

"Hair on Fire?" Pt 2

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Well, let's go ahead and get started. Find a seat. I mean, just standing room only right now. So find a sea. It's a joke. It's okay. Come on. By the way, you notice my gnomes, these are my church bodyguards. I carved those this last week. They're going to go out in my garden. Maybe it'll help keep the bugs away, I don't know. Or the squirrels, huh?

[unintelligible]

Pine with two by fours which was really hard. I couldn't believe how hard two by fours are to carve because they have oil in them. So anyways, we need to pray. Remember that Lee and Pam Nichols are on their ministry trip, their mission trip right now. They do a trip every couple of months with Sowers Ministries. They go out and basically they camp for three weeks or something like that to, at orphanages or homes like that, Christian camps to help and what they basically do is help to rebuild things that need to be rebuilt and refurbished and all that stuff. And so pray for Pam and Lee. I also talked to Gary Tennyson and his wife this week and Gary Tennyson, the dementia is just getting worse, and he's right now in a nursing facility because he fell and broke his hip again. He's up in Chandler at a nursing facility, so we want to pray for Gary and Lucy Tennyson, okay? So let's pray.

Lord God in heaven, we are grateful to be able to come. We thank you for the rain you sent us this last week, but we also thank you for the sunshine and the warm weather. Lord, we look forward to this day, this Lord's day. We pray that you'd fill us up with good things. We would ask you to be with Lee and Pam and keep them safe, watch over them as they're serving where they are and pray, Lord, that the work they do would be beneficial to the folks that are there. We pray for Gary and Lucy Tennyson, that you would help them in this very difficult time of their life and season in their life. It's fond memories of Gary when he was alert and cutting hair and making silly jokes, and we pray that you would continue to help him even in this situation now to have a good disposition, and we pray for his physical recovery from the fall, and be with Lucy, she has to make decisions and guide them through it. Lord, bless us in our class today as we think about how to vet media and what to think about and bless us and guide us in this class. In Christ's name. Amen.

Okay, so we are doing a class called "Hair on Fire," question mark. And we started it last week, so just real quick. Some of the things we came to, these are just basic principles as we look into, as we're reading, listening, as we're thinking about media and so forth. And by the way, we're going to have two short videos, and so you're going to want to be able to sit where you can see and hear when we do that. I'll turn the lights off when we get there and you'll, I think you'll appreciate it.

The first thing is suspend judgment, right, just the importance of not making a judgment until you've actually validated certain things. You have to suspend judgment which means we start with assuming innocence instead of assuming guilt. We don't assume guilt first thing and this is not just the reporters or the media itself, this is the stuff reported in the reports, okay? So it's both of those. You have to have that position, be in that position. Then accusation does not mean guilt. I don't know how many times I need to say that because I see it happen all the stinking time on usually Facebook, social media, but sometimes in personal contacts, there's just automatically, "Did you see that report? You know they're guilty." And it's like, wait a minute, how do you know? You know, what do you mean? Just because they're accused does not mean guilty, okay? I gave you an example from a distant relative of mine in another part of the country. Hanlon's razor which I'll quote in just a minute, but basically is don't necessarily immediately attribute to malice what could be easily attributed to incompetence, right? I love that line. Reporters are human. They have the same foibles and limitations as you and I do. They can mis-report, they can just sheer accidents or inattention to detail, all kinds of reasons, right? And they have their own biases, just like we do and so forth.

So we validate before you palpitate and authenticate before you propagate. I'm going to stick to that. That's my line all the way through this whole thing. So as I'm putting this all together, it's actually getting bigger. It's probably going to be for sure four Sunday. Okay, so we did one last week, one this week, we'll do two more coming up. And as you interact with me and as you bring up things, some of that actually is leading me to think about I need to talk about that just a little bit more in detail. So that's part of the reason why. This is great. I don't mind at all, okay? If this is an important subject to you, because I think it should be, and you're engaging like that, then we're going to keep on going down this road just a little bit longer.

