



Ray Edwards Show, Episode 422

Weirdest Christmas Episode Ever (Take That Dawkins)

[00:00:00] **Male Presenter 1:** *Ray Edwards Show*, episode 422. Weirdest Christmas episode ever. Take that, Dawkins.

[00:00:13] **Male Presenter 2:** The *Ray Edwards Show*. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

[00:00:22] **Ray Edwards:** This is the episode we're recording before Christmas. Christmas. Do you love Christmas or are you a Christmas- like, "I can't wait till it's over," kind of person?

[00:00:35] **Tiffany:** I am both. I feel like Christmas- as a parent, I try to have the best Christmas for my kids and it really stresses me out. Otherwise, I like the snow, I like the decorations.

[00:00:46] **Ray:** You like grocery shopping for Christmas?

[00:00:48] **Tiffany:** Christmas music. Oh he... no.

[00:00:51] **Ray:** You could've said it.

[00:00:53] **Tiffany:** H-E-L-L no.

[00:00:54] **Ray:** The funny thing about yesterday was you worked from home, you worked remotely yesterday, you do that a couple of days a week, and the first communication I received from you yesterday was this, "Hell no." Was a reference to whether we should have a workshop over Valentine's day?

[00:01:10] **Tiffany:** Yes.

[00:01:10] **Ray:** I didn't realize when that was suggested by other team members that we haven't-- We should have it on the 13th and 14th of February.

[00:01:18] **Tiffany:** Who said that? That's just wrong.

[00:01:20] **Ray:** It was Tami.

[00:01:21] **Tiffany:** Oh, Tami, you go spend time with Von.

[00:01:24] **Ray:** She said, "I could give a crap about Valentine's day."



[00:01:26] Tiffany: She said that?

[00:01:27] Ray: Yes.

[00:01:27] Tiffany: I wonder why.

[00:01:28] Ray: I'm quoting her.

[00:01:29] Tiffany: Well, it's been many years, they've been married for a lot of years. They've probably done it all. [laughs]

[00:01:35] Ray: Never say you've done it all.

[00:01:37] Tiffany: That's true. No, we should totally not have it. Hell no. We should not have it on Valentine's day.

[00:01:41] Ray: No, we're not going to have-- I was putting it in the events calendar and I realized this does not make any sense because first of all, I don't want to be doing this on Valentine's day, I want to be with my wife. Secondly, even if you're not a couple that celebrates Valentine's day, there's lots of people who are in love who don't celebrate Valentine's day, that's fine. But usually one or the other partner in the marriage does not feel that way. If you say, "I'm going to be at a business seminar, marketing seminar on Valentine's day," that's not going to go well for you.

[00:02:14] Tiffany: No, especially if there's other dates that we could have it on.

[00:02:17] Ray: Then plus we're probably going to have it at some public like hotel convention center and it's going to be full of people all dressed up for Valentine's day and all smoochy.

[00:02:27] Tiffany: We're just going to feel guilt.

[00:02:28] Ray: Yes or envy. That was the 'hell no', that's why I got the 'hell no' from you.

[00:02:37] Tiffany: The reason I didn't contact you much is because I knew holy crap, you just went through a week- like a gauntlet of calls. Your calendar was nuts.

[00:02:46] Ray: This leads to what I want to talk about today.

[00:02:48] Tiffany: Perfect.

[00:02:49] Ray: I hadn't heard from you and you were working from home which we agreed to. We talked about it. You should just go ahead and work from home. Yesterday I had said there's no need for you to come in tomorrow and mainly I did it because there was a winter storm warning and I didn't want you to have to drive from Post Falls in the icy slippery weather just to come in and do some email things you



could've done from home. It was my idea and you're not here, and most of the day I was stewing about, "Tiffany's not here and I haven't heard a word from her."

[00:03:21] Tiffany: Really? Oh, look at you jumping to conclusions.

[00:03:24] Ray: Yes, I was on my jump-to-conclusions mat.

[00:03:27] Tiffany: Yes, this is a perfect lead-in to what you want to talk about.

