

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 302

Bearing God's Name

December 15, 2019

Teacher: Dr. Michael S. Heiser (MH)

Host: Trey Stricklin (TS)

Guest: Carmen Imes (CM)

Episode Summary

Carmen Imes is Associate Professor of Old Testament / Program Coordinator of the program in Bible & Theology at Prairie College in Alberta, Canada. She was a recent speaker at the Naked Bible Conference. In today's episode she shares her research on several related threads: the concept of bearing God's name (representing God as his people), the Old Testament Law (Torah), and the relevance of the Old Testament events at Sinai for believers today. Listen in to learn how the Law is misunderstood and misapplied by many Christians and how to think more carefully about the relevance of the Old Testament.

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 302: Bearing God's Name with Carmen Imes. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

MH: Pretty good. We're starting to see boxes piled *inside* the house now instead of the garage. So that's where we're at.

TS: Now do you actually pack yourself, or do you have everybody else pack?

MH: Oh, no. Well, I packed my books. Everything else, if it's really something valuable (dishes and whatnot), I'm letting Drenna handle that. I bought her all the fluffy packing material that I could possibly get, just to make sure that nothing gets broken. But that's her department.

TS: Are your books still packed from Logos, when you left?

MH: Yes. Yep, they are.

TS: You planned that perfectly! [laughter]

MH: The answer is yeah, but I have, since packing the office, gotten another 20 to 25 used books. So you know, that's my packing load right there. Two boxes [laughs] or whatever it is.

TS: Now are your books hands-off, like, "Don't touch my books. I'll do it." Or do you not care?

MH: No, that's pretty much it. I want to pack them. And it's not because I think people are going to destroy them. It's just that I want to know what's in every box. It just makes unpacking easier. So if it sounds like I'm getting off easy here, I'm really not, because my son-in-law and I are going to be the ones for the most part loading the trailer.

TS: No, Mike, the best money you can invest is to hire movers. Let me tell you. Trust me. Money...

MH: We're getting it hauled. But right now, everybody else except me... I don't know if it's because I'm just stupid. But everybody else but me is worried that we're not going to fit everything into the trailer. It's like, "Look. We're going to be the ones packing it. We're going to use every inch. If we have to re-pack something, we have the time to do it. Don't worry about it." [TS laughs] So that's my job this time. [laughs]

TS: It's not fun. Ooh, I hate moving. But the trip driving out will be fun! Do you have everything planned, what you're going to do?

MH: Yep, we have an itinerary. And I let the kids dictate the route, where they want to go and stuff they want to see. So it'll be fun.

TS: What's the number one thing people are looking forward to the most?

MH: You know, I think probably the Grand Canyon. My wife and I have seen that, but nobody else has. So that is probably pretty high on the list. We have friends in Roswell, too. My oldest daughter's husband wants to see Roswell. He wants to go to the UFO museum and do the stuff that we did with the kids earlier. So that's pretty high. But that's because we have this one lone voice now that's pushing for this. So yeah, we'll do it. But Grand Canyon is probably number 1.

TS: If you go right through Roswell you have to stop and do something alien-related, right? [MH laughs] I mean, you have to. You can't just drive through it. You have to stop and...

MH: I've never been there at a time where the festival isn't going on. So I'm really curious as to, what does the town look like, just in January?

TS: Yeah. Nothing.

MH: [laughs] You've already answered that question.

TS: Yeah. I've probably been there 20 times, just because one of my friends has a cabin in Ruidoso, so we'd go up there to go skiing and whatnot growing up. But we took our kids one time and had to stop. And we loaded up with magnets. We have Roswell magnets on our refrigerator. [MH laughs] They have little wood statues everywhere. You have to get one for your house, Mike. They have these little green chiseled wood alien statues. [MH sighs] And I have one of those in my office. So you have to get you one of those.

MH: I tell you what. I'll look for a dog chew toy that's an alien. That would be fun.

TS: You've got to get... They come in this little wooden carved alien green statues. You've got to get one. They come, like... Mine's probably 12-18 inches tall.

5:00

MH: There are people out there thinking right now that this is some totem or tulpa that's going to spiritually infect the house.

TS: Right. Yep.

MH: That's why I'm angling for the dog toy. [laughs] They can just tear that thing apart.

TS: Well don't judge me. I don't bow down to it, let me tell you. [MH laughs] Mike, I'm excited about Carmen. Another familiar face for the show. She was at our conference and we interviewed her. I can't believe it's been many, many years that we've been talking about her book/paper. It was just a paper back then. And here it is. The book is out.

MH: Yeah, both of them.

TS: Mike, we want to do something fun, too. So last week we mentioned about the giveaway that we're doing, her book and a couple of Naked Bible Podcast items. I want to remind people, this is the last week, so hashtag #NakedBible. It can be a picture of you on social media, a message on Facebook or Instagram or Twitter. It doesn't matter. Just hashtag #NakedBible, something random, funny, about the show, comments, opinions, it doesn't matter. Mike and I will randomly pick somebody and send you Carmen's new book, *Bearing God's Name*, and a couple of items from the Naked Bible Podcast merch. We'll get it to you before Christmas. Whether you wrap it up and open it up under your Christmas tree is your business. [MH laughs] That's what I would do, Mike. [laughs]

MH: I know. I'm tracking with you.

TS: Alright, awesome. Well, I'm ready for Carmen if you are.

MH: Yep, absolutely.

MH: Alright. Well, as we just mentioned, we have Carmen Imes on the podcast. We're thrilled to have Carmen. If her name is somewhat familiar, that's because a couple of years ago we had her on one of our ETS/SBL interviews. And if you went to the Naked Bible Conference this last year, you know exactly who she is. So this is our opportunity to get her for a full hour. So Carmen, thank you for being on the Naked Bible Podcast. I want to start by letting you tell everybody who you are.

CI: Okay. Thanks for having me. It's a joy to join you again. I absolutely loved being with all your people at the Naked Bible Conference. What a great group. So this is a great privilege. I am from a Christian home. I've grown up always knowing and loving Jesus. I think... I can't remember a time when I wasn't following Jesus. It just started at a very young age. It was probably in my early teen years that I felt a call to missions and knew that I wanted to go to Bible college, so I ended up at Multnomah Bible College, now Multnomah University and did a degree there and met and married my husband there. We became missionaries with S.I.M. We did some outreach in the Philippines and then served with them stateside for a total of 15 years. And during that time, I did my masters at Gordon Conwell in Biblical Studies and then ended up at Wheaton College for my PhD.

MH: Wow. For those who don't know what S.I.M. is...

