laughs)

JW And I would love to hear Ernesto because what I was just describing for some of our international students isn't something we had at the beginning. Ernesto brought a lot of that from his past, his history, and his passion for justice in certain ways.

MH And just so people know, Ernesto... Just to lead into this, Ernesto was a student. He's a graduate of Eternity Bible College, went off to seminary, finished seminary, came back and worked. And he's now the CEO and president officially of Eternity. So he's gone from student to the top dog here. So how do you, tell us...

ED It's a real American success story. That's what it is. (MH laughs). Really, I just pulled my boot straps up and did it all on my own and that's all anyone needs to know. (MH chuckles)

MH That's right. That's right. (Tell us how that works. You didn't have to rely on anybody else. You were just very individualistic in this approach. (ED agrees)

ED Let me say something first....

JW That's sarcasm if anyone missed it.....

ED Yeah...here's another piece of it. Just in case are considering coming to this school and you are wondering... "Man that Josh guy talks a lot." Well, normally I don't go 35 minutes without saying a word in a conversation with Josh (MH laughs), but there are five things that he is really passionate about and I think biblical education is one them. I think if you ask him about rockets that might be another one. And there are two or three other things.

MH I stole this hat from Josh actually. (All laugh)

JW You're a rocket nerd too, so...yeah.

ED If you want to talk for another 35 minutes, start talking about rockets. Yeah, talking about some of the dirty money practices, I don't want to bad name...well I'll say two things. Number one, I think it's important to remember that (and none of you all were saying this), but sometimes the cogs in the machine are not aware or they are just blissfully ignorant of the bigger picture of what is actually happening. Two examples of that. I have a friend who is a full time professor – that's what they are called right? – all they do is teach classes and write stuff? – at a school that costs more than my annual salary to go to. And he is a very genuine, kind, loving guy. He loves his students. He takes them to coffee, takes them to breakfast, he has them over to his house. Him and his wife throw parties for them every year at their house. He is just a very, very kind dude, who went through school at a very different time. I don't think he's fully away of the financial pressures, and the systemic segregation, I guess you could call it, financial segregation that happens within his own institution. The students that apply that will never make it to the school because of financial reasons. But you know, him as an individual teaching his classes, I think I could call it ignorant in a sense of like, at this point if you watch the news you are choosing to ignore this problem. You're not just like "Oh, I never knew our tuition was \$120 grand." You know... you do know. There's the internet, websites, you know how it all works. But, you genuinely love these students so you end up investing time into them.

I started looking for bible schools in 2009. Maybe in 2008. Somewhere in and around there. I went to like a recruiting office where I would sit down in front of somebody. It was like a predatory deal or no deal there. There was an individual there who was trying to convince me that I could afford... I think I was working at Subway... they would say, "No you could afford this \$60-, \$70-, \$80 thousand dollar education. We're gonna get you loans, we're gonna get you this..." The most predatory, honestly, was two schools in particular in Southern California – and you could probably figure out who they are – and they were people who were telling me that I had a lack of faith, that God wasn't going to provide, because my dad had drilled in me this whole idea of don't get yourself into things you can't afford. And I'm not against people debt for their car, mortgage or whatever it is because you need things in your life. But, the idea of signing something or stepping into a process that was going to cost me \$80 or \$90 thousand dollars at the end of it because I literally had no support. I had moral support. I didn't have financial support. And even a school... I had applied to a school when I also applied to Eternity. Because this school prides itself on having zero tuition for undergraduate students...And I learned that even though I would get zero tuition, it was still going to cost me. It was mandatory that I lived in student housing for the first two years. So it still was going to be close to \$35-40 thousand dollars worth of boarding or dorm fees. So, it was like, "Well, this isn't really for me either. You guys pretend like its free but I still need a \$40,000 loan and then what do I do for the second two years of school?"

And honestly, this is why I came to Eternity. And internally we are always having this conversation. The real reason had nothing to do with the curriculum, the professors, the staff, or anything like that. It was because it was the only place I could afford to go to school. And I....

JW But those are the reasons you stayed....

ED No, that's not true. Those are the reasons I have stayed and continue to work for the school, yes 100%. But, the reasons I stayed at the school were just that I truly felt like I couldn't go anywhere else. I had this desire and this calling in my life to study the bible. Matt and Josh know this, but I worked in an orphanage for a while and I had the realization while working there that passion, desire and calling are not enough. You cannot play in ministry, you cannot....that's mean. You can't just really, really, really, really care about living a biblical life and having biblical ethics if you don't know the bible. It just doesn't work. The example I always give is, that I don't care how passionate you are about airplanes, unless you have a pilot's license, and you have your hours, and you've passed all these tests, I'm not getting in a plane that you're flying. Your passion, your desire, God's calling, Jesus coming to you in a dream when you were five years old telling you that you're going to be a pilot, I care about all that, but none of it is