So here's Hanlon's razor: never ascribe to malice that which is adequately explained by incompetence. Actually Hanlon's razor had the word negligence down here and it was Napoleon Bonaparte is attributed as the one who put the word incompetence in there, okay? And I think either one works, negligence or incompetence. And that goes for governmental decisions to news reporting to just personal interactions. You hear that somebody said something, you know was there malice? Let's not start there. Let's start with possibly incompetence or inexperience, or lack of perspective, or just negligence, okay? It's a good place to begin.

So this is a Bible class, so we need to talk a little bit about Bible again. Exodus 23:1-3, God himself said, "You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor

shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit. " So notice that God is really intently concerned about truth, eeping the upper hand and not false reports and false and malicious witnesses or false witnesses. Okay, and so because of that, that should tell us we need to validate and authenticate, especially before we propagate, especially before we start spreading it around. We need to know for certain, as certain as we can that this is legit or this is not legit, okay? I mean, how many means have you seen that are actually being put out if you watched it on Facebook or Twitter or anything like that, that get out and say, "Well, this is what's really happening," and then you go and check it out and you find out it's not really happening or it didn't happen the way that it's being put out. It means it gets put out like news. And so it's extremely important because of scripture, because of God's own criteria that we should be caring about the kinds of reports we propagate, that they'd be genuine and authentic, that they be real or truthful, that we need to be those who validate and authenticate, okay?

And so if we end up spreading, just think about the passage, if we end up spreading a false report then, at the least, we're marrying our credibility. At the least, we mar our credibility. We're just taking up whatever report and spreading it around, then when we come to tell somebody about Jesus or the gospel, our credibility is on the line. "Well, you believe that stuff. Why should I trust you when you talk about this stuff?" Right, so it mars our credibility at the least, at the worst according to Exodus 23, we're joining hands with a malicious witness, okay? And that right there should stop anything we want to propagate and really encourage us to want to validate and authenticate. We don't want to mar our credibility, we also don't want to join hands with a malicious witness.

So Wes and I have been memorizing Titus 2:7 through 8 and I know it's for ministers, but I find it interesting that Paul tells Titus and says be an example in all respects of good works and in your teaching show integrity, dignity and sound speech that cannot be condemned so that you may put an opponent, you may make an opponent ashamed because they won't have nothing evil to say of us. And Paul doesn't just say that to Titus, he tells that to Timothy as well, that there's extreme importance of us making sure, especially as ministers, that what we're saying is legitimate, if there's integrity, there's dignity, so that what we're saying just can't be condemned as incredible or lies, or whatever. Does that make sense? So it's all the way through scripture for all of us.

So then. Here's an example. I really appreciated this, this just came up yesterday. I don't want to get into the specific subject, I just want to show you something. This is from USA Today the claim, "Ma'Khia Bryant was shot." This is the claim, "Ma'Khia Bryant was shot after approaching an officer to explain her situation." What I appreciated was that USA TODAY actually came back, I don't know if they reported this claim, that they reported it this way, but they're actually challenging this and they go back and they say, "Misation about the incident has been circulated widely on social media." Okay, and so they go through and they show two examples. One widely shared post falsely stated that Bryant was not holding a knife at the time of the shooting, and the other false account says that after she called 911, she actually approached the police, and then the police shot her four times, etc. And so they say they're actually trying to get ahold of the person that

put this one up and so forth. But I appreciate that because what they're doing is they're saying, you know, they're actually challenging maybe what's even been put out in news. If you remember what we said last week, we were reading a journalist doing a report that she gave to the Apostle Paul that said they found that journalists are using something like 30 or 40% of their material is like from social media. So imagine if those reports get out, right, and they spread and then that ends up in some new report.

