

What in the WORLD?!

Hi guys!

Welcome to the companion for this new series on the podcast!

This series is going to be a little different to the others as they won't necessarily be week-in week-out, or even particularly structured – I'm just going to be engaging with the news and putting a Christian worldview onto it!

This week, I went to the BBC news website and just... looked at the stories there. No planning, no prep, just used my knowledge and understanding of the worldview we all hold to interpret the news in the light of Christ.

As a result, this companion will be pretty short in comparison to usual. I'm going to put the link to the article, so you can read it for yourself, and then put some notes on what I said in the podcast.

Let's get into it!

First off, something very relevant to you all – schools re-opening.

Looks like many of you are going to be wearing face masks at school if you're in an area with higher cases or in/at-risk of lockdown.

I know a lot of you might be concerned about this, perhaps a little fearful of going back to school, but there's a couple of things I want to say about this.

Firstly, we don't have a spirit of fear! That's 2 Timothy 1:7 – *“for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control”*.

We shouldn't be making decisions based on fear because, as we reviewed last time, God has a plan for our lives. We can live in these plans in good faith because we know that our future promises ultimate and eternal good – knowing and being with God.

When we make decisions based on fear, we are (deliberately or not) saying 'I don't believe God's promises for my ultimate good, so I am going to fear the future'. This is not of the spirit, and we need to address this.

It's definitely easier said than done, I can absolutely accept and agree with that! I myself struggle with not making decisions based off fear.

When Sam and I discuss big, weighty issues, we try to work out if we are being wise and prudent, sensible and conservative, or if we're being fearful and minimising God's impact in our lives through our own attitude.

The best things we have ever done, and the greatest things that have happened to and for us, have happened when we have completely given over the reins to God and asked Him to just see us through to His plans, not ours.

Again, this harks back to last week.

Secondly, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has made an interesting statement in [this article](#).

So, he's saying it's morally wrong to stop children going to school.

What an interesting statement to make! What do we think of that?

We have to ask why that might be morally wrong. Apparently we have a moral duty to

ensure kids get to school. Where is BoJo coming from here?

In this country we have an expectation that all children attend school and get an education. Why do we have this expectation?

So you know, to keep this simple we will assume we only have 2 types of rights – natural or moral rights, and given or legal rights.

Natural or moral rights are the rights we have for being humans. In America, these are known as inalienable rights – the right to life, the right to self-preservation, the right to free expression, and so forth.

Given rights, however, are the things the government says are things you must have. These can include healthcare, education, housing, etc.

Boris is working off the assumed given right to education that we operate in this country, that to deprive someone of something they have a right to is immoral.

On a Christian worldview, we don't see these given rights as true rights because they are not intrinsically given to us by God. I'm not saying a right to healthcare or education are wrong or bad, far from it, but that we can't take this as morally wrong based on that basis.

However, we also need to consider the background data for Boris' statement – he has previously said that there is a greater risk to young people and children from not going to school, because of the mental health ramifications, than from coronavirus.

So, based on this information, the immoral action isn't from depriving people from an education, but rather from putting vulnerable and defenseless people into a position in which they are to be harmed through no fault of their own.

Now *that* is a good moral case!

As Christians, we can definitely get behind this! The health, including mental health, of young people is very important. Do you think God cares about children and young people?

Let's check our Bibles:

Psalm 139:13-16 – “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works and that my soul knows well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed, and in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them”

Jeremiah 1:5 – “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations”

Galatians 1:15 – “But when He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through His grace”

We also know that when the disciples tried to usher the kids away from Jesus, He rebuked them! He said that children are important to God and welcome in His kingdom.

God is super interested in your health and your mental health.

If going to school, getting that social interaction and continuing to learn is important to your health, we can be pretty confident that God would be for us doing that!

Don't have fear about going back to school, be excited about what God is going to use this time for!

Right then, moving on, what's all [this hubbub](#) about J.K. Rowling?

Apparently she's had to return an award she won after some criticism:

“JK Rowling has said she is giving back an award associated with the US Kennedy family, after being criticised for her views on gender and trans issues”

What did she win this award for, I think that’s pertinent here.

So, [this article](#) says she won it because of her *“commitment to social change and reflect Robert Kennedy’s passion for equality, justice, basic human rights, and his belief that each of us can make a difference”*. Seems fair, I know she’s been very outspoken on feminism and what not.

Let’s have a look at why she’s had to give it back.

So, it says here she made a transphobic comment that diminished the identity of trans people.

Quote here:

“The Harry Potter writer was criticised in June for posting tweets which took issue with the phrase “people who menstruate”.