enough for me to get in a plane and put my family on that plane until you've gotten through some sort of rigorous assessment by professional pilots who have all said, "Yep, this person knows how to make sure you don't die." And it sounds like cliché, but I first hand witnessed people, and not necessarily at the orphanage that I was working at. I'm not trying to call them out, but I have firsthand witnessed people who love Jesus, they were passionate, but truthfully everything they did was ran by their cultural context. It was ran by their cultural set of values and world views. And the bible and the biblical narrative and the kingdom of God had no real bearing in decision making. And that to me was a big problem. And I don't know how, but somehow my 19 or 20 year brain at the time thought I think that could happen to me. I could easily see myself falling into that trap.

I was one of the people that Josh talks about. I grew up in the church, I grew up going to different youth groups and bible studies. My mom took me to church every single Sunday and by the time I was 9, 10, 11, 12 years old then every day camp, Awanas – anything for me to be like, you know, free babysitting and I would go to that kind of stuff. And I truthfully had never read the entire bible.

29:40 JW Ernesto, the influence you've had on the way accessibilities expanded internationally, you didn't mention that the orphanage you worked at was in another country, but...

ED Oh yeah, well as people know, I didn't live in 1930, I assumed that they knew it was outside of the U.S. (laughs) Anyway, umm...

JW We don't call them orphans. We don't have orphanages

ED Yeah, yeah. So, we have this constant tension at the school. We have bills to pay, we have professors to pay, and we have staff members to pay. We also have chosen to be an accredited bible college where we are under constant scrutiny of US Department of Education and our accrediting body. And all of that comes with fees and extra hours and personnel to maintain that status with the US Department of Education. And yet, we have this semi-competing value where we strongly believe that anybody who wants to study the bible should be able to study the bible at a college level. So a very small way we do that is that we scale tuition so that students – we believe – an average person can work at an average job here in the US and should be able to come to Eternity without going into any kind of student debt. I say average on purpose. There are definitely people that I've spoken to that are not on that scale and they can't afford to come to Eternity. And every time I have this conversation or I talk to our enrollment counselors, it breaks my heart. I think why, why? Here's somebody who...well, honestly – if somebody listens to this and you have a bunch of money, I'd love to have half of it. Because I think, even just two days ago I was talking to someone who is involved in prison ministry in LA county and there is giant churches growing in prisons all across the US. I don't know if people know that. And we are trying figure out how we can bring our education to the prison system. And the truth is, you can't do that and maintain the status of ... it becomes a philanthropic effort of our school. Because prisoners, well I don't want to go into all that, but they are making \$0.13 an hour for the work they are required to do. So it's just not a realistic thing to say, \$200 a credit hour. It's not even close to accessible and yet...yeah, there's a lot of conversations with people that we have and we just realize that we want to figure out how in the world can we provide a biblical education to people who want it, but specifically with international students – students outside the US I guess I should say.

We just realized that...okay...anyone who is listening to this and you've been told that you have to pay more money for out of state tuition, it's a scam. It's not real. I mean there's reason why people make you do that. But the truth is that adding a student to one of our existing classes – we have students in Mexico, Brazil, Japan, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Emeritus (I think), Italy (MH Germany), Germany, Nepal...all over the place...Scotland...all over the place. And to be able to add those students to what we are already doing is not some sort of ten X, astronomical fee. It actually is a little bit cheaper to add them on to what we are already doing here in the US. So we are able to scale tuition in order to make that accessible to a lot of people. But honestly, there are still people who, even internationally, who have

strong English skills who would be able to go to an accredited school that is taught in, (all of our curriculum is delivered in English), but it's still not accessible. We are constantly fighting against it. And what I think I see as a distinguishing marker between us and what I witness or in conversations I have with other administrators and people at different schools is, most people just don't care. If its money. At the end of the day it's just money. At the end of the day, our students in Nepal pay \$7 a credit hour. It's not worth it.

All their mission statements will say things like, "We desire to train the Kingdom of God to better biblical literacy", or something stupid like that. And what they should say is, "We desire that anybody who can give us a bunch of money to do so, and we will give them a degree at the end." And that's obviously harsh. And again, I have friends who are genuine kind, passionate, loving people within those systems. But it's just a dirty thing that happens where at the end of the day, admittance to college, how fast you have to go through a program, how many people they let into particular programs, the fake-false scarcity narrative, the admissions cut-offs, the college acceptance things that go viral on Tik-Tok "Oh, I got into this school or I didn't get in and I'm crying.", SATs, ACTs – at the end of the day, it's really all about money. It's not about education, it's not about changing people, it's all about how can we squeeze the most amount of money out of the most amount of people as possible. And again, to caveat with 17 nice people involved, but the rest of them...nah, just kidding. There's probably more than that. (Laughs). But, it's so crazy. As we've been in the belly of the beast for a little bit, it turns out you don't really need to charge the crazy, astronomical prices that most Christian, to echo Josh's point, that most Christian universities are charging. It's just not necessary, at all.