CI: Oh yes. So S.I.M. doesn't stand for anything anymore. But it used to stand for Sudan Interior Mission. And then after that it was Serving In Mission. It's an interdenominational church planting mission.

MH: That's interesting. You were overseas for how many years?

CI: We were overseas for 2 ½ years of the 15 that we served with S.I.M.

MH: Right. And when you were over there, did you do church planting work? Did you do something else? Did you do any kind of translation? What did that look like?

CI: Yeah. Our hope was to plant a church among Muslims. And so we were working with Muslim minority population in Manila. Really in the 2 ½ years we were there, it was mainly language study and just making friends, building relationships and trying to see what the needs were in the community and how we could help. So we ended up back in the States where my husband worked at

S.I.M.'s international office doing finance and administration. So those years in the Philippines, it felt like we did a lot of tilling and a lot of preparation and then never did get to go do what we were there to do. So we trust that the Spirit has carried on the work we started.

MH: What language?

10:00

CI: We were learning Tagalog or Filipino. Our Muslim friends were also learning Filipino. We met in the middle in this. It was a second language to both of us. They had their unique language for each group. I think there are 13 different Muslim majority people groups in the Philippines. So we were sort of meeting in the middle in a second language for all of us.

MH: Wow, that's interesting. We just got a... Boy... No, it was the other one. There's... Is Talugu a language? Or Telagu? Is that one of them. I know we were...

CI: Ohhhh.

MH: We have a Tagalog translation project going for the *Supernatural* book. I just got another one that begins with a T done.

CI: Well, Tausūg would be one of the language groups, but it's really small, so I'd be surprised if that was one of them.

MH: Yeah, that's not ringing a bell. It must be something else then.

CI: Okay.

MH: I know there are a bunch of languages over there, which I was surprised to learn. So I was just curious as to which one you were tackling.

CI: Yeah.

MH: So what was the... You get to Wheaton. You do your PhD. And the focus of your dissertation naturally has really produced two books. So tell everybody what your dissertation was and then the two titles of your books. We want to drill down on the InterVarsity Press one for our audience.

CI: Yeah, so I published my dissertation with Eisenbraun's under the title *Bearing Yahweh's Name at Sinai: A Re-examination of the Name Command of the Decalogue*. And it's a deep dive into the command not to take the Lord's name in vain in Exodus 20:7—just re-looking at that passage, which I believe has been mistranslated and misunderstood for a very, very long time. And so that work is very technical. There's Hebrew. There's Greek. There's some Latin and other languages that I engage in there. So it's not a book that most people will want to

read. But I felt as I was working on it like this is a message that the whole Church needs to hear. This is really important stuff. So from the beginning, I hoped that I could rewrite it, repackage it somehow in a book for laypeople. And that's the book that's coming out this week with InterVarsity Press called *Bearing God's Name: Why Sinai Still Matters*.

MH: I think by the time that this episode airs, that that book will be shipping. So for all of you who are listening out there, this is why I wanted to have Carmen on. Because her work is not only interesting. I do agree—I think it's really important. And we want people to take the opportunity to get it. Just like with *Unseen Realm*, I had the same kind of experience. You're sitting there, working on your dissertation and then it dawned on me that 95+% of people in church are never going to see this stuff that I'm seeing. And they're never going to get the payoff for any of this. So that just felt wrong.

CI: Yeah.

MH: And that was the little spark, the little wake-up call that I had.

CI: Yep.

MH: And then 20 years later, we get *Unseen Realm*. So I get it. And I want people to get your book, just because I do think the content is really important. And as people who listen to this podcast regularly know... And if you're a newbie, this may be the first time you hear it. But I look for scholars who are trying to take academic content and make it decipherable to people who aren't going to go get degrees. This is the one-string banjo here.

CI: Yep.

MH: So this is really important. So go ahead and finish your thought. I just wanted to let people know that this is why you're on. This is important.

CI: Yeah, yeah. And that's a passion I share. I really see my ministry as bridging the gap between the academy and the Church. And wanting to see both the academy and the Church interact in helpful ways. So this book was my attempt to cross that bridge and hand the Church the results of really what amounts to eight years of masters and doctoral work on this topic. So while the dissertation is a deep dive into that one verse (that one command) and all the different dimensions of how to read it well, word studies and cultural exploration and potential parallel passages and the history of interpretation of that verse, the new book (with IVP) is actually much broader. So I present what I learned in my dissertation, but it doesn't follow the same outline. I start at Sinai and I talk about the importance of what happened there, and then I trace that theme of bearing God's name through the rest of the canon. So it actually gave me a chance to trace the threads through the rest of the Bible and into the New Testament, which

15:00

I didn't have space to do in my dissertation. And I was checking this morning. It's about $\frac{3}{4}$ Old Testament and $\frac{1}{4}$ New Testament, which is about the right proportion. That's about how our Bibles are proportioned. [laughs] So it'll take people all the way through to the book of Revelation and show them how this theme develops.

MH: This audience isn't afraid of the Old Testament. [laughs]

CI: Nope, they're not. [laughs]

MH: That's no drawback at all.

CI: That's what I love about them. [laughs]

MH: They're also no strangers to the importance of tracing threads. This is what we try to do here. We have the naïve assumption here that the Scripture taken as a whole ought to make sense. [laughs]

CI: Right. [laughs]

MH: It's not just this disparate conglomeration of really strange or... "What in the world does this have to do with this thing over here?" But that's the impression a lot of people get because they get content piecemeal, if and when they get it, in church. It gets broken up. So this is perfect, tracing a thread through Scripture. Now you... This was your focus point at the Naked Bible Conference—the concept of bearing God's name. So in short form, can you unpack what's behind the title? We'll get to the subtitle in a bit, but what's behind the title of the book?

CI: Yeah. So the command not to take the Lord's name in vain has often been understood as a prohibition of speaking God's name in some venue. Whether that be speaking it all (pronouncing God's name), or using it in a curse, or in a magic formula, or saying it in a derogatory manner, these are all potential ways that people have read it and understood it. My approach is to go back to the Hebrew and retranslate it. Because the Hebrew text of this command actually says nothing about speech. If I translate it more woodenly or literally, it would be, "You shall not bear the name of Yahweh your God in vain, for Yahweh will not acquit one who bears his name in vain." So I'm trying to drill down to the question of, "What does it mean to bear God's name?" And I don't think (breaking with other interpretations of this command) it's about bearing his name on your lips or swearing an oath. I don't think it's speech-related. I think it's much broader than that. So the big concept is that at Sinai, as the people are entering into a covenant with Yahweh, he is claiming them as his own people. And to do that, he figuratively places his name on them just like we would put our name on something that belongs to us, to show that it's ours. And so God is putting his name on his people to show the world they belong to him. And now he's telling them, "Don't go out and live as though you don't belong to me. Don't bear my

name in vain.” So the rest of the commands flesh out what it will look like to live as his faithful, covenant people and represent him well among the nations.