Rowling objected to the avoidance of the use of the word “women”.

Women *are* the only people who can menstruate, surely that’s not controversial!?! That’s the most basic scientific biological fact you could ever come across.

Right, I see the problem here. By saying that biological women are the only people who can menstruate they’re assuming she’s saying trans women aren’t proper women.

Okay, I’m going to try and handle this one delicately and fairly, because this is a super-charged subject.

Let’s start here then – does being transgender make you less human or less valuable?

Absolutely not. We are all made in the image and likeness of God, we all have inherent moral value, we are all fearfully and wonderfully made. Being trans, being gay, being disabled, being any characteristic does not diminish that. That’s our starting point.

Does someone believing “you can’t menstruate” make you less valuable as a human?

Absolutely not. Your worth isn’t tied to one singular biological function. If it was, women who have gone through menopause would be less valuable than other people and that just isn’t the case.

This gets us to the underlying issue here – identity.

The trans movement really is an identity movement. It’s a small (very small, less than 1%) minority of the population who believe their identity is something other than what their biological sex presents them as. Meaning women who believe they are men, and men who believe they are women.

I’m personally quite sympathetic to the transgender issue, I know the suicide rates for transgender people is exceptionally high (40% last time I checked) and any loss of life is an absolute tragedy.

But it’s also a tragedy to live a lie. Unfortunately, despite what some people will tell you, your sex is determined by your biology. Truth is important because it is of God, and lies are, by their nature, demonic.

When this foundation writes *“The science is clear and conclusive: Sex is not binary”* that is an absolute lie. Your biological sex is absolutely binary, it goes all the way down to your very genetic code, to say otherwise is a lie. Perhaps she’s using the word ‘sex’ disingenuously, as in not biological but sociological, but this is still deliberately deceitful.

And this makes me so sad because this just causes more confusion for people who are already struggling with horrible issues!

Let's tie this back to last week – what we do, achieve, own or wield is not what defines us! God defines us, our relationship with Jesus defines us, the gifts of the spirit that manifest through us define us.

Part of God's definition of us is through the gender He chooses for us, after all in Genesis we see that "male and female he created them", because those two things are key to our identity. We are created by God and we are created either male or female.

Part of God's plan for our lives includes the gender we are at birth, and until we find the identity we have as a result of this, we are going to be deeply unwell in our spirit.

People who struggle with this issue need prayer that they find their identity in Christ, not through the expression of their gender as the world sees it.

I think that's all that really needs to be said here. Pray for people who struggle with these issues, and people who are deceitful about these issues, because they all need Jesus. We all need Jesus, it's all about Jesus!

Next up, we have the sad news of Chadwick Boseman's passing at age 43 after dealing with colon cancer for 4 years. He never spoke publicly about it, instead choosing to suffer silently for 4 years.

Initially I wondered why that might be the case, but then I saw the work he has been doing whilst sick: he's visiting sick kids in hospital.

He's visiting people who are dying from the same thing that's killing him and, instead of seeking to get attention and sympathy for that, he's just making sure the only thing in focus is those sick kids.

What an amazing guy.

There's an example of a man, I don't know if he's Christian but in this instance it doesn't really matter, that we can all aspire to be like.

He doesn't take the focus from others onto him, he supports and cares for others in their suffering, he remains strong in his own suffering instead of being weak and giving into it, he gave back to the same community he was quietly a part of, and he did everything he could to ensure that the weak and vulnerable among us were happy and cared for.

Isn't that what being a bloke is all about?

I sure think so. Chadwick Boseman, I don't know enough about the rest of your life to make a totally informed decision here, but based purely off those actions you have officially made it to role model/hero status. I hope he's with Jesus now.

Moving on to something less devastatingly sad – Trump!

I might make this a weekly segment, let me know if you have a pick or a name for the segment. So far I've got:

- Trumpwatch
- Trump Call
- Trump Card
- Trump of the Week

Let me know!

Anyway, in [this new story](#), again on the BBC, we have a call-out of President Trump sneaked into what seemed to be a simple journalistic and historical piece.

You guessed it – Trump is a white supremacist, apparently.

I won't spend time on this because it's obviously absurd, but just because a person goes to a place where an atrocity against a certain race happened doesn't make them racist or a

white supremacist.

What a nightmare of a situation in American politics.

Anyway, that's enough of that for this week!

As always, don't be afraid to get into the youth whatsapp chat and let us know how you are, what you're up to and what you're thinking. Get your prayer requests ready for Thursday and get involved in our Bible study! And you can grab us on Instagram @chawnyouth.

Speak to you next week!