Unfortunately you can't do it for free and still have professors who have proper credential and have gone to school. But it's like this self-serving system. Part of why we have to pay professor what we do is because it cost them so much to get the degrees that they got.

MH It's almost the same as like, I don't know, the medical industry in some respects. It costs so much to get trained... So just thinking broadly speaking because as you mentioned and this is what I was thinking too, the systemic nature of how this works, because there are legitimately good people within those systems. And we can think of examples from our own life. I can think of things from my own life where I might have had good intentions of doing something, but the doing whatever it was, was part of something that I look back on and think, 'that thing that I was a part of, I don't know if it was a good program to be part of because there was things built into that program that weren't healthy. But my intentions were good and I genuinely love the people that were within that program or system.'

But I think...and this is something that we talk about too, that we are not suggesting that we have it all together, we've got it all figured out. We are constantly learning and thinking, and looking back and saying well that probably wasn't helpful so let's shift focus and strategy. And everybody else is doing the same thing in their own context. But the question of money – never mind higher education, Christian higher education, but just money in the church. Money and western Christianity, I should say. You don't see this in China where the Christians are struggling to survive. For us, in the western context, can we build a big sanctuary that costs a hundred million dollars or something, or whatever it is.

The problem with having this conversation about money, is that inevitably we want to have those caveats, we want to say those things but we feel like we need to have the conversation for us to grow as people, as an institution, but for others to think about too. But it makes it hard to talk about because I think what we are suggesting is that the relationship between Christians in the western world, in your context and my context, the relationship between Christians and money is just fundamentally unhealthy. And it's like getting cancer diagnosis from your doctor. That's never an easy conversation to have. It opens the doors to lots of anxiety and all these sorts of things. And yet, we need to be loving enough to have those conversations and be willing to give a diagnosis that isn't comfortable if that is legitimately the truth. And I know for me, I think I know how you guys feel about this, but I know for me when I start thinking about the way churches and Christian organizations use money in the western world, I get not only cringed out by that, but I also get angry. It makes me really angry because I just where that money could go to and



how it could be used to help people practically. Anyway, just setting the tone for people here. People are listening and thinking, “man they are really coming down hard on this”, just understand the context of it all. Because we can’t not talk about this weird relationship between money and biblical education. Like Ernesto was saying, if we want to employ people to do this, we have to pay them. We have to charge for it. And I tell people this all the time. In our conversations, we’ve had a whole meeting and talks about this – about how can we give away more free stuff and how that’s a healthy thing to do. And it’s always that fine needle we have to thread, but nonetheless, I think this is what helped me fall in love with Eternity Bible College eight years ago or whatever it was.

ED/. The other thing is that maybe we can sound passionate or that we are coming down hard, it’s because we’ve seen the detrimental effects that it’s had on people and the ripple effect into the Kingdom. When you see people that wanted to be missionaries, that was their hearts desire for years, and are not able to. Or you see people who do go to the field and they don’t actually know the bible. Just the...destruction may be too strong of a word for some of them, but the lack of fruit that’s going to be there because of it. And I think that’s the kind of passion that drives us. It’s a little bit of the frustration over the consequences and....

All agree

JW Something I would like to add, both from what Ernesto was saying and what you were just saying there. I teach a class on theology of work and vocation. I’m very passionate about that subject. Mainly because I worked as an engineer for years and never really felt like I was taught what it meant to be a Christian engineer. So it was part of what drove me. And along the journey about learning about theology and work and vocation, I met a guy that was a very wise business man and taught on that in various kind of informal contexts. And he said that the thing that happens is that every industry has lies built into it. It has foundational lies. And he called them lies and at first I thought that was too strong of a word. But he said that the place where they get hidden is in the assumptions. Because when they are in the assumptions you never even stop to think about them.

And so when we think about higher education and things that happen, what’s so hard about these conversations is that we are questioning assumptions that people never even question. They never even stop to think about those things. That there are these lies built in at that very foundational level. And those are very hard to confront and deal with because they are at a lower level of thought. They are beyond and where you don’t really think about them which is why they are so pernicious and evil. Because you just live – and I would just suggest for everyone that’s just a reality of all kinds of areas of our lives. It’s in the assumptions that you’ve got to go back and look.

And I’m thankful that at the beginning of the school, we had people that were questioning some of those assumptions. And that has led us to be people that constantly question some of those assumptions. But at the same time, like Ernesto said, there are good people - it’s at the level where they aren’t thinking about it. And the reality is that the three of us have assumptions maybe about something other than education where we are doing the same thing.