MH: Do you think this was... The obvious question is, “How in the world did people begin to think of speech when it comes to this?” Because yeah, if you look at it, you’re right. There’s really nothing in the context about speech. So I guess it’s possible this was taken over from Judaism, just in terms of the reverence for God’s name. But then the sub-question is, “Well, how did *they* look at this command, and not see these things that you’re talking about?”

CI: Yes. And my short answer to that... The fuller answer, of course, is in the dissertation, which has a whole chapter on the history of interpretation. The short answer is that there *have* been people, both Jews and Christians, throughout history who have read it the way I do. I’m not the first one ever. And I actually got the idea straight from Daniel Block, my doctoral mentor. So it wasn’t an original idea to me. But it’s always been a minority voice. And I think it comes from this human desire for real specificity: “Just tell me exactly what I’m not supposed to do.” [MH laughs] And so I think really early on in the history of interpretation, you have... Even in the targums, some of the targums (which are the Aramaic translations or paraphrases of the Old Testament) read it as specific to oath-taking: “You shall not swear a false oath.” They add in words to specify that. And some of them read it more broadly. So already, even before the time of Christ, there is some... You see this impulse to kind of, “Well, just tell me exactly what I am not supposed to do, because that’s too broad.”

20:00

MH: Yeah, that’s one of those things that I would file under, “We’re going to help you, but in the end, we’re not helping you at all.” [laughs]

CI: Yeah. Because if we narrow it to just, “Oops, don’t say God’s name,” or, “Don’t swear an oath,” that’s easy.

MH: Yeah, that’s easy.

CI: And it actually doesn’t fit very well in the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments to have this command right near the top of the list. Whether you count it as the second command or the third command is a matter of debate. But it’s right there at the top with the biggies. “No other gods” and “keeping the Sabbath.” How do you get this strangely specific command at the top of the list, and then at the bottom of the list, you’ve got, “You shall not bear false witness,” which, if you’re going to take this command as a prohibition of false oaths, then what’s the difference between that and false witness? They’re very... There’s too much overlap, I think, between the two. But if you read the command the way I’m reading it, it’s a broad command because it belongs at the head of these ten. So the first command as I count it is “No other gods. I will be your God.” And the second command is, “Don’t misrepresent me. Don’t bear my name in vain.” So

those two echo that covenant formula. “I will be your God, and you will be my people.” And it’s from that the everything else flows.

MH: Mm hmm. And if you look at it in terms of the whole canon and just restrict it to the Old Testament, it makes a lot of sense in tandem with the notion of imaging, which you have talked about, both at the conference and then in some of your work. Because that’s how you originally got on my radar, when I went to the regional ETS meeting. Because you combined this with the imaging concept, which is a big deal, just generally. And then I spend a couple of chapters on it in *Unseen Realm* as well. And so it’s like, “Yeah, she’s right. This is just hand-in-glove kind of thing.” But it was an idea that I didn’t develop. So that’s what put you on my radar. Because it just makes sense. It makes sense in that way. It makes sense, because later you have the Decalogue expanded in terms of, for lack of a better term, case law—situational sorts of things. And you don’t really get this speech idea outside of the oath-taking. And when you really stop to think about it, it’s like, “How in the world did... How did we get here?” [laughs]

CI: Yeah. And I think that interpreters have been doing their best to make sense of what seems a little odd in Hebrew. “You shall not lift up the name of Yahweh.” “Well, we don’t lift up names, so what does that mean?” So they’re trying to fill in the gaps somehow, when I think actually we need to read it quite concretely. “Don’t carry my name in vain.” And how do we carry his name? In everything we do, people are watching us to find out what Yahweh is like. Because it’s like we have this invisible tattoo saying we belong to him.

MH: Mm hmm. You don’t have to come up with a chapter and verse here, but cognate parallels, just to bearing the name. This abstract idea. Just say a little bit about that.

CI: Do you mean in other languages or in the Bible?

MH: Yeah. Either/or.

CI: It’s interesting, because interpreters have tried to find parallels. Since this verse on its own seemed a little strange, they’ve tried to find examples from other ancient Near Eastern texts that might unpack it. And so, for example, there’s this stele from Egypt called the Neferabu Stele, where it says, “I am a man who swore falsely by Ptah”—pronouncing the name of Ptah falsely. And so they say, “Look, there it is! That’s what we’re talking about in the name command in the Bible.” But the problem is, the only words that that parallel shares in common with the name command is “name” and “falsely”.

MH: [laughs] Yeah.

CI: There’s no word for “swore” in the Bible. So you have to first decide that lifting up the name is an idiom or figure that means to swear an oath before this

Egyptian text becomes a parallel. Otherwise, they don't have enough in common to unpack it. And that's the case, I think, with all of the proposed parallels in other ancient Near Eastern texts. What we have in the name command, I believe, is quite unique to the Bible—this idea of covenant representation.

25:00

MH: Yeah. And again, just that phrase (“covenant representation”) just makes sense. It makes sense in the context. It makes sense with what is before and after. That's the good stuff. Because you're right. You were a little more gentle than I would be. I would say, “If you don't have proof that it's an idiom, you're just making something up.” [laughs] “That's just what you're doing.”

CI: Yeah. And I don't think maliciously so. I think...

MH: No, no, it's not sinister.

CI: Yeah, I think all of us, when we come to Scripture, are trying to make the best sense we can of it. And what's ironic is that most interpreters have missed the interpretive key that is right there in the same context at Sinai. And that is the high priest. He is, when his uniform is prescribed...

MH: Yeah, he quite literally bears the name.

CI: On Sinai, he quite literally bears the name. And it uses the same verb—same object—for bearing the name. And so we see, as we look at Aaron in his high priestly ministry, we see a visual model of the ministry that the whole nation is supposed to have as a kingdom of priests. To me it makes so much sense. But interpreters have looked everywhere else for parallels and missed the one that's right there.

MH: Yeah, I'm just really struck by this, because you... I spent a good amount of time in Second Temple literature. I'm an Old Testament guy. So yeah, the cognate stuff, but moving forward into the Second Temple. And a lot of the writers there have really insightful things to say that tell you that they're really paying attention to the nuances of the text. And then you hit something like this and it's like, “Good grief. It's right over there.” You know? [laughter] But to me, it feels like they're in a certain mental mode (with attaching this to speech or the verbalization of God's name) because of the exile. Like they're just going to the nth degree to not ruffle God's feathers again. They're gun-shy because of what happened at the exile and that affects the way they're thinking. So it's not like they all of a sudden just weren't as smart. It's that they're affected by this event, which was traumatic, to say the least.