[00:03:31] Ray: I was making up all these stories about, "Well, why is she not contacting me? What is going on?" At some point during the day, I think it was after the 'hell no', because I almost made a snarky comment in that chat thread about that. I typed it out and then I deleted it and I thought, "What am I doing? She's not here because I told her not to be here and she hasn't contacted me because she sees my calendar and she knows I'm probably going bonkers. She's, as always, looking out for me." That really got me thinking about the fact that we do this stuff and I say we because it's me, but it's everybody, we all jump to conclusions or make assumptions about what things mean particularly about what the things that people say or do mean and it's coming from us, not from them.

[00:04:26] Tiffany: A lot of the times the conclusions that we jump to are automatically negative.

[00:04:30] Ray: Yes, that is the real deeper part of the subject I wanted to talk about, why we jumped to the negative conclusion first. I have a theory that some people who listen to this podcast who are not- they would say, "I'm not religious," I'm not religious either. I just happened to follow Jesus who is not religious either. He upset the religious people. He went into their temple and made a mess out of it, but for those of you who are not into this kind of stuff, you can think of this as the positive thinking or the motivational talk part of the podcast or you can just skip ahead 45 seconds and do that a couple of times and you'll be all right. There's a phenomena that we do, that we engage in, I hate bringing this term up because it means a lot of different things to a lot of different people, but it's spiritual warfare. There's a group of people that for them, spiritual warfare means there's a demon behind every coffee pot.

[00:05:28] Tiffany: Oh, well, isn't there?

[00:05:29] Ray: Waiting to leap out, jump on you and make you a sinning, sinning sinner. I don't really believe that's how it works, but I do believe that there's a battlefield that we're largely unaware of. It's a spiritual battlefield and the battle is not for God against Satan. It's the battle for our minds and our hearts.

Paul writes about the spiritual war in Colossians. He says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," meaning they're not worldly, they're not physical, "but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds," and this is some strange language. I want to come back

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and explain what it means in a moment. "Mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled."

Now, I've heard scary sermons preached on this verse, but I've come to understand this is not a scary verse. It's a very encouraging verse and here's what it's saying, I believe. We don't war in the flesh. It's a spiritual war, which means it's taking place in our minds, and our hearts, and the weapons of our warfare are the weapons of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Love, belief, charity, grace, all the gifts of the spirit. Those are the weapons of our warfare. They're mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.

You have to ask, what is a stronghold? The readers of this original letter would have understood a stronghold is something you build to keep somebody out. Strongholds in the Bible are referring to little fortresses that the devil helps construct in our heart and our mind to keep God out of that part of our life. If somebody says, "I have a stronghold in my life for greed. I'm working on greed," they have greed in their heart and they have a defense around God coming into that part of their life. They don't let God in. They don't let Him touch that or change that or transform that. They don't want it transformed. They want to enjoy their greed or they're getting totally blasted out of their minds drunk or their promiscuousness or whatever their thing is. It's a stronghold.

It's something that if you confront somebody who has a problem, like somebody is a problem gambler, let's say, and you confront them and say, "I think you have a problem with gambling," they get super defensive and super aggressive about their defensiveness. That's a sign of a stronghold. They don't want you knocking on the door of that stronghold.

The weapons of warfare are the gifts of the Holy Spirit that are mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing, meaning every arrogant spirit, that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. Think about this, what do we know about God? God is love. God covers us in grace. God sees us as perfect because he sees us in Christ, so he doesn't see our flaws. He sees us as he sees Christ, he sees us as perfect. The arguments from the high things, the arrogant spirits that try to influence our behavior. Remember, Satan can't read your mind, but he can watch your behavior. There's nowhere in scripture- you're looking at me with a puzzled look on your face, there's nowhere in scripture that says the devil can read your mind.

[00:09:34] Tiffany: Right, but like those thoughts seem to come from myself. Do you know what I mean?

[00:09:38] Ray: They seem to come from yourself, but this is where I think we learned to discern and ask ourselves, where did that thought come from?

[00:09:43] Tiffany: Well, is he planting things inside of your brain?

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[00:09:46] Ray: He's whispering to you and maybe you're listening to him. Have you ever had- this is a bizarre example, but a lot of people can relate to this, have you ever had this urge? You're driving in the mountains, mountain passes.