MH Yeah, right.

JW And we acknowledge that. It’s just that we feel like maybe the Lord has opened a little bit of the window to be able to see in this area. A place where this lie is being detrimental to the Kingdom of God and we want to help expose it and bring about something else.

42:55 MH That’s a really good point to make is that. We’ve had meetings where we talk about, “Hey, let’s go talk to this person and treat them as a mentor because they’ve have been in the college administrative field for a very long time and maybe we can learn from them.” Not maybe...we know we can learn from

them. So we've had sit-downs and we talk to other people. And we are learning from other people who have different assumptions than us because we are blind to our own assumptions too.

And perhaps this is a good segway. I think that captures the heart and DNA of our curriculum and the way we teach people – always ask questions. Ask questions that put your own assumptions to the test. And I think that whole idea is embedded in our curriculum from year one to year four. And it goes back to something you said awhile back, Josh. And I'm going to butcher this but it captures what you said. You said something like, "A lot of people go to Bible College just to get reinforced in what they already believe." But that's not our ethos at all. We want people to question. And many will look at us and say, "why are you doing that?" or, "Why are you making your students read this, that or the other?" Do you all want to speak to that? And speak to our curriculum. Why is important to teach our students how to think and ask questions? Because we challenge our students who come from whatever background. They will read stuff they are going to disagree with, for sure.

JW I feel people...well, one way to say it is, I think people who have the right answers for the wrong reasons, is still not a healthy thing. Because eventually those wrong reasons will get exposed and then they are not going to be sure what they believe. So, I think it's better to question and break down those bad foundations and build those new foundations. I think about it like a house that's been built on a bad foundation. The house may look great but eventually the house is going to fall down. So you need to go back and start again at the beginning. So we certainly push students to question things that they've assumed about the bible and various things. And we expose them to different ways of thinking because the reality is that all of us make assumptions. We come from our specific context. We make assumptions that we don't know we are making about the biblical text - about all kinds of things which leads us to wrong conclusions. And at the end of the day, I would say, we would all say, we are all seeking truth. And that requires an acknowledgement that we don't currently have it. And so we pass it on to students because some of them come in thinking they already know everything and they are just here to get a certification so they can go and do something. As opposed to saying, "I feel like I know some things, but I also want to build some foundation. And I also want to find out if there are things that I believe that are wrong." And it's really just a matter of seeking truth. And not just truth in an intellectual sense, but truth that will then change the way that they live. We talk about biblical knowledge isn't true knowledge isn't true knowledge until it leads to some kind of implication in your life. If you haven't been moved and changed by an idea, then you don't truly know it. As you much as you might be able to say it, if it hasn't changed your life, you don't know it yet. That's, I think, biblical knowledge. So, that's what we are seeking in terms of helping students.

And there's this whole biblical stream with biblical studies, and biblical theology and forcing them to read stuff that they haven't read before and look at it with fresh eyes. But there is also a whole stream of understanding people, which incorporates history, and cultural anthropology, and things like that. How do we understand people and the way that people think about life which helps us realize how we are thinking about things, but it also helps us to then better understand people that we haven't understood before. Because there is an awful lot, in my opinion, right now one of the biggest problems in the world we live in is that people don't know how to empathize or understand people that maybe they don't agree with on the surface. And they don't have the ability to dig underneath and find out what's causing that and where is that coming from and how can we be able to engage and build bridges as opposed to just burning the bridges of people we don't agree with. Ernesto, I don't know if you want to add to that.

ED Yeah, I'd like to clarify a little bit something Josh said. It's kind of crazy that people come to Bible College and maybe they've been a Christian for 10 years, 9, years, whatever...5 years, their whole life, whatever, but then the assumption is just when you move into a house or an apartment, whatever, the assumption is that the skeleton of this thing or the foundation – everything is fine. I've never bought a house, but guarantee I wouldn't if they told me right away, "Just so you know the entire bottom of this house is eroding and at any moment it could fall and your entire family could die." That doesn't sound very smart. But people come in just assuming. I think I came in just assuming. I mean I was a missionary

and people gave me money to do that. So obviously, I was pretty good of a Christian, right? But, you do realize...the clarification I would give, is that it is also a little arrogant of schools to say hey, "Give us four years and we can deconstruct all of the bad things that every possibly existed in your student/child's mind. And in that same four years we will build a Christian foundation that is firm that they know what they believe, that will no longer have questions and the world will no longer affect them. And they are going to be Christians for the rest of their life. Just send them here." And that is marketing language that gets used in Christian universities and Christian education. And I think what we do, is clear out the crap, the foundation... We rip out a bunch of things and we start to teach people how to use tools. We start to teach people what the materials look like. We start to...and then we are about most of the way through teaching them how this thing is going to look and then we send them on their way. And we don't claim to be able to rebuild literally everything.