CI: Sure.

MH: Let's talk a little bit about the subtitle. The subtitle is *Why Sinai Still Matters*. So right away, I imagine you're going to... Either in class or in conversation,

people are going to say, “Well, that’s a good question. Why does it matter? I thought we were free from the law as Christians?” So what’s behind that subtitle?

CI: Yeah. This is such a common misconception. And I believe that this idea that we’re free from the law and we don’t have to think about it anymore stems from a misunderstanding of what the law was there for to begin with. So if we view the law at Sinai as Israel’s means of salvation (so they had this system whereby they had to keep all these rules in order to be saved), then of course, when we come to Jesus we know that we’re saved by grace through faith, and so of course then the law becomes irrelevant and we put it aside. But I think that’s a fundamental misunderstanding of what the law is for. Israel doesn’t obey the law in order to be saved. The law comes, beginning in chapter 20 of Exodus. A whole lot of stuff has already happened, including God rescuing them from slavery in Egypt. And it’s not as though Moses shows up at the border of Egypt and says, “Hey, guys, good news! I can get you out of here! Just sign on the dotted line and say you’ll do these things and I will rescue you.”

MH: Yeah, spiritual calisthenics. [laughs] If you drop off the wayside, too bad.

CI: They are delivered completely by grace and they come to Sinai. And the first thing that God tells them is that they’re his treasured people and that he is making them into being a kingdom of priests. And to begin the Ten Commandments, he says, “I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.” So whatever the law is, it’s not a means of salvation. It’s not a means of bondage either. He’s already set them free. And he is (I think) in the law outlining what it looks like to live in freedom—what believing loyalty looks like as a new nation. And so if we get that right and we get to Jesus, we see Jesus is saying, “I haven’t come to abolish the law; I’ve come to fulfill it.” He’s living out the covenant faithfully and modeling for us how to do so.

MH: Yeah. What really helped me years ago to see what you just described, was the... One of the early things was what I call the Deuteronomy 32 Worldview—that the nations are divorced at Babel and then it’s God’s choice to start over with Israel and use Israel as a conduit through which the nations would be brought back. And so just that alone tells you that God’s not sitting there thinking, “Okay, humanity is just a bunch of screw-ups, so what other tests can I throw at them, knowing that they’re going to screw those up, too?” [laughs] You know? It just doesn’t make any sense to come up with another contest or performance-based thing.

CI: Right.

MH: It just doesn’t make any sense at all. So that alone tells you, well there must’ve been some other thing going on here. So he chooses to create Israel. He chooses to put himself into a covenant relationship with Abraham and by extension with Israel. And the law just seemed like, here’s a boots-on-the-ground

30:00

way to show this relationship *to* the nations. Because you *are* supposed to be a holy nation, something that's distinct to attract them back. You're supposed to do this kingdom-of-priests thing. It really helped me think differently about it. And then when the whole... That was clear to me. And then believing loyalty is something that years ago, I threw into *Unseen Realm* because it just seemed important at the time.

CI: It's a great way to describe what's expected of Israel at Sinai, and it's still expected of us today. Our belief translates into action. It's not just about where we go when we die.

MH: Yeah. And you need both terms. So that was really helpful. The other thing that helped me was the discussion about the New Perspective. Because on the one hand... I don't know where you land on that. And I don't know exactly where I would completely land on that either. I'm still thinking about a lot of it. But just the notion that N.T. Wright was challenging about the works of the law... Because we are prone to interpret that as Paul is opposing works salvation. And when you really think about it, it's like, "What Jew who really understood their Old Testament would think of the law that way?" [laughs]

CI: Yeah.

MH: I mean, how would that pop into their head?

CI: Yeah, I'm with you. I think... I don't know that I've fully decided where I land on New Perspective stuff. But I do think that it's been really helpful in showing us that...

MH: At least let's take this off the list. [laughs]

CI: Yeah, that Paul is responding and rejecting not the Old Testament law, but the ways it's been twisted and misinterpreted in his own day. And then we have that added layer of the Protestant Reformers reading Paul through the lens of works salvation, which they see in their own culture. And so yeah, I think we need to read the Old Testament more carefully. Paul is not doing away with the law any more than Jesus is doing away with the law. What they want to get rid of is a sense of legalism or a way of approaching God that is devoid of that relationship.

MH: Yeah, in Paul's day devoid of Jesus. I can't remember what the title of the book is, but there's been a recent Mohr Siebeck book that goes back into primary sources (imagine that [laughs]) About the "works of the law" phrase. Just a sweeping overview of how, not only the Jewish community, but the early Christian community was understanding that. And basically, what this book determines is that Wright's observations about what's not being said here are correct. This is what the discussion was. But the other key thought was, what

Paul and others were really after was how Judaism... And this isn't a works salvation thing. It plays into it possibly, but it's the idea of defining your relationship with God by means of this covenant only. So in Paul's day, it's like he's trying to get his fellow Jews to not define themselves without the fulfillment of the law, which is Jesus. So now our orientation point to God is through the messiah, through Jesus, and not this thing. But he's not attacking one thing so that the only thing left is this other.

CI: Right.

35:00

MH: There's more nuancing than that. So that has been pretty helpful, I thought. Since I know your work, I kind of knew the trajectory you were going to follow here. But yeah, this is important stuff that, I think that if people are patient and really think about it (and your book's going to be a big help here), they'll be able to think well about just this topic.

CI: Yeah. I hope so. You raised a moment ago this idea that Christians think they should be free from the law—that we could set that in opposition to the grace in the New Testament. And I think one of the most prominent examples of how widespread this is was Andy Stanley's famous statement a year and a half ago, while preaching through Acts 15, telling his church that it's okay to just unhitch from the Old Testament because as Christians that's the backstory, but what we really need to zero in on is the resurrection. And so let's just unhitch. And I'm not trying to throw Andy Stanley under the bus here. I think he's a wonderful pastor and has got such a heart for reaching the lost. And he sees that when unbelievers begin reading the Old Testament (and even sometimes Christians are reading the Old Testament) there are barriers. There are things that are unpleasant that we read or that we don't know what to do with. And he doesn't want that to stand in the way of anyone coming to Jesus. So let's just leave that aside. And my approach with the same problem is different. I say let's educate people. Let's help them discover the Old Testament and what it's really saying so that it ceases to be a barrier to faith in Christ. So I don't want to unhitch. My book is trying to *re-hitch* the Old Testament. [MH laughs] I believe that as Christians, we can't understand our identity or our vocation without Sinai. If we don't get Sinai right, we miss out on what is our purpose as believers.