[00:09:59] Tiffany: To drive off the road?

[00:10:00] Ray: You just wonder, "What if I just drove right off this cliff?"

[00:10:04] Tiffany: That seems like my thought, not somebody else-

[00:10:06] Ray: That's not your thought. You're a new creation in Christ. Would Christ drive himself off the cliff just because it occurred to him to do so?

[00:10:17] Tiffany: No. That is so weird that you're even saying that though because that is a thing.

[00:10:20] Ray: It is a thing. Have you ever had the urge if you're the passenger in a car, you're going super fast on the highway and think, "I could just jump out of the car right now.?"

[00:10:27] Tiffany: [laughs] Yes.

[00:10:29] Ray: That's not your thought. That's the enemy whispering in your ear saying, "You could do this. You're on top of a tall building in New York City. You could just jump."

[00:10:40] Tiffany: That does not seem like it's coming from anybody but myself.

[00:10:44] Ray: That's why it's so effective. It's the only trick he has.

[00:10:48] Tiffany: How do you discern if that's not-

[00:10:50] Ray: Well, ask yourself, "Is this from God?" You'll know immediately.

[00:10:58] Tiffany: Just for the record, that thought does not occur to me very often, but I know what you're talking about because those types of things have occurred.

[00:11:05] Ray: Yes. It has occurred to me and it's a little scary to admit it because then people think I'm crazy, suicidal. No, that's not it.

[00:11:12] Tiffany: No.

[00:11:12] Ray: Constant listener, you've had this thought too. You know you have. Even if you're with somebody, you don't want to admit it, now you're in the car with them saying, "I don't ever have- I don't have those thoughts."

[00:11:22] Tiffany: I was driving to work this morning and I brought Levi and his friend Noah to meet my mom here in the parking lot, but on the drive over, I was

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thinking of how when the people who were anticipating this new King coming, they were thinking it was for their immediate need of a new King in their life.

[00:11:42] Ray: Right. He's going to kick the Romans out and fix everything.

[00:11:47] Tiffany: What they weren't considering, and nobody even realized what it really was that he was coming for a much bigger purpose, so much further reaching. I realized the things that I've prayed for and really wanted, sometimes they don't happen how I want or when I was-- I don't even have an example right now.

[00:12:10] Ray: I do.

[00:12:10] Tiffany: What?

[00:12:12] Ray: It comes from Garth Brooks. "Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers."

[00:12:15] Tiffany: Yes. Ultimately, they do get answered but in a bigger way.

[00:12:21] Ray: Absolutely.

[00:12:23] Tiffany: Sometimes it's quieter.

[00:12:26] Ray: Absolutely. And that's a case of where we think we know what we want, God knows what we actually need. John Piper says it this way. On the same thought, he says, "We wonder why God doesn't answer our prayers the way we want." How does he put it? "You would answer your prayers the way God answers your prayers if you knew everything God knows."

[00:12:47] Tiffany: Yes. What I've seen in my own life are the prayers that I thought were an answer, but actually are further reaching. They are touching a bigger picture not just the immediate thing that I wanted.

[00:13:01] Ray: It may include that.

[00:13:03] Tiffany: It does a lot of times. It's not immediate, like these people were waiting for a King, a King King and they didn't get that, but what they did get was this way bigger thing. I don't know why I was thinking that even. I really don't, but it was in the car.

[00:13:19] Ray: That was a different voice, not the voice of the enemy. I think that was the voice of the Spirit of God speaking to you about the truth.

[00:13:27] Tiffany: I really liked that.

[00:13:29] Ray: These arrogant spirits that are whispering these things in your ear, they're whispering arguments in your ear against the knowledge of God. What we know of God is that God is good all the time. God is loving all the time. God is not

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angry with us. His anger has been expended. It was done with on the cross. His vengeance, his judgment was done with on the cross. That's all done. He loves us. He wants the best for us. He has nothing but grace for us. Any thoughts about bad things happening to us coming from God are arguments against the knowledge of God.

[00:14:12] Tiffany: Those assumptions that we jump to in regards to the people in our lives and the situations are the devil.