So I, I appreciate USA Today challenging reporters in doing this and to us, okay? And you can imagine if those are on Facebook, how many people will just take those claims? Maybe that's part of their political agenda. It doesn't matter. But how many will take those claims and they're still out there. "Well, this is what really happened." It happens on the right and it happens on the left. Every time I get on Facebook I see it, okay? And so I appreciate USA actually challenging that. By the way, has anybody noticed how many new sources are beginning to actually have a whole fact check page on their websites or anything? If you go to Reuters, Reuters has a whole page, like they have a whole link on there and they go through and do fact checking on certain things that are becoming very popular. Yes, Sir.

[unintelligible]

I realize that, but that's where you're reading and you're asking questions, and you're saying, "Is this legit? I mean, does this sound legit, or does this sound like they're trying to cover themselves, or are they twisting something?" And so even the fact checks sometimes you need to go back and look at other sources to see, right? So good, but I do appreciate the fact that they're asking those questions and starting to put up fact check things. So even USA Today does that. It doesn't mean that they're legitimate, I mean, it doesn't mean that they're not going to be mistaken, but it's a good move in the right direction, okay?

That was just an example, kind of that validating, authenticating, and so, as we saw last week, Proverbs 18:17, "The one who states his case first seems right until the other comes and examines him." So we're all to be cross-examiners. In fact, Matthew Henry brings it up and this is from Matthew Henry's commentary. Matthew Henry talking about this verse says, "This shows that one tell is good until another is told. 1. He that speaks first will be sure to tell a straight story, relate that only which makes for him, and put the best color he can upon it so that his cause will appear good, whether it really be so or not. 2. The plaintiff, having done his evidence that is fit that the defendant should be heard, should have lead to confront the witnesses and cross-examine them and show the falsehood and fallacy of what has been alleged which perhaps may make the matter appear quite otherwise than it did. We must therefore remember that we have two ears to hear both sides before we give judgment." I love it.

Anyways, and so I mean, it's just, it's a good, it's a very good biblical principle to work at, okay, that's the statement here so now I'm going to be a cross-examiner. If the article and the subject matters that much to you that it causes you to have heart, you know, your blood pressure to rise, then you probably need to stop for a moment and cross-examine

it. Okay, does that make sense? All this is from last week but just want to catch everybody up to speed. Even Jordan Peterson, I don't know if you know who Jordan Peterson is, but that's okay. But in his book "12 Rules for Life" says, "Beware of single cause interpretations and beware of people who pervade them." I think that's extremely important. That's actually kind of what Proverbs is like, is leaning towards.

So West and I were talking one day about the Civil War, you hear lots of single cause interpretations of the Civil War. It was about slavery. It was about states rights. Those were single cause interpretations. That's too simple. There was far more going on than just those two issues. Those were just, those ended up being the main ones remembered but there were lots of other things happening as well and being able to step in there and start looking and seeing those others changes the way you actually think about the Civil War and then how you hear people that are talking about them. I'm just using that as an example.

So then the question asked, it's another principle is are there other reasonable explanations? When you're reading a news report or you're reading what somebody is putting out like that, are there other reasonable expectations or explanations? I mean, it's extremely important. If you're listening to talk radio, you're getting one perspective. That talk radio host's perspective, okay? Which is fine, but you need to ask yourself the question, stop for a moment before you have a car accident when you're driving down the road listening to it and say is there a possible other explanation that's just as legitimate? And you may be surprised that just asking that question changes what you're hearing, okay? Does it make sense?

Okay, so are there other possible reasonable, reasonable explanations? There's lots of unreasonable explanations, but is there another reasonable explanation? Take any questions up to this point before I get into where we're going for today. That was 15 minutes of review. All right. So we you talk about media angle, and I'm not talking about necessarily the bias of the media per se, but it is a perspective about angle. We need to think about angles on several different issues and I'll explain more about this as we go along, but we're going to talk first today about media angle. We're not going to have time to do the next part of the class which is media influence. We'll do that next week, but media angle. So what we need to do, we need to hear from Francis Schaeffer. Everybody remember Francis Schaeffer? Okay, this is from his video series "How should we then live?" This is just a short clip. I'm going to have to turn off the lights. You're going to have to listen really, really carefully. If you can't hear, then move up, okay? But this was really pretty cool.