MH: Yeah. That's well-said. And again, here on this podcast, I've been a little crankier. You're just so much more pleasant than I am. [laughter] I'll say things like, "Show me someone who wants to ditch the Old Testament, and I'll show you someone who just can't comprehend biblical theology." It's really indispensable. And I feel silly saying, "Hey, three quarters of your Bible is actually indispensable."

CI: Yeah, right. [laughs]

MH: [laughs] But that's kind of where we've come. Here we are having to say these sorts of things. It just feels a little bit weird.

CI: Yeah, and again, I do feel like I appreciate not only Andy Stanley's really great ability to hold an audience (and his one-point sermons are just captivating), but I also appreciate his pastoral sensibilities. He wants people to meet Jesus. But what baffles me is when he takes them to Acts 15, he concludes that when the early Church is meeting to decide what to do about Gentiles—deciding they don't need to be circumcised—that that's evidence that they're throwing off or unhitching from the Old Testament, when in fact when I read Acts 15, I see that they're going precisely to the Old Testament to find a justification or grounds for how to include Gentiles in the covenant as Gentiles. They are unwilling to make the decision without the testimony of the Old Testament. So they are certainly not unhitching.

MH: Right. And they only sort of remove part of what the Old Testament is saying. So I don't know how you get there.

CI: Right. And the part that they remove is the part that was designed from the beginning to be an ethnic identity marker—to separate Jew from Gentile—so that the Jews (the people of Israel) could be a model that people see and see that they're different. And I think that's the bit that's changed now because of Jesus—the way is open for Gentiles. And so now the laws that pertain to separating Jew from Gentile (so that would include kosher diet and circumcision chiefly, but other things as well) have been set aside because we no longer need to make a dividing wall. Now the Church is opened up—the covenant is opened up—for Gentile membership.

MH: Yeah, it's a very worthwhile thing to keep what you just said in mind. Because... And Stanley's sensitivities are correct. There are things about the Old Testament that drive people away, especially in our culture. But it's like look, we have to realize that this was... There's some planned obsolescence here. And both of those terms are important. God knew where salvation history was going to go, and it wasn't going to end with the theocracy. The theocracy is planned obsolescence. There was a purpose in this, and now we're further down the road here, and so to criticize or turn away from the gospel because of something that's really intimately attached to these distinctions you're talking about is really to misunderstand that, okay, it had a role, but now things are different. And this was all part of God's wisdom to do this. So I think I would agree. Rather than just ditch the whole thing, maybe a better trajectory would be to actually teach people. "That was just planned obsolescence. Here's what it was supposed to do."

40:00

CI: Yeah. And to teach people how to think it through. Because it is complex. There are a lot of laws that... In fact, I would say the law as a whole we can't just take and apply. We can't just live it out today and expect it to have the same result. It's part of a cultural moment for Israel's history that has shifted by the time

we get to Jesus' day. And it's shifted again in our day. And so we need to think carefully about how we can express believing loyalty in our cultural moment.

MH: Yeah, wasn't it wise of God to not attach salvation to culture? In other words, there is no sanctified culture. But it's a point we miss because of the way we're accustomed to talking *about* these parts of the Old Testament.

CI: Yes. And I think sometimes... I'm guessing this is maybe a danger with some of those who are really excited about your work and your podcast, that there could be a danger in discovering the Old Testament so much (like discovering its value so much) that we now crown the Old Testament as king over the New Testament.

MH: [laughs] "What's that New Testament thing?"

CI: [laughs] Yeah, "That's the appendix. We don't need to pay so much attention... Because we get all the good stuff in the Old Testament." And then to try to implement it like to think, "Oh, Hebrew language is better than English. So I'm going to pray in Hebrew. And I'm going to try to eat the way they ate. And I'm going to try to wear what they wore." As if we're trying to recreate ancient Israelite culture in our day. And that's, I think, equally unhelpful. You have the unhitching on one side and then you have the full implementation of the law on the other extreme. And I don't think either one of those is the right solution. My book is trying to steer people in the middle and say, "How does the Old Testament function as Christian Scripture? How do we read it to form and inform our behavior, our ethics, etc.?" So it all matters, but we're not just going to implement it wholesale.

MH: Yeah. And also while not violating what it meant then.

CI: Right. And to read it in its ancient context. And we're going to know our current context well enough to know how these different dimensions that are covered by the law might be expressed. So I'll give you an example that came up in class. I was teaching Torah class back in September/October here at Prairie College. And we were talking about the laws of Exodus and Deuteronomy. And there's the law (I think it's in Deuteronomy) about not reaping to the edges of your fields. And the reason people aren't supposed to reap to the edges of their fields is so that orphans and widows and disenfranchised people without land of their own can come and glean along the edges of the field. So it's a way of giving them the dignity of work and providing for their physical needs and not being the greedy landowner who has to eek every cent out of our land. Well, what I realized as we were reading this is that I have farmers in my class. Prairie College is out in a rural area, and a lot of the kids I teach come from farms. And so we talked about, "Okay, so I'm not a farmer, but you are. So does your family reap to the edges of its fields?" "Uh, yeah." "So is that a violation of this command?" "Well, nobody's going to come gleaning in our field. That's a

trespassing issue in our day.” [MH laughs] It doesn't help. Even if you're a farmer, you can't implement the law the same way it was in ancient Israel, because our social structures are set up differently. So we thought together then about how might we live out the spirit of this command? How might we demonstrate believing loyalty as business owners or landowners now? And so the first suggestion was, “Well, you could reap it all, and then you could give a bunch of it to a food bank.” And somebody else said, “No, no, that's not it. Because it's not just a giveaway. The people who are gleaning are given the dignity of doing work. And if you just give it to a food bank, then it becomes a handout.” So how could we think... What would be another way to do this? So we talked about, “Could you hire people who would have a hard time passing a background check? Who've been recently released from prison? Or they're new immigrants? Could you provide jobs for people who are otherwise disenfranchised and that would give them the dignity of labor?” And it would share your profits with them. And it was just a really rich discussion of how we might live this out in our context. You can't just slap the same law on our practice today.

MH: That's a really good, worthwhile illustration that works both ways. Because like you said, the thing you would immediately think of as the way to apply this doesn't quite get it. [laughs]

45:00 **CI:** Doesn't quite capture the spirit of that command, yeah.

MH: We're talking about your class experiences and the local church. So let's talk a little bit about... I imagine that all the stuff that you've been bringing up, that this is what you hope happens with the book.