[00:14:21] Ray: Yes. I believe that to my core and it doesn't just apply to people's motives, it applies to things like-- Have you ever had this thought? You're at home with the kids and you're waiting for Troy to get home and he hasn't come home, you haven't heard from him and you start thinking, "Oh, my God, has he had an accident? Is he in a ditch somewhere? Was he crushed by a semi?"

[00:14:41] Tiffany: I text him 20 times.

[00:14:42] Ray: You start imagining the horrible things that could happen to him. That's not from God, and that's not from you. Those are the arguments against the knowledge of God. It goes on to say-- Let me remind you of the context of what I was sharing with you. The weapons of our warfare, the warfare is not physical, it's spiritual. It's this that we're talking about. It's not acknowledging what we know about God to be true. The weapons are the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, they're mighty in God for pulling down strongholds. Things in our lives like lust and greed, and negativity and depression, those are strongholds.

The spirit is mighty for pulling those things down, and casting down arguments against the knowledge of God, the things we've just been talking about, bringing every thought into captivity, to the obedience of Christ. What preachers say about this is, "You better get your thoughts captured so that you're obeying Christ or you're in trouble, T-R-O-U-B-L-E. I ain't talking about the Travis Tritt song." That's not what it's saying.

It doesn't say bringing your thoughts captive under the obedience of Christ or your obedience of Christ, it says you're bringing your thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ. It's not our obedience, it's Christ's obedience. He was obedient perfectly so that we didn't have to be because God knew we couldn't be. We have the benefit of Christ's perfect obedience. Then it says- and it's talking about us being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. Our obedience is fulfilled in Christ. We are able now to punish the disobedience. It's not us we're punishing, it's those arrogant spirits.

[00:16:43] Tiffany: How do we punish them?

[00:16:45] Ray: By rebuking them and saying, "I'm not listening to you. You're a liar. Sit down and shut up. I completely reject what you're saying. Troy has not been in an accident. Linda's not been in an accident. Tiffany is not somehow mad at me for

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some weird reason and not coming into the office because she now hates me." It's all just crazy stuff that we do to ourselves. In the end, there is a final judgment. It's not a judgment of us, it's a judgment of the rebellion of the angelic beings because I'm getting way off. People who came here for copywriting are going to be like, "What the hell is going on?" I'll finish this just momentarily, just so I can upset another group of people. The Bible does not say that hell is for people. It says clearly, "The lake of fire is for the devil and his angels." Period.

[00:17:43] Tiffany: Well, that's relieving or should be relieving to a lot of your listeners.

[00:17:47] Ray: Yes. They get punished for all this stuff they've done to us. Making these assumptions, these bad things, this is what makes us feel bad. Our thoughts produce our feelings and our feelings produce our actions. If you start acting on the thought that Troy's been in a terrible accident, you get all panicky, you get the kids all panicky, maybe you go out in the car looking for Troy to find where in the ditch he is, it can lead to all kinds of chaos and disorder and maybe even upset between you and Troy or you and the kids or me and Lynn.

Just put yourself in the example and realize that your thoughts can lead you to do all kinds of crazy things, that have nothing to do with what happened because you made a meaning of something that didn't exist. What if you assume the best because you've been promised the best by God? What if when those thoughts occur to you that, "I wonder where Lynn is, she hasn't called, I hope she hasn't had a blood sugar incident and she's in trouble because she has diabetes," why would I assume that? Because she has it under control. There's no reason to think that that would happen, but I could start thinking things like that.

What if instead of thinking that I thought, "What if Lynn is out secretly shopping for a great Christmas present for me? What if Lynn is enjoying the spa day that I bought her at the Davenport and she's having the most wonderful day that she's had in a long time? What if Lynn just decided to go have tea downtown at that tea room where they serve tea and cupcakes and is just reading a book and enjoying herself? What if Lynn took the dogs to the park because she's playing with the dogs?