[unintelligible]

Now watch and listen to the angle here of the camera.

[video clip]

Narrator: Frank Bushman, attorney for the young people who are to be arraigned in court tomorrow morning, pointedly remarked on this overreaction by the police.

(picture of hand turning the channel on the tv)

Police Officer: I hereby declare this an unlawful assembly.

Narrator: Late last night, disorder broke out among a small unruly mob as our guardians of the peace quietly and efficiently, in spite of extreme provocation, restored order.

Police Officer: I command you to disperse and if you do not, you shall be arrested. You have two minutes to disperse.

Narrator: It is important that our courts make an example of these hoodlums and hand out the kind of sentences they so richly deserve.

Francis Schaeffer. We staged this scene. We filmed it to show that television can tell any story that it wants to tell. In both versions, the action was the same and the actors did exactly the same things, however, the camera was placed differently. The editor edited differently and the announcer told a different story. We would be naive not to realize that what we're seeing is an edited symbol, but the nature of tv is such that we see it with our own eyes that we naturally look at it as though it were objective truth. For many, what they see on television is more true than what they see with their eyes in the external world.

Let me stress it is always unfair to say the media does this or the press does that. There are always individuals or individual publications, for example, that are not included in the generalization, but the mass media can be used by an authoritarian manipulating government or an elite. The elite gives the arbitrary absolutes and then not only tv but all the mass media can be used for manipulation and a plot or conspiracy are not needed. All that is needed is that the people in the places of influence and those who decide what is news have in common the modern results of humanism, the modern worldview which we have considered at length in this series. When the perspective, the worldview of the elite, coincides with some of the influential news carriers, it does not have to be all, then either consciously or unconsciously the media becomes an instrument for manipulation
[end of clip]

So as you were watching the camera angles, it was the same incident, what did you notice? If you could see it, I mean, I realize it was dark and it's on a big screen and everything else.

[unintelligible]

Yes, in fact, did you notice the one camera shows the girl screaming as she's being handcuffed and brought to the police car and she's put in police car. The second camera angle shows the policeman hit with chalk or whatever and he's down and then you see this touching moment where the one police officer is comforting the one who's fallen, right? So it's just you can turn off the commentary, just the camel, the camel angle, right? The camera angle actually has its own, is its own message, okay? So think about that's what kind of what I'm thinking about media angle. It actually presents it. Then, of course, you heard the announcers and they have their own issues and stuff like that.

What else did you notice?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah, yeah, right. There's all camera angle, right?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah. That's good. That's a good observation. The lighting was something, okay? Yes?

[unintelligible]

Hey, listen, I remember turning the channels that way. I remember click, click, click. I mean, that was pretty cool. There's no street violence, I heard that.

So, so it's really helpful when you think about that and his analysis at the end was very, extremely helpful. There's no need for a conspiracy or plot, right? It's just the mindset of those who actually are whatever, whether they're academics or they're the chief editors, it's that his big concern at the time was humanism specifically and we would probably, and we would go along with that with secularism and so forth as that becomes the reigning mindset and it's being led, then that becomes the reigning mindset, okay? I think that was extremely helpful too just listening to that.

All right, let's go to the next one. You ready to go to the next one? We've got one more video. Are you ready? So you think about angle, right? Think about the angle of the camera when you watch this next one. I hope you laugh your heads off at the next one.

Uh-oh, internet. Come on, internet. There we go.

[video clip]

The correct answer is 16 passes. It is fun, people realize.

[end of video clip]

Who saw the gorilla?