CI: Mm hmm.

MH: These are the kinds of discussions you hope are stimulated by the book. So is that true? Or elaborate on that a little bit more. And at what level is this particular book written?

CI: Yeah. My hope is that people who read my book will rediscover the value and the relevance of the Old Testament for Christians. That they will realize, “Oh, the Old Testament is my book, too. And it's living and active and useful for teaching, correcting, and training in righteousness.” And I hope they'll feel more equipped to read it in its context—to see the threads of biblical theology that hold it all together. So I've written it as accessibly as I possibly could. My 17-year-old read the whole manuscript before I sent it off to IVP. We crossed out and changed every word that she didn't know. Now, she does have a good vocabulary. She's a smart girl. But the goal was to have a book that could communicate to a teenager, but that takes the real results of the research I've been doing for eight years and doesn't dumb it down. I wanted to make it accessible without losing the richness of what I'd learned. So it reads kind of like a series of blog posts—just as accessible as possible. As I was writing, I had a guy in mind from our

home church in Oregon City, where we worshiped before we moved to Canada. He came to my Sunday School class every week and loved it, but he admitted to me that he hadn't read a complete book from cover to cover since high school, other than a welding manual. And I kept thinking, "I want to write a book that Earl will read. I want this to be something that would connect with him." So I've done a bunch of things to try to help it be accessible. The sections are short. There's 10 chapters, but each chapter has four or five shorter sections in it, so you can pick it up a few pages at a time. There are discussion questions in the back of the book that would make it suitable for a small group or classroom use. It has suggested chapters to read in the Bible to go along with each chapter. And then my favorite thing is, this is the first Bible ever published that includes QR codes linking to videos from the Bible Project that go along with each chapter

MH: Yeah. That's just a sweet idea. [laughs]

CI: It *is*! And I'm so excited to see how it works!

MH: Whose idea was that? Was that your idea?

CI: It was my idea.

MH: Well then you need to take credit for it.

CI: As I was writing the book, I kept thinking, "Oh, I wish I could show them the *Holiness* video," or, "I wish I could show them the *Reading Biblical Law* video," or, "the *Image of God* video." "These videos just are so good." And then I thought, "Well, maybe there is a way we could put videos in my book. So I talked to IVP and they said, "We'll try it. We've never done it before, but we'll try it."

MH: Boy, good for you. [laughs] That's just a great idea. So it sounds like IVP kind of let you drive the bus here, as far as where you were pitching the book, and of course this idea. Is that correct?

CI: We worked together on it for over a year, not extensively, but we had conversations that spanned over a year, going back and forth about who's the target audience, what's the hook to draw people in. There were other ideas we floated—different outlines. Ultimately, when we landed on this outline and it clicked into place, I knew it would work. And I started writing, sent the proposal off to my editor at IVP, and I said, "I sure hope you like this, because this book is writing itself whether you want it or not." [MH laughs] It was pouring out of me and I couldn't stop it. It was like pushing a boulder downhill. So it's true that they did change the title and they completely designed the cover. I wasn't part of that. But there was a wonderful synergy between us as we tried to work out who is this book for.

MH: Well I don't know, and I don't know if you know, but I can sure hope out loud here, that the response to this (and even the exercise as you described it) will

50:00

prompt InterVarsity to really poke at a few scholars that publish for them to do the same thing with their content. That would sure be nice. And it's not like IVP, prior to your book, was producing books that are just unreadable. That isn't it at all. It's just that there were a lot of textbook kind of books. And it's just for somebody who's in seminary. It's the jargon. It's the vocabulary. All that stuff. So this would be nice, if this actually gains a bit of traction.

CI: It would be nice. [laughs] It would be nice. I mean, my book is sitting right on the line between IVP and IVP Academic. So it is coming out under the Academic label, but they made it a smaller size that will feel more natural to laypeople. There are no footnotes. Instead, there are endnotes, which every academic who hears me say that cringes, because they hate endnotes. [MH laughs] But it's not for you. It's for laypeople. Sorry. [laughs]

MH: Right, right. And you're correct. Those of us who have degrees, we hate endnotes. Let's just be honest.

CI: Yep.

MH: Because we read those things! You know?

CI: I know. There's just a lot of flipping back and forth.

MH: I don't want to flip to the back. [laughter] That's funny. But that's a good illustration, though, for the audience. This is how publishers will think about what they're producing—in other words, what the target audience is. And the footnote/endnote thing might seem completely artificial, but that's actually a big deal in terms of who you imagine the audience to be. So that's a good illustration. Now I have to ask you this question, because I know people in the audience are going to be wondering. What is it like being a woman who is a biblical scholar? Because let's be honest, in my spiritual journey, I have been in contexts that look at this in dramatically—just diametrically opposite ways. I'm not going to name the institution, but I was at an institution at one point. Well, we had a professor. This wasn't the opinion across the board. But we had a professor that would say things like, "You shouldn't buy books and even read them (like commentaries) if they're by a woman, because women aren't supposed to be doing this."

CI: Wow.

MH: That's the most extreme I can pluck out of my experience. And then you have the other... And I had some of those folks, like, "You're crazy, dude. This is really good stuff." I'm thinking of Joyce Baldwin, her Tyndale commentary. I mean, come on. Like, really? But then you had the other side of it, where it's like, "I can't even believe we're having this discussion." That sort of thing. So what has the experience been like for you? Good? Bad? Pushback? Encouragement? It's probably all of the above.

CI: Yeah. It's been an interesting journey. But I will say it's a great time to be a woman Bible scholar. We are in a great moment, I think, as a culture. There are still people who are loudly pushing back. But they are slowly dying off. Can I say that? [laughs]

MH: You're allowed to say that, because that's generational language. We know what you mean.

CI: Yeah, that generation is passing away. Now there are young people who are still passionate about women remaining silent and not teaching. But there are, I think, on the flip side, an increasing number of churches, schools, institutions, who are saying, "Not only is it okay, but we actually want to have women here. We want women's voices to be part of the conversation. We're realizing what we've missed, only listening to people who look like us or who share our same gender. If everything we learn is from someone just like us, then we end up with a one-sided perspective." So as I look around, I see publishers saying, "We want to publish more women." And even publishers saying, "No, we won't publish that collection of essays unless you include women's voices in it." So it's a day in which it's a great time to be a woman scholar. Because...

MH: Your work is more accessible.