What if every time we have one of these negative meetings that we make up like, "That client hasn't called me back, they're pissed at me, they don't want to work a day for them"? What if the reason they're not calling back is because that promotion works so well for them, they're out on the golf course enjoying the day off? More often than not, aren't those the true things that are happening? The better idea, the better meaning, isn't that really what's usually happening? It's hardly ever the bad thing we imagine. We make meanings out of things and then we act accordingly and that can either create a great life for us or it can destroy our lives. The thing that we get caught up in is logic and reason. I'm a huge proponent of logic and reasonable thinking, logical and reasonable marketing, but not when logic itself becomes a religion.



[00:20:26] **Tiffany:** Explain because-- Wow.

[00:20:28] **Ray:** All right. What if you know somebody whose religion is logic and science and they have a system of thought they're so married to, they won't consider any other idea?

[00:20:40] **Tiffany:** That sounds boring.

[00:20:41] **Ray:** It happens a lot in political discussions. People are like, "I belong to this political philosophy. My philosophy is--" I'll just use an example that I've been through this myself, so I can talk about it without having to be talking about anybody else. I went through this period of time when I read the books of Ayn Rand, whom I still respect and is a great influence in my life. I consider her a great mentor, a great thinker, great philosopher, great writer.

She wasn't right about everything. Some things about her philosophy are just wonky and some things about her writing are just boring and some things about her philosophy and sense of life are ridiculously strange and weird. She had some weird ideas about sex. I'm not going to go into them, just read some of her-- The letters of Ayn Rand, personal letters she wrote to people and it's like yuck, weird, but that doesn't discount the good thing she did, but I went through a period where it was like it was the gospel of Ayn Rand. Everything Ayn Rand said was true. If you question Ayn Rand, you are clearly an idiot. That's a terrible place to be because you've now shut yourself off from any real possibility that there's other ideas you haven't considered. I have to think Alicia Berberich who's in our mastermind group for turning me onto this book by Rory Sutherland called *Alchemy: The Dark Art and Curious Science of Creating Magic in Brands, Business, and Life*. It's really about-- He's the vice-chairman of Ogilvy Advertising, which is kind of a big deal.

[00:22:15] **Tiffany:** Is it okay that I have not heard of that?

[00:22:18] **Ray:** It is okay, but we have to fix that. Did you ever watch any of *Mad Men* or were you aware of the show *Mad Men*?

[00:22:23] **Tiffany:** I'm aware of it.

[00:22:24] **Ray:** It's about Madison Avenue advertising agencies. It's about one agency, in particular, that's like the greatest ad agency in the world. It's modeled on David Ogilvy who was the guy who basically created modern direct response marketing. He's a big deal. I haven't finished this book. I've only just started it, but the premise as I can pick it up so far is that you have to be careful about disregarding ideas that seem ridiculous because that's where all the great innovations come.

It's people who assume, "I know what's true, I know what's not true, everything must be purely rational, it must be explainable," they've left something out of the equation. Human psychology, because Rory in this book points out an example of a test they

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did where they were sending a letter out for a charitable organization. We do this kind of stuff in direct response marketing all the time. We test different things, so they tested envelopes. They tested a long skinny envelope. They tested one that opened at the end. Like if you're going to slide money into it, you slide it into the end. They open at the top. They tested one that had- it was on cheap paper, they tested one that was on very expensive paper. They tested one that gave a very logical argument. I don't remember what the charity was, but it's something like, if you give money to this charity, you'll be helping orphan children live a better life. Well, that's hard to argue with. They also tested an appeal that said, "If you donate to this charity, we'll give you a penguin nightlight." Guess which test won by like five to one?

[00:24:06] Tiffany: The penguin nightlight.

[00:24:07] Ray: The penguin fricking nightlight, which makes no sense. It's not logical and these were to adults, like adults wanted a penguin nightlight. His point is that human psychology is a weird thing and you can't decide by logic how people are going to behave and you can't disregard ideas just because you think they're ridiculous at first. Here's an idea that it was ridiculous at first. It only happened because people just kept trying to do this thing that was impossible.