[video clip]

For people who haven't seen or heard about a video like this before about half miss the gorilla. If you knew about the gorilla, you probably saw it. But did you notice the curtain changing color or the player on the black team leaving the game? Let's rewind and watch it again. Here comes the gorilla. And there goes a player and the curtain is changing from red to gold. When you're looking for a gorilla, you often miss other unexpected events. And that's the monkey business illusion.

[end of clip]

Okay. Thank you. That's so funny. I love that video, unintentional blindness, okay? So you're busy looking at one thing that you're focusing on. They told you what to focus on, the passes, and then some of you missed the gorilla. Everybody who caught the gorilla, how many of y'all saw the person wearing black leave the stage? One. Feels kind of iffy. How many of you saw the curtain changing color during all that? Yeah, couple of you did. Have you seen it before? Well, that no fair! I've watched this four times this last week trying to think about how to do this in the class, and I could not help but see all those things, right?

But notice that that I've guided your attention to one thing or actually Daniel Simmons, who put this together, guided your attention to one thing and with your attention being focused on one thing, you become blind to other things, okay? So thinking back to Francis Schaeffer, the angle of the cameras and all of that, it does focus you in one place, but then it left out all these other possibilities and you're so focused you may not have seen some of these other things that might change the way you actually perceive what's going on. Does that make sense?

So that unintentional blindness is really important to remember and media angle. Oops, there we go. So as you think about this, so as you have this information talking about media angle and all that we saw with Francis Schaeffer and intentional blindness, as you have this information in mind, how does it help you when seeing live newscasts, YouTube broadcasts, and so forth? How does angle and unintentional blindness and so forth, how does that impact you or help you as you're watching live newscasts or maybe YouTube broadcasts or whatever they are?

[unintelligible]

Looking for the gorilla.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, likely they're just as blind as everybody else is. That's the thing, what's so interesting is how often they themselves miss things, okay? But you're the cross-examiner. You don't have to be mean about it, but you're the cross-examiner and so you

start questioning, "Was there something I was missing in that live newscast or in that video? Is there something I'm missing? Is there's something that's not even being filmed?" Okay, I'll explain that in a minute. Were you going to say something?

[unintelligible]

Right, right, right. And that's why we cross-examine because we're the one bringing in and asking that question is there something else? So that's a good thing to always ask, okay?

So in what way should this impact our response, for example, to phone videos that prove accusations of guilt and get posted all over social media, news reports and so forth? I mean, phone videos have exacerbated situations, okay, because they say, "We have proof. This is what happened," whatever it is. So thinking about what you just saw from Francis Schaeffer and then that unintentional blindness, what's the first question maybe you ought to ask? Huh?

[unintelligible]

Content? Context. What do you mean by context then?

[unintelligible]

Okay, so before and after because this is not just like drops out of the air. There's other things going on. Very good. What else? What other questions. Yes?

[unintelligible]

Yes, the viewpoint. If I'm doing, I mean, think about it, go do a camera video if you've got one on your phone. You know, just video Joe and Elizabeth for a minute, right? And don't video anybody else. Just video them. You're leaving out all these other things, and if Joe starts talking to somebody but you don't know who he's talking to, he could be talking to himself. He needs to go see Bill, right? I mean, whatever, right? So just because a camera, the picture is cutting out everything else and focusing you here but just knowing that means you need to suspend judgment. First principle, suspend judgment. It may not be everything that's in the video, or exactly what you're supposed to think is going on in the video. There may be more going on. There may be far less going on than what's being put out there in the visual. Does that make sense?

What are some other questions you need to ask? Yes?

[unintelligible]

Yes, right, right. It's just like the two videos that Francis Schaeffer was doing where you have a commentator telling you what you're supposed to be seeing in the video. So suspend judgment. You need to authenticate and validate before you propagate, okay?