55:00

CI: Opportunities are falling in my lap, because there's such a growing realization that we need women's voices. It's not a matter of being politically correct. It's a matter of hearing from the whole church and recognizing Scripture's vision for partnership between men and women. So I've had a really wonderful experience. Prairie College is so supportive. I've had almost no pushback here. When I interviewed, I said, "How would the constituency feel about a woman teaching Bible here?" And they said, "Let me put it this way. In 1922, our school was founded. And I think we hired our first woman Bible teacher in 1923." So women have been teaching Bible here since 1923. So Prairie... The Canadian scene is a little bit different than the scene in the U.S. It's had a long history of affirming the giftedness of women and what they have to offer to the Church.

MH: You know, I remember this particular person I'm thinking of, who, "Don't read Joyce Baldwin's commentaries because it's Joyce Baldwin." That was 30 years ago. But I remember even thinking then, "Look. Even if..." And I'll say this to people in our audience here. Even if you don't endorse women's ordination, all the world is not a church. A Bible college is not a church. So why... What's the deal here? But I use that example because that's the most extreme in my experience of telling us, "Just put down that wonderful commentary." It just was so odd.

CI: For me, the biggest pushback I had was when I was in Bible college myself and a professor of mine said, "Carmen, I've noticed you in class. I wonder if you

would consider being a lab instructor for me for Bible study methods. So that would mean twice a week, hold class for an hour with a smaller group of students and actually be teaching them Bible content.” And I said, “Is that okay?” I mean, the pushback was *me*. I had not grown up in a context where that was allowed. And I said, “That sounds like a dream, but I don’t think the Bible allows it. Like, how do you get to the place where you’re okay with allowing women to teach?” And so he sat me down and took me through the key passages and showed me how he read them, and I went, “Oh. This is a lot more complex than I thought. It’s not just a matter of women being silent, because here Paul is telling women to wear head coverings when they pray or prophesy in public.” So they’re actually speaking up in public in a spiritually significant way in the life of the church. So maybe what I understood from these passages is not the whole story. So I began teaching under him. And I remember that first couple of semesters as I was teaching Bible study methods... again, this is more than 20 years ago. I remember some pushback from students—male students who were older, married, wouldn’t even look me in the eye as I taught. They just... This one guy would just stare down at the table and wouldn’t even look up at me the whole class period. And I went to my mentor and I said, “What do I do?” He said, “Don’t give it another thought. Just do your work and do it with excellence, as I know you will, and he’ll come around.” And sure enough, by the end of the semester, he was telling all his friends to sign up for my class. And his wife signed up for it that next term. And so I learned then not to go out and try to persuade people that I should be allowed to teach. Just take the opportunities given to me.

MH: Yeah, you don’t need to be an activist.

CI: Right. Just do it well and people will realize, “Oh, that was edifying and I learned a lot. I want to learn more.”

MH: Yeah, I’m glad you used the “edification” word. Because I can remember instances in my own context where, when you start thinking about the passages... And obviously all the world is not a church and all that stuff. But when you start asking yourself legitimate questions like, “Okay, we’re not in a church. We’re in this class (or whatever). And I was blessed by what this woman in front...” [laughs] I remember in college we had a psychology teacher who had a long history of missions experience. And she would just say things, and it’s like... I mean, I still remember, this is the woman who, this is the first time I heard, “Five minutes is a long time.” Because I always had to work through school and do this or that. And it’s like, that just stuck with me. The moment I heard it, it was ingrained in my character. But she would just have really good scriptural principle kinds of conversations during the class. And it’s like, “God forbid that I should be encouraged or edified in any way.” [CI laughs] But when you start thinking about it in terms of the biblical language, it’s like, “Yeah, I was. Is there something wrong?” It starts to just get you to think about the coherence of one particular approach to what really is a complex issue. Years ago on the blog, I had a conversation. I don’t know if you know John Hobbins.

1:00:00

CI: Yes, I do.

MH: He and his wife were both ministers in Wisconsin. I knew John from the E.W. But we did this back-and-forth on the blog where I told everybody, "John's mission is to make me care." Because I didn't care if he and his wife were a pastoral team. And I didn't really care about the other side either. Put me in a room with a different group and I can argue either position really well. Which tells me that this is probably something that lacks the kind of clarity that either side thinks that it has. There's just other stuff going on here that makes this really difficult. And we ought to just admit it. We ought to just be able to say, "We don't know. I'm not sure. And so whatever you believe your calling is, be blessed and do a good job." You know? And I would tell people, when I... I actually got, like, one interview in my life for a teaching position. And this question came up, and I said, "Look, if it was my daughter, that's exactly what I would tell her. I'd say, 'I don't know, because I can see both sides to this. But you know what, if this is what the Lord wants you to do, if you're convinced of that, do a good job. And I'm going to be supportive. I'm going to help you in any way I can.'"

CI: Mm hmm.

MH: So there are just things like this that I think fragment the Church unnecessarily.

CI: Agreed.

MH: And they become in our minds more concrete than what they actually are. And I think Scripture is actually seeded with those things, not because God didn't know what he was doing, like, "Oh, God forgot to give us this detail." My rule of thumb is, God was perfectly capable of taking this ambiguity away. And he doesn't care. If he cared, it would be like this other thing over here, where we're just hammered with it. So I'm glad to hear that you've had a good experience. I did not throw my Joyce Baldwin commentaries away.

CI: Good for you.

MH: They were wonderful. They're part of the Tyndale series, if I can promote them any further. [laughter] I had Cynthia Miller in grad school. She was the reason, without getting too biographical here... I had a lot of low points in grad school, because I'm working full-time for 15 years and the environment there wasn't the greatest. And she was the reason I stayed in. And I only told her that at the end of the road, "You were the reason I stayed."

CI: I just want to add a comment to this discussion about women in biblical scholarship, just to say that there are women who still have really horrible experiences in scholarship. I don't want to sound like, "Hey guys, the problem's

over. We're where we need to be on this." I've been really grateful for the encouragement I've received from men all the way through my studies and they've been the ones pushing me to keep going in scholarship and to teach and to write and to speak. But not every woman has cheerleaders like that or has that kind of supportive community. So I think still a lot of work needs to be done. But I'm just grateful for the ways that I've had opportunities and that I've been well-received. I'm sure I could think of stories of times when I was marginalized, but those have not been the defining feature of my experience.

MH: Mm hmm. Yeah, and you're right. I can think of those, too. Just people I've known over the course of years, both in grad school and after getting out. So yeah, it does happen, for really, really unfortunate—and there are a couple I could think of where I would use words like “ungodly”—reasons.