It's indicative in...well, I don't know what that word means. I don't know if it's indicative. It can be seen in the fact that we don't do systematics. A lot of systematics is trying to, at least from my perspective, and Matt might tell me I'm wrong, is trying to take everything that the bible has to say and say, "Okay, what does it say about this one little thing right here?" And that like an answer. And now I know what the bible says about this things. And we don't do that. All we do is make sure they are very aware of the landscape. Very aware of the biblical story. Here is how all these different pieces of the bible work together. But we really are trying to set students up for a lifelong relationship with the scriptures, with the church, with the story of God, so that they have the ability to build different foundations and slowly rebuild what it is that they believe about God, the Spirit, men and women, the church and all these different things. Because it's just craziness to try a complete, to claim that you have some kind of magic sauce where you can deconstruct and reconstruct a lifelong faith somehow.

Like, in four years you are going to insure that this person, you send them to our college and they are going to get a communication degree and guess what, they are never going to walk away from the faith. And really, as I've talked with Christian parents, and I am in a community where I have kids going to college, there is this fear tactic of what is going to happen when my kids go off into the world? And when somebody can recognize that fear. This is what they teach you in secular marketing. You know, pinpoint the fear point and then figure out how your product somehow, whether it's a surgery for your belly that it's never going to get big again, or put this security system on your house and nobody can ever break into your house and hurt your family, or send your kids to a Christian college and I promise you that 99.9% sure that they are not going to walk away from the faith. And with genuine concern, obviously, parents don't want their kids to walk away from Jesus. But I'm sorry, there is not an education, not even Eternity's, that can guarantee that your kids are going to continue to love Jesus and to be part of his kingdom for the rest of their lives. And the fact that it is kind of sold that way sometimes it's another little weird, I don't know...it's an assumption I guess. Like what Josh was saying that everybody is like, "Well, if I just send my kids to this school, obviously they are going to remain Christian"

JW You might not like this analogy, but it's funny to me that they think they can do better than Jesus, because you know, Judas was there three years with them and he betrayed him so...

MH Even he got his bachelor's degree and he...

JW Yeah if he would've gotten his bachelor's degree then he wouldn't have...

MH OHHH, because he only went for three years.

JW Yeah, he only went for three years.

ED Yeah but he got paid, right?

MH ohhh (laughs)... you know, I think to describe kind of what you guys are talking about and I sense this as part of the ethos of the school. That we treat scripture as a doorway into a journey with God, and some people treat scripture as a weapon to beat up on people who don't agree with them. We often see scripture used, in churches for example, churches often employ scripture polemically. It's for the purpose of defending your particular version of your particular denomination, of your particular tradition of Christianity. But for us, we want to do things slightly differently. Yeah, we understand that scripture does give answers and we look to scripture for answers. We all do that and I get all that. But scripture is also a world in and of itself to be explored. And we want students to come into that world and not be afraid to ask the questions, not to be afraid to express fears and doubts, not to be afraid of any of that. And I am just curious in terms of...well maybe this is a good segway.

We are not associated with a denomination. Not that we think denominations are inherently wrong or anything like that. Maybe explain the eclectic nature of our faculty and student body. We don't have just Baptists. We don't just have Anglicans or Presbyterians. We have a wide variety of...even in some of our classes we have two professors. One who's teaching and one who's interacting with students. And those two professors can be from completely different tradition with completely different views about whatever is being taught. So why is that healthy and what does that model for the church? Why is it important?

JW Well, I would say this. It's something that has grown. When we first started there wasn't a lot of theological diversity among our faculty. Maybe a little more among our students but not as much. But as we've grown and especially as we've started an online program we were able to draw faculty from a much broader area, geographical area. So you have more choices. In my time as academic dean, I've tried to be very intentional about expanding that because I've seen that for our students, it's much more beneficial to hear different perspectives of something. I tell people that as much as you can, you should try to travel to other cultures. Because you learn the things that you are assuming. It just teaches you a ton about yourself. It's like when you learn a second language. If English is your first language, when you learn a second language you learn a lot more about English, too. So, the same thing happens with experiences and people understanding the bible. It's a cliché that truth is like a diamond with many facets, but that's what you start to get when you are in a class with a professor from a certain background, students from various cultural and theological backgrounds. All of that starts to cut away some of the assumptions and shows you different ways of looking at things. In my life experience, at this point in my life, I've realized how many things I assumed but found out later weren't true. But I wish I would've found those things out earlier. So whatever we can do to help students find those things in their life – and we don't know what they are, right? When students come in we don't know what their assumptions are and what they are thinking. So as much as we can expose them to people that think differently than them – and obviously within all of this there is bounds for this. And everything we are saying about question everything, we are not exposing them to anything and everything possible. There is...