You've got to do that. We cannot, there's been some PCA ministers who have come out on Facebook and just said really, really tough things and it's like in one of my talks that you don't know that that's the fact. "Well, I saw the video," he said. That doesn't mean diddly. It's a video. It could be valid. It could be invalid. You know, you've got to have authentication before you come out and start saying all these things, and he had to actually agree with me and stop and just rescinded what he was doing. But it's really important that we do that. So if you think about that, you don't make a knee-jerk decision based upon a video, even if it's put on news media or social media. You can't. You have to stop and start asking questions. But if you don't ask questions, then you may easily be misinformed at the least, manipulated at the worst. Does that make sense? Yes?

[unintelligible]

Right. Right. Yes, it's from somewhere, yes. Are you following? Yes.

[unintelligible]

Did you all hear what Bob said? So the editors do edit the videos because they're looking for usually, oftentimes they want you to stay in tune, right? It may not even be any malice. It's just they, and we'll talk more about this probably next week when we talk about media influence.

[unintelligible]

Well, Frankie Schaeffer went Eastern Orthodox and repudiated his parent's faith and then he left Christianity altogether. He had issues for a long time.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah. All right, so here's the third question: describe healthy perspectives. We already started doing this. Describe healthy perspectives one should have and hold some positions once you take when viewing visual media. So we're asking questions. We're starting to ask, you know, are they editing the video just to get our attention? Is there another angle? Is there more to this story than just what is being visually put out there?

[unintelligible]

With a grain of salt, suspend judgment. Very good. All right. Are you ready to move on? Hey, Mike, I was ready to move on five minutes ago. Come on. So media angle, what other media venues, what other media venues should you apply media angle perspective to? Think of, for example, I've given you some here, you could add some but how about print media? Does print media have a media angle when they do pictures and they recount stories? It doesn't have to be malice, there's probably not always malicious there in any way, but they have a perspective, right? They have an angle they're coming from, okay? So you can ask that question: okay, what's the angle of the visual, usually there's a lot of times there's pictures in there, what's the angle of the picture? What's it leaving

out? And then the stories, they recount the story, right, is there something they're leaving out and so forth?

Radio news, the same thing there, asking, we've got to ask those media angle questions. Radio talk shows where the radio talk show host out of one side of their mouth says they're giving you the news, but then out of the other side of their mouth they turn around and say, "Oh, but this is just entertainment." I remember one big talk radio show host would always put himself forth as putting out the news and then when he'd have a caller come on who would blow up and tell him how terrible he was and how this was, how the person was thinking about committing suicide or whatever, he would immediately start laughing and go, "Why would you believe me? This is just entertainment." I thought that was always kind of chicken approach of his. But how does the media angle impact the way you listen to talk shows?

How about podcasts, blogs, YouTube, Vimeo? Is that how you pronounce that one? Yes?

[unintelligible]

Right, right, right. That's good and that's exactly right. You've got that, you've got editors have their own perspective. So we talked about some I mentioned last week, sometimes it's usually the editors that put the headlines on and not the journalist, right? And things like that. So you've got multiple layers there, okay? And they could be in conflict. Well, guess who loses that battle in an article like that? It's not the one who owns the paper or the news source. It's not the editor. It's the journalist loses, right? Because it gets co-opted by these other entities sometimes. So those are good questions to keep in mind and Fox, okay.

Anybody else? Yeah.

[unintelligible]

Yes, academia, yes. In fact, Jonathan Haidt, who's an atheist, Jewish, moral psychologist wrote a book called "The Righteous Mind," and then he cowrote a book. He's probably politically a centrist and he cowrote a book with a guy who's probably on the left named Greg Lukianoff and one of the things they were pointing out was how academia is heavily weighted with political social liberals and then on top of that other, and how often conservatives and liberal professors both are actually getting hit hard. Anyone who wants an open dialogue. That was called "The Coddling of the American Mind." In fact, Bob read that one. Yeah, and it's a great book. It's very, very beneficial, very helpful.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, actually Jim said something the other day that I thought was good. He picked it up from Prager, Dennis Prager, that there's a difference between left, between liberals and leftists and I think that's a really helpful connection because I know a lot of liberals who are very, very caring about getting close to this truth as they can given their perspective,

and then there are ideologues. who are promoting ideology, and there's where you go with your leftists.