Making a bicycle. Nobody sat down one day and said, "There should be a two-wheel device that has two wheels that are in line with each other and you should be able to write it and balance it and peddle it and make it go." It was just a bunch of experiments in a series of accidents by a bunch of different people, and to this day, physicists still argue about why does a bicycle work? It seems incredibly complex that it depends on the balance of human being to make it work. There's still a lot of arguments about why a bicycle works. Pricing of products, if I have this watch and you don't see the brand, I just hold up the watch and I say I have two watches, they look identical, maybe one has a little bit of a flare or different color on it, but I say this one is \$97 and this one is \$9,997. Without thinking too long, which one do you think is probably the better watch?

[00:25:41] Tiffany: Well, I would totally go with the more expensive watch.

[00:25:45] Ray: Everybody would, almost everybody would. It doesn't mean it's necessarily better at keeping time because there's more things than keeping time that people consider when they're making a decision like that and they don't consider them consciously. We assume if something's more expensive, it's more valuable.

[00:26:00] Tiffany: Exactly. That's why I tell people to price all their stuff way higher than they think they should.

[00:26:06] Ray: That's why if you tell an economist, "This product will sell better if we price it higher, but we don't make any changes to the product," the economist will get angry. "That doesn't make any sense."



[00:26:19] Tiffany: Why does that not make sense? When you want the more expensive watch even though that obviously-

[00:26:23] Ray: They don't want to consider the fact that you want it. Rory cites a bunch of ideas that happened, not because people were looking for- they didn't-- People want science to work like this. They want us to be able to think, "I want an outcome. I'm going to logically think through how to make the outcome happen and then I'm going to come with a formula and make it happen." That's not how all the big breakthroughs happen.

[00:26:46] Tiffany: How does it work?

[00:26:47] Ray: Penicillin happened as an accident. It was moldy bread and it was a byproduct of another experiment that somebody realized this mold is killing these bacteria. They weren't looking for antibiotics. They just found this thing that did this stuff and they're like, "This is weird." Aspirin was an analgesic, a pain reliever long before we knew why it worked. We just knew it worked. In a way, it was folk medicine. Scientists would say there's no scientific basis for you to take aspirin. Well, there is a basis because when I take it, my pain stops. Just a placebo effect. Well, the placebo effect cured my headache.

[00:27:33] Tiffany: With what you were saying right before the medicine thing, a lot of breakthroughs are just accidents. How would somebody relate that to their business?

[00:27:43] Ray: This is the part that frightens business people who are non-creative business people. Creative business people love this. I love this. You just try stuff. Everything becomes an experiment. You say one day, "I think I'm going to try to do it like this." I drive people in our business, our industry crazy because there are accepted ways to write sales letters. There are accepted ways to do webinars, there are accepted ways to sell things systematically online. I'm constantly screwing with those ways and doing it differently.

Sometimes it flops, but often it does really well and my colleagues are like, "How did you do that? How did that work?" I think it's just because I like to play around with ideas. I get bored. It's hard though for people to accept. Here's an example Rory he gives him the book. He says we know through study- and I know this to be true as well and you're going to see this exemplified in our business because it works every time. Every time I post something on Instagram with pictures of my pugs in it, I get more response because pugs are cute.

[00:28:50] Tiffany: People like dogs.

[00:28:52] Ray: I'm going to start using the pugs in our marketing.

[00:28:56] Tiffany: How?



[00:28:58] **Ray:** Well I'm actually thinking about having either Butter or Bobby write part of the newsletter every month. Have their picture, have things from their viewpoint, maybe have them both write it.

[00:29:09] **Tiffany:** They should have different voices though. When they're writing, that should be coming from-

[00:29:13] **Ray:** Totally, because they're totally different personalities.

[00:29:15] **Tiffany:** Yes. Do you think you could write a letter coming from each of their perspectives?

[00:29:18] **Ray:** Could I ever.

[00:29:19] **Tiffany:** You should try that.

[00:29:21] **Ray:** I'm going to do it. I'm going to do it. We know the cute animals do better in advertising, but it's difficult when you're in a board room pitching for a multimillion-dollar contract to say, "I know you've got all this data on why people want to buy your luxury sports car, I think what we should have is we should have a commercial where we have golden retrievers driving the car." It feels risky to be the guy who says that or the lady who says that. You think, "They're going to think I'm nuts, I'm going to get fired." Well, good. If you get fired, go start your own advertising agency and kick their ass.