MH All of our teachers believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

JW Yeah, go read our statement of faith. We are (inaudible) Christians. It just helps them see different ways. I look back and I am just so thankful this has happened in my life. So, I want that experience to happen for students. The sooner the better. Faculty grow and change. One of our faculty has been here since the second semester of the school and still teaching. But he doesn't teach the same thing he taught back then, because he's grown, thankfully. We should all be growing and maturing and this is part of the process. Ernesto, do you want to add to that?

ED Yes, I do. I'll give you an example from yesterday. Yesterday I talked to somebody who went to a, I will try not to reveal it, went to a two year bible program that is denominationally bound. And they went to that program because they grew up in that denomination and they wanted to go to a bible college. He spoke with us before he went to this program, but he chose to go there because his whole world was that denomination. That's where he grew up, where all of his friends were, that was his perspective work, job, and church planting was all in this denomination. So he went to this denominational school, he

finished and then got married to someone not from his denomination. Then they moved to a city where now they are attending a congregation not from the denomination that he grew up in. And he is realizing that he spent two years of his life at this school and maybe 10-15 years of his life being indoctrinated, but maybe that's a bad word... He was being taught to follow in the footsteps of this particular denomination. And the bummer with all that is that our denomination doesn't care about A, B, and C. And so because they don't, he doesn't even know how to talk about these things. It's always just assumed that we believe this thing for these reasons. And he is realizing that other people don't.

The mantra that I always say about Eternity is that we strongly believe that there are Jesus loving, bible believing Christians all over the world who think very differently about things. And if you are a Jesus loving bible believing Christian you should be able to fit at our school. Whether that's professors, to staff to students. Anything outside of that, within reason I suppose... I don't want to make all-encompassing statements, but anything outside of that, we should be able to agree that we are family, we are brothers, we love Jesus and we are all trying to seek truth through scripture. And at the end of the day, to divide over those small little things, or to decide that somehow you are a third cousin version of the kingdom of God because what... because we disagree on when I'm going to get zapped to heaven or something like that. It's just so silly, so silly that we have caused division. And, from a *Screwtape* perspective, it seems intentional. It seems intentional on the enemy side to cause such weird factions and divisions between Christians when people are afraid to tell their parents that they don't know if Job was a literal person. Like that kind of stuff. They are afraid that somebody is going to find out that they have a female professor at school. It's like, "Are you serious that is where we're at?" Yeah... I don't know. I could talk about that for a long time.

JW I think it shows how fragile that system is. When you think you are going to lock in your child's salvation by indoctrinating with these things and holding it there. That will only work until it's exposed to the world.

ED Yeah, exactly.

JW And I don't mean the world in (inaudible). But I mean the world to other ideas, to other thoughts. It's going to break down some of that. And it's either going to harden those walls and then they can never learn anything new. Right? I mean we know people like that. Or, one little piece is going to fall and they are going to throw the whole thing out. And we know people like that too. And so hopefully, if you can teach people to take pieces out and put new pieces in, it and adjust pieces, then they can move through life and continue to grow.

1:01:50 MH Yeah, I think this is a problem in sectors of Christian higher education. I heard one story that somebody was telling me this. Their daughter was attending a Christian university. And in one of her classes she was exposed to, I don't know what it was, theistic evolution or something like the flood was local and not necessarily global, which those are scholarly positions. Not every scholar is going to hold to that, but many do. If you are familiar with biblical studies, you are going to know that most scholars are not going to hold to global flood. But it was interesting because the parents were so livid. They called one of the higher ups at the school and pushed back majorly on that. And it was kind of a scuffle. I don't know how that was resolved. It's none of my business. But what was interesting is that they assumed that their views were just going to be reinforced. But that is not education. That is indoctrination. Education gives us space and others to express their views on this. And it's loving enough to allow them to listen. The funny thing is you don't have to believe it. I mean she didn't have to believe those things. But I don't think that's the fear these days in today's Christian world. It's not that we are being forced to change our minds, it's that we are being forced to listen to another opinion. And I don't think that's healthy. I think we should be slow to speak and quick to listen.

JW And that choice says a lot about the parents too. The parents have been taught something. This is something that gets passed down. Like, "I was taught this." Being taught which things are first order

doctrines. You know, if you lose this you lose everything. The slippery slope argument. There might be people who are listening and hearing you say something about a non-global flood and their cackles get up and think, "How could you...?" We shouldn't get...it's like our truth is so fragile. And that's what's weird to me. It's like they have to protect it so much. I mean, if it's true, you don't have to protect it or be afraid of other views out there.

And I just want to say, practically, one of the things we do in order to help with that, is we want students and faculty because they should be able to model this, but we want students to be able to articulate positions they disagree with in a way that the other person will be able to...you know the person that holds to that will be able to say, "Yes I believe that". Instead of straw manning they call that steel manning. You should be able to create a solid argument for the argument that you disagree with. And I think that's a powerful thing for creating empathy and understanding and seeking truth. We really live in a world that we do flippant little things like we refer to the rapture as "zapping people", Ernesto. (MH laughs). Yeah, I'm going to call you out on that right now.