[unintelligible]

All right, so let's move on. You ready? Yes?

[unintelligible]

Right, right, right, right, right, yes. Right, right. Yes, right. And that, yeah, that may be. I mean, I think for most of them here in Oklahoma. I threw papers for the Journal, anybody remember the Oklahoma Journal? Yes, I threw for the Journal. And then when the Journal disappeared, it was only The Oklahoman so I threw for the Oklahoman. I was in 7th, 8th and 9th grade. Yes?

[unintelligible]

But I think that's a, I mean that's a good point and the statement is one of the statements you made was actually knowing their, where they're coming from. Actually, it's one of those questions you have to ask, right? So if you know that, then it helps you when you're reading it.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah. So I mean, so there's multiple layers and that's why we have to be discerning. We have to ask these questions. We've got to be cross-examiners, okay?

So let me just give you a stipulation just real quick. None of this is that I'm presenting to you am I wanting you to stop listening to your favorite commentators or radio hosts, nor am I aiming for you to discard your favorite news source. That news, yeah, I put the right word there, news source. What I'm after is endeavoring to encourage you and I, you and me, sorry, and encourage us to ask good questions of our sources and questions of ourselves from the start and before we broadcast the information. This is an old Latin phrase, caveat emptor. It means basically buyer beware. You are the buyer of that news stuff, that news information. And so buyer beware. It's the principle that the buyer alone is responsible for checking the quality and suitability of goods before the purchase is made, okay? I mean, that's exactly how you have to approach the news that you look at, is you just have to ask the right questions. You have to validate its authenticity and the legitimacy of the facts, okay? Even a biased paper, far left or far right, if you know it is, you still can read the article to profit by looking for the facts, and then go check those facts and make sure that that's legit, that those are the facts, and you make your own decision. That puts you in a different boat than someone who's just simply saying, "Oh, well, So and so said it therefore it must be true and I'm going to put it out there on Facebook," or whatever I want to do, right? You have to stop and do that. John?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Right. Right. Sure. Yeah, yeah. Right. Yeah.

All right, let's do this. Gotta bring Dan Crenshaw in here. I don't know if you have read him or if you like his politics. It's not about his politics, I really appreciate the warning. I'm going to give you two of these. I think this is extremely important. Anybody know the story of Dan Crenshaw, Navy SEAL, wounded in combat, the congressman down in Houston, far right, but this is a great book. I really, really enjoyed it and I'm on the right side too, by the way. So but it's a great book and I think he's got some good challenges for us. So here's what he says. One of the thing he says, "The basic message is this, if you're losing your cool, you are losing. If you're triggered, it is because you allowed someone else to dictate your emotional state. If you're outraged, it's because you lack the discipline and self-control. These are personal defeats, not the fault of anyone else, and such defeat shapes who you are as a person and in the collective sense, who we are as a person." He goes on later and says, "Passion successfully overrides reason and accomplishment. Who gets more attention, the public figure," and by the way, you can put anybody on the right or the left in this picture here. "Who gets more attention, the public figure who calmly sees both sides of an argument or a perceived grievance and tries to mediate, or an activist who angrily marches down the street proclaiming their righteousness? Our outrage culture is increasingly drawn to voices perceived as authentic, which is usually just another code for excessive emotion. Thoughtful argument is downgraded while fist-shaking activism is rewarded. There is an assumption that anger must be connected to righteousness, passion replaces reason, attitude, owning the libs or the cons." You know, that code language, right? "Only the Liberals or the Conservatives' attitudes, only the Liberals or the Conservatives replaces the sophisticated argument." And if that's the case, if he's right and I think he is right, then the journalists are going to feed, are going to play with that, right? That's where they're going to go because this is what gets your attention. So whether it's neo-Nazis out doing this or whether it's Antifa or whoever, that's what gets the attention because that's what we pay attention to. Bob brought that up earlier that we like that violent stuff or whatever, right? And so we have to ask the question.