[00:29:52] **Tiffany:** People do like the animal thing.

[00:29:56] **Ray:** It applies to so many things. We need to be careful about making judgments about what is absolutely true and what is absolutely not, because if we get stuck in a system of thinking, we limit ourselves, we limit our possibilities of making these new discoveries. There's a quote I'm going to read to you a little bit from Adam Smith's book *The Wealth of Nations*, which was written a long time ago. By the way, Rory points out, there's not a single- this gigantic book that every economist, every person who studies money and finance and the way money works in the world, they all revere this book almost like it's a Bible, there's not a single equation in the entire book. There's no math in the book.

Adam Smith warns against what he calls the man of system. This goes back to the people who have something that becomes a religion for them. Like objectivism, the philosophy of Ayn Rand. He says, "The man of system is apt to be very wise in his own conceit and is often so enamored with the supposed beauty of his own ideal plan of government that he cannot suffer the smallest deviation from any part of it. He goes on to establish it completely in and all its parts without any regard either to the great interests or to the strong prejudices which may oppose it. He seems to imagine that he can erase the different members of a great society with as much ease as the hand arranges the different pieces upon a chessboard. He does not consider that the pieces upon the chessboard have no other principles of motion

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besides that which the hand impresses upon them." In other words, chess pieces can't move themselves.

"But that, in the great chessboard of human society, every single piece has a principle of motion of its own altogether different from that which the legislature might choose to impress upon it." In other words, we are free to make our own choices and we decide things based on how we feel not on whether our feeling fits inside your perfect plan of government or philosophy. This is why- here we go, now I'm diving off the deep end.

[00:32:05] Tiffany: You haven't yet?

[00:32:05] Ray: This is why Donald Trump won the election. It's not because he had the smartest plan. The smartest most intellectually sound plan really was Hillary Clinton's plan. It had the most science. It had the most psychology. It had the most well-written papers and position statements, but Donald Trump knew something. I'm not saying who is the better candidate, but I'm going to say this. The man who understood how to trigger people's emotions was Donald Trump and he made people feel something and he said things that inflamed some people and fired other people up and made them like, "It was about time somebody said that."

He understood that speaking to people's feelings was more powerful than being disconnected from people's feelings and speaking only to their intellect and only looking at the charts and the polls and doing what the math told them to do. You can make what you will of that, but that's why he won and if he wins again, it will be for the same reason, because he can do more with a single tweet than I've seen anybody else on the other side do with a gigantic speech or a tour around the nation to places where nobody showed up. Okay. Moving on.

[00:33:31] Tiffany: Okay. Moving on.

[00:33:33] Ray: There's one more area that I want to talk about where we make meaning, which is the ultimate meaning when we start thinking about the meaning of life and where it comes from and that's religion. Rory Sutherland who wrote this book writes about religion and his wife is an Anglican priest.

[00:33:54] Tiffany: What is Anglican?

[00:33:56] Ray: It's the church of England. Think of the Episcopalian church in America, it's like that. It's a liturgical- it's like Catholic Light, that's going to piss off everybody. That's how I would sum it up. His wife is a believer and Rory says, "I'm not sure I believe in God," but listen to what he has to say about religion in this segment from the book. This is actually from the audiobook as he reads it.

[00:34:24] Rory Sutherland: I'm not entirely sure of the existence of God, but I'd be reluctant to disparage religion as nonsense as some people do. The question is not, does it make sense, but does it work? In a 1996 survey on the place of religion in



public life in America, the Heritage Institute admitted their self-interested organization found that, one, church-goers are more likely to be married, less likely to be divorced or single and more likely to manifest high levels of satisfaction in their marriage. Two, church attendance is the most important predictor of marital stability and happiness. Three, the regular practice of religion helps poor people move out of poverty. Regular church attendance, for example, is particularly instrumental in helping young people escape the poverty of inner-city life. Four, a regular religious practice generally inoculates individuals against a host of social problems including suicide, drug abuse, out of wedlock births, grime, and divorce. Five, the regular practices of religion also encourages beneficial effects on mental health as less depression, higher self-esteem, and greater family and marital happiness.