ED I wasn't talking about the rapture....

JW Oh yeah, I'm sure you weren't

ED I was talking about being struck by lightning and dying. Yeah. It was clear to everyone else so go ahead....

JW I misunderstood. But, just that ability to articulate to other people and be gracious. And a lot of that comes from truly understanding their view. And it's crazy to me that people are okay with saying I don't believe that when they can't even say what "that" is. There is so much of that in the world right now on all kinds of topics. They say, "I am so against (blank)..." And you ask them, "Can you explain that? Can you define that?" and they can't. They have just been told I'm not that, I'm against that. And to me, that's a problem that is bigger than just theological discussions. That's a problem in our current societal structure. You talk about social media and magnify that and all kinds of things. But as Christians we ought to be a people who aren't afraid to engage in different discussions. If we really believe that what we believe is the truth, then we shouldn't be afraid. Ernesto brought it up earlier, but I think fear drives so much of this. We need to stop being afraid.

MH I think when I do bible prophets and the latter prophets, we talk about Ezekiel's temple. There is a range of views on that. Is it symbolic or literal? And I don't grade my students on whether they agree with me or not. I don't agree that it is a literal forecast of a literal temple of the future. But I have a number of students who think that and they have been exposed to the arguments for that so I grade them on how well they articulate their view against the objections. And it doesn't bother me. I don't lose sleep at night because my students didn't walk away believing what Matt Halsted does. Because Matt Halsted could be wrong. And so, as a school we grade, and as a faculty we grade our students on how well they articulate those positions, how well they engage with scripture. And their answers in some ways, are just not as important. Especially when it comes to eschatology stuff, but that goes for a number of things too.

JW Matt, you may not know this story. It happened about a decade ago. When we used to have a more active blog as a school, we had two professors present two different opinions on Ezekiel's temple.

MH I do remember this.

JW It was a way to demonstrate to the world that these are the kind of people who work side by side and you can see that they have two different views, they both believe in the bible, the authority of scripture, and all that. And I thought it was fantastic, but I got a couple emails from people saying "how dare you do that. This one is right and that one is wrong. How dare you tell anyone this other view?" And it was kind of stunning to me.

MH That is stunning. I remember that article. I do. It was a great article. And I think there were two articles, right? One is giving one view and one another?

JW I think there were probably four posts. Two by each person. I don't remember if we went back and forth like the four views kind of style.

ED Yeah, they go back and forth.

MH Oh they do? Okay. That is a great story.

JW They probably are still available somewhere.

MH Yeah, I'm sure people can find them

JW I said a decade ago, but at this point in my life it could've been 6 years, it could've been 15.

MH Yeah, yeah. Well, just last question. Where is Eternity Bible College going? What is the future for the school? What are areas of growth that we still need to grow into? We know we haven't figured it all out by no means. That's just not the way we think. But where are we going in the future?

ED Yeah – NFTs. Click there. Link in bio, click there and we are selling NFTs of this podcast. (MH laughs) So, right now you could get... Every minute is going to be \$5,000.00 and you'll own it. It's not fungible.

MH There you go.

JW My answer is a little different. (MH laughs)

ED I'll bet.

JW We started distance education quite a while ago. We started it because of an accessibility issue. We realized that were people in churches that shouldn't leave their churches, or couldn't leave their churches, or couldn't leave their towns for a whole bunch of reasons. If someone grew up in a church, they should probably stay in there and do ministry while they got educated. Don't leave. And the reality that you have to go to certain bigger towns to get educated and you couldn't stay. And with the technological advances that we had, we said let's do this so that we can help people.

And our student body had shifted to be about 80-85% online prior to Covid pandemic changes. And with that – with Covid we obviously went fully online for a while and decided we weren't going to go back to anything else. So we have become a fully online school. We certainly lost something in that. Like with most things you lose something, you gain something. There are the pros and cons. You weigh them and try to minimize the cons. So we've been trying to do that and it's helped us actually to be fully online. It has helped us to focus on the online students even more instead of just the 15-20% that we saw right in front of our faces. Because it's easier to focus on them.

So we are trying to mature in what it means to be fully online and to bring...you know the things that you miss are the conversations that you have after class, the relationship that you as a student might be able to have with a professor, go out and have coffee after class, something like that. We've lost the ability to be able to do that very informally and so we are trying to find out ways to do that better.

But in the big picture for me, like Ernesto said, if you are someone with a big chunk of money and you want to give us half of it, we've got big vision for things that we would love to see happen. I would love to

see Eternity be a school that has not only students from around the world, but also faculty from around the world. That diversity of cultural locations and theological backgrounds would only grow.