Anyway, before I go in for any questions or anything before I wrap this up. Yes?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, we used to have other ways of saying that in the military, but that's not fitting for here. Here we go.

So remember, suspend judgment, assume innocence both of the journalists but especially the article itself, the people that are accused in the article, right? So accusation does not mean guilt. Hanlon's razor, don't attribute to malice if it can be legitimately explained as incompetent. Reporters are human. Are there other reasonable explanations? And then lastly, ask what's the media angle. It's not to shift the blame, not to say the media is at fault, but what's the media's angle? That's all you're asking. What's the angle of this photograph or this video? What's the angle that they're writing from or whatever. And

think about, think about the monkey business, think about the unintentional blindness, the gorilla that walked in the room, right, because you're focused on one thing, you miss these other things.

So validate before you palpitate and authenticate before your propagate. There's the class for the day. Any last comments, questions, rants, raids, foot stomping?

[unintelligible]

Sure. They do. It can, and that's kind of Jonathan's Haidt's point, his analogy is the elephant and the rider. The elephant is the emotions, the rider is the reason, and usually the elephant when it sees a mouse it reacts but it takes a while for the rider to get the elephant back under control, right? That's a great analogy. I love the picture. By the way, this is a side note, it's interesting that Jordan Peterson and Jonathan Haidt and some of these others are probably on the left politically and socially, and yet they see the same things that concern you in academia. There's a whole movement afoot right now trying to reassert we need to have open dialogue and open discussion. We're really concerned about what's going on in academia, okay? And so it's really helpful fun to actually read these guys and go, "Okay, that's exactly what we're saying, but people listen to you because, you know, you've got a PhD," or whatever, right? So that's pretty cool.

Anything else before we close? Yes.

[unintelligible]

That's how we began talking about what God wants us to do. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, right. Yeah, absolutely. Okay, yes?

[unintelligible]

Yes, yes and that's a great, that's a great point and remember that when you're on social media, but also think about that with journalists because that's now the competitive realm they have to report in. It used to be one of us was talking about this last week, it used to be I might spend a whole week on an article, or two days writing an article, three days doing some investigating. Now I've got to put stuff out instantly because everybody else is putting it out instantly. We're in the instant world and it's impacting every aspect of us, but we don't have to fit into it completely. So, like, let's talk about social media. You see something to get your blood boiling. Stop, take a breath, shut it down, take a moment, walk off, go get some coffee, red wine if it's later in the day, whatever, okay? Don't do it first thing in the morning and then then maybe do your validating, then come back and rethink it, okay, and then see if you want to go that way.

[unintelligible]

Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, good. So remember, ask questions. That's a big thing. Ask questions, okay, and actually start looking at things with that idea of taking time to

actually work through that. If it's something that really, really gets your attention and gets your blood boiling, you need to stop and suspend judgment. Go back and start authenticating and validating and all that stuff.

Okay. So before we end, just real quick, that's it. I had a thought and it's gone, so let's pray.

Well, God in heaven, thank you so much that you have blessed us with with guides, with help in situations like this. We thank you for the legacy of Francis Schaeffer and what he tried to do. We thank you, Lord, for even voices that aren't believers that are starting to see what we've been saying all along and seeing it and seeing it clearly even doing scientific studies that show exactly those things for them. We pray, Lord, that you would help us, that we would be a very wise people, our hair would not be on fire when our society maybe the hair's on fire everywhere else, that we would be very sober-minded. Lord, prepare our hearts right now as we get ready to gather into the great assembly to worship you, to fill us with your Holy Spirit that we may sing and rejoice together, that we may make melody in our heart to the Lord, that we may serve one another and serve you in worship, Lord. We pray that you would bless us in Jesus' name. Amen.