1:05:00

CI: Definitely. I've seen a lot of change. This was my 11th time attending the Evangelical Theological Society meetings. And I've seen a big change in 11 years. ETS used to be in some ways the highlight and in other ways the biggest struggle of my academic year, because that's where I would feel most acutely that not everybody wanted me there. And I don't feel that in the same way anymore. I sense a growing support from other scholars. There's a growing number of women involved. And I see a growing amount of support from the executive committee to include and encourage and support women who are evangelical scholars. So like I said, it's a good time to be in scholarship. I'm excited to see what God does.

MH: That's interesting. We won't rabbit-trail on it here in the episode, but as a man, I don't even think about what the executive committee does. [laughs] So to hear you say that, to me, it just feels like, it just is what it is and stuff happens.

CI: Yeah, it's not. [laughs]

MH: I'm totally oblivious to that.

CI: Yeah, this is actually the first year where a woman was voted onto the nominating committee.

MH: Ah, that's interesting.

CI: So it's the first in ETS' 70+ year history where there is now a woman in a leadership role at the national level. It's never happened before.

MH: Wow, that's really interesting. Who is that?

CI: Lynn Cohick.

MH: Yeah, we know Lynn. She was on the podcast.

CI: Yeah. She was elected to the nominating committee, which means there may be enough people on the nominating committee now that it's conceivable that we could have a female on the executive committee someday in the not-too-distant future. So I count that as a win, because we need all the voices at the table if we're to reflect the full richness of the Church and the diversity of the Church.

MH: Yeah. I just never even thought about that. It's like, "Who even wants to go to those committee meetings?"

CI: [laughter] I have a renewed interest...

MH: That's the time to go to the book table. [laughter]

CI: No, it's important to go. If you want to see change in an institution, then you have to care about the business meetings.

MH: Oh, boy. That's hard to hear. [laughter]

CI: Sorry to ruin your shopping time. [laughter]

MH: That's hard to hear. Ah. I'll confess, I've never been to a business meeting. Maybe I should go, just kind of sit in on one.

CI: Yeah, if you're going to vote responsibly, please come. [laughter]

MH: Right. Okay, one last question. It's obvious. What's next? What are you working on now?

CI: Several things, but the big thing is that I've been invited to write a commentary on Exodus for Baker Academic. So that's a five-year project. It'll be a big 750-page commentary or so.

MH: Is it a part of a series?

CI: Yeah, it's in the *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Series: Pentateuch*. There aren't any volumes out in that subseries yet. But the series on *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament: Psalms and Wisdom Literature* is complete. So it's in that same...

MH: Do you have a section editor and a general editor?

CI: Yeah. Bill Arnold is the editor for the Pentateuch. He hasn't been on the project since it started. It's been a little hard for them to actually have volumes come out. People have had contracts for a long time and weren't able to deliver. So I'm taking over the contract for someone who wasn't able to get to it. And I'm

excited. I'm excited to work with Bill and excited to spend more time in Exodus. As you know, it's a rich book.

MH: Yeah, you know, one word of advice... And it's probably too late, but just going forward into the future, try to retain all the rights that you can. Because... You just voiced the reason. Having worked at Logos for 15 years, we're familiar with some of the "inside baseball" on some of these. It's really hard. It's becoming more and more of a challenge for publishers to produce not only lengthy series, but lengthy volumes like that. And some of the series just die right in the middle, and then the publisher just sits on them.

CI: Yeah.

MH: It's really hard if somebody puts the amount of work into a book like that and it's just sitting on somebody's laptop.

CI: Yeah. Well, thankfully, this series is doing really well. The Pentateuch volume will be out next year. John Goldengay did Genesis. So that'll be the first one to kick off this subseries, and hopefully you'll see mine before too long.

1:10:00

MH: Well, that's good to hear. So that gives us something to look forward to, even though it is five years. But it's nice to know that there's a new series coming for a book like Exodus. I won't say this about Genesis, even though John is awesome. But when I see a commentary on Genesis, I think, "Really? Another commentary on Genesis?" [CI laughs] But for Exodus, you can't say that. There aren't that many of them, really. I don't know why that is.

CI: Compared to New Testament, where you have a book like Philippians with dozens and dozens of commentaries, I feel like, yeah, we could use more resources on the Old Testament.

MH: Yeah, and that's a good book for it, too. There just seems to be a hole there. Well, that's good to hear. Well, thanks for spending an hour with us and instructing us—*edifying* us. [laughter]

CI: Absolutely. Thanks for the opportunity.

MH: It was fun. You're, of course, welcome back any time. But we will look forward to seeing what you produce, not only in the big form, like you just mentioned, but any other things. If you produce something that you think really touches a nerve or really needs attention from a lay audience, you have to let us know.

CI: Well, I do have a book coming out in March that your people might want to know about. It's a shorter devotional project on the Psalms in which I'm the editor of the project. I just selected an excerpt from an early Church writer on each

Psalm. So it's... And then we've updated the language so that it's more accessible to somebody who doesn't have a seminary education. Sometimes the ancient sacred Christian classics that are really old are hard to read because the English translations available are so archaic. So this is going to be a more accessible way to see some of the best riches of the early Church's interpretation of the Psalms. So that'll be fun. So that's called *Praying the Psalms with Augustine and Friends*. It'll be out in March.

MH: Who's putting that out?

CI: It's being co-published by the Urban Ministry Institute and Taylor University Press. It's the first volume in a new series called the *Sacred Roots Christian Classics Series*. It was outside my wheelhouse. I'm not an early Church scholar, but I learned a ton. And I love the Psalms, so I hope that it helps people rediscover the Psalms.

MH: That's interesting. Thanks for mentioning it. So again, just thanks for spending the time with us. We really appreciate it.

CI: Yeah, thank *you*.

TS: Alright, Mike. I can't believe it's been two or three years since we initially interviewed Carmen at SBL many years ago, talking about this same subject. And here we are with the book finally coming out. I mentioned off-air then that I didn't want to wait two or three years to read her stuff [MH laughs], but you educated me, that's how it works. And so we're trying to address that. But it's amazing that 1) we've been on the air for that long [laughs], and 2) the day of the book is finally here. [MH laughs] So you can go get that. And I want to remind people to hashtag #NakedBible anywhere on social media. We're giving away her book and a couple of our merch items. Hopefully we'll get it to you before Christmas. So anything, if you want to recommend our podcast. You want to take a picture wearing our merch—T-shirt, mug, whatever. Just include #NakedBible and Mike and I will randomly pick people to win that. And we'll send you Carmen's book and a couple of things from Naked Bible Podcast.

MH: Yeah. Like Trey just said, if you want it before Christmas, you have to jump on the opportunity, and we will give it a look and try to get it to you as soon as we can.

TS: Alright, sounds good, Mike. And with that, I just want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.