Six, in repairing damage caused by alcoholism, drug addiction, and marital breakdown, religious belief and practice are a major source of strength and recovery. Seven, regular practice of religion is good for personal physical health. It increases longevity, improves one's chances of recovery from illness and lessens the incidence of many killer diseases. Religion feels incompatible with modern life because it seems to involve delusional beliefs. If the above results came from a trial of a revolutionary new drug, we'd want to add it to tap water. Just because we don't know why it works, we shouldn't be blind to the fact that it does. Take that, Dawkins.

[00:36:15] Ray: I love- that's my favorite part. Take that, Dawkins. Those of you who've read Richard Dawkins' *God Delusion* will understand why that's so funny. I love what he says. He says the question is not, does it make sense? Does it work?

[00:36:29] Tiffany: I love that.

[00:36:31] Ray: I do too.

[00:36:32] Tiffany: I'm going to actually.

[00:36:33] Ray: Are you going to meme that?

[00:36:35] Tiffany: I should meme that. I'm going to put it in my notes so I don't forget it.

[00:36:38] Ray: Here's one more for you. This is what he said about Donald Trump. Irrational people are much more powerful than rational people because their threats are so much more convincing.

[00:36:53] Tiffany: That's about Donald Trump?

[00:36:55] Ray: Yes. He was talking about the wall. His point was Donald Trump- this is so funny, Donald Trump said we're going to build a wall and the Mexicans are going to pay for it. The Democrats went nuts on-- They're like, "That's crazy. You can't build a wall. You physically can't do it. It's not possible. Nobody's gonna ever pay for it." They had all these rational arguments against it and they didn't realize

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they were just feeding fuel to his fire because I don't think he ever intended to build a wall. All he had to do was threaten to build a wall to call attention to what he wanted to talk about. He just had to raise the possibility and seem just crazy enough that he might actually try to do it and it worked beautifully. Irrational people are much more powerful than rational people because their threats are so much more convincing. I love that.

[00:37:54] Tiffany: I don't think I like the term irrational.

[00:37:57] Ray: Well, maybe I can help. If you are a believer in Christ, you're irrational.

[00:38:06] Tiffany: Am I?

[00:38:07] Ray: Yes, because rationally, there's lots of arguments against it but the question is not whether it makes sense. The question is, does it work? Do you have the knowledge of God? Do you have the experience of God? You can argue with me all day long about why there is no God and you can have good arguments and there are good arguments. I've looked at them. I've made those arguments myself when I was anti-God and I was against the idea of Christ, when I was antichrist. I wasn't the antichrist. I was just helping him. I'm not that way anymore, to quote Clint Eastwood from *Unforgiven*, the best movie ever made. "I ain't that way anymore."

[00:38:47] Tiffany: I have no idea what you're talking about.

[00:38:49] Ray: That is sad. What kind of education has your husband given you?

[00:38:53] Tiffany: Do you think he's seen that? What's it called?

[00:38:53] Ray: Troy? I'm throwing down the gauntlet, my friend. Why has your wife not seen *Unforgiven*?

[00:38:59] Tiffany: I like Clinton Eastwood. He's a good director too.

[00:39:03] Ray: He is a great director but *Unforgiven*, you haven't seen it. I'm so wounded.

[00:39:07] Tiffany: I'm going to text him right now. Have you seen *Unforgiven*?

[00:39:13] Ray: If not, you guys should just come over. We'll make a night of it. We'll watch that and then maybe if we're not sleepy, we'll watch *Jeremiah Johnson* afterward.

[00:39:19] Tiffany: I actually really liked that movie except I hated when everybody died, it was sad and it was surprising because Troy was like, "It's such a good movie," and I'm sitting there expecting a good ending.

[00:39:30] Ray: One of the greatest movies, everybody does die.

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[00:39:33] **Tiffany:** That guy reminds me of Troy. *Unforgiven*.

[00:39:37] **Ray:** *Unforgiven*. People can give all the arguments about the irrationality of God that they want to, but I've got something they don't have. I have an experience with God. Somebody once said, "A man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument." Your argument is meaningless in the