I would love if it wasn't restricted to English. Right now we do have students that English is their second language but we still require a certain base level of English to be able to things. And even to move into one more language is a big thing. You know, if we could start subtitling in a language or two, our videos and things like that. Just beginning to make moves into that accessibility word is a huge word. A huge word. And being able to open that up. And I know that as we do that because as we've done that it's taught us things about we do and made what we do better by exposing ourselves to that too.

We have found ways that some of our curriculum was very United States centric. And we've had to re-write and re-do some of that. And we didn't necessarily recognize that at first until we had students in other countries make comments such as, "These lessons are kind of irrelevant to me. Apparently that's the way you think in the United States, but I don't know what you are talking about." So it made what we do better, I think.

So, I just see a vision of us just getting bigger. Size doesn't matter to us, we've never been about how big can we make it. We just want to be accessible to as many people who want it. That's just our hearts desire and it's been that way from the beginning to me. It brings me great joy to see.... You know the first time we had a student graduate that we had never met until graduation face to face was a pretty exciting moment. Some people might think that's weird, but for us that was amazing. It was a lady who was a full time mom and she had kids who were going to college. She was able to get a full bible education, but she came and walked at graduation and that was when we got to meet her face to face -you know, obviously we interacted with phone calls and emails.

MH That's a really good example because people who started their jobs, they've got families, there is no way they are packing up to move. I mean just financially. There is no way I could do that. So why should you? That's just one of those assumptions we've made in terms of western education that we have to stop and ask. Is that a biblical assumption? Is that something we have to do? Well, no we don't. We could take it to them. And they could get a good degree.

JW We do have to note there is a down side. The kind of personal discipleship that you can have when you are in the same location is amplified when they are there face to face. And you can't do as much when via zoom. Technology has gotten a lot better. And I am very thankful for the technology we have and we try to make use of it. We acknowledge the cons and just try to avoid them.

MH Right, right.

JW Ernesto, do you have anything to add about where things are headed?

ED Yeah, I just think for some reason my whole life I've been involved in ministries that their whole purpose is to not exist. So that's been an orphanage – you know, you don't want orphanages anymore. My family does foster care, and hopefully something happens where you don't need foster care anymore. And biblical education is the same thing. We are a para church organization. We have come alongside the church to help the church fulfill her mission in being and making disciples of Jesus. And technically I guess we shouldn't exist. For hundreds of years there weren't bible colleges and seminaries. But there is starting to be this gap within the church and within biblical theological education and so groups of people stepped up and said, "alright, we are going to help fill this gap because is not a plate we are willing to let fall and break." This is something that has to happen. Our desire to bring biblical education and make it accessible to whoever wants it, I would love – I don't think I'll see it in my lifetime, but I would love to see a day where it's no longer needed. Where people have been trained and brought up in their church. And where we have equipped and trained pastors and ministry leaders, and church planters and missionaries and all that kind of stuff to the degree where they can now walk their people through the



story of the bible and where they can expose their people to “this is what Jesus loving, bible believing, Christians think” around the world. And we are just not there yet. And I don’t think we are super close which is why I think it will take beyond my lifetime to get to that point, but that’s the goal. The goal is that we are able to provide this extremely valuable, necessary art of Christian discipleship to support the church for as long as it’s needed.

MH That’s awesome. Well guys I just want to say thanks for hanging out. I learn a lot from you guys and I know I’ll continue to do so. It’s a privilege to have you as my colleagues and I know it’s a privilege to have me as your colleague (MH laughs).

JW Thank you for saying that. It’s a privilege to for you to know me. (MH laughs)

ED You’re my favorite person in Oklahoma.

MH Oh, dude. Thanks, man. There’s like 5 people in Oklahoma.

ED You’re in the top five. (MH laughs)

MH That’s so good. So good. Well, guys again, I thank you so much and I know our students are blessed to have you as professor. I love these conversations because they are honest and transparent. They are not superficial and we want to get to the real stuff, the meat. And I know it’s beneficial to all the listeners today about why biblical education is important. I call this podcast the Bible Unmuted because I think what happens is sometimes we have this tendency through our biases to mute certain points of scripture that we don’t like. Sometimes it’s deliberate and sometimes it’s just because we are not thinking about our own assumptions like y’all were saying earlier. So in some sense this is like bible education unmuted and those conversations are helpful. Anyway thanks guys for being on the show today.

1:17:45 That’s the end of today’s episode. And thanks again for listening to The Bible Unmuted. If you like this podcast, consider rating it on your podcast platform, subscribing to it, and sharing with your friends. You can also support the podcast by becoming a patreon member. Go to: <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted> - or simply find the link in the description of this episode. Thanks for listening. Until next time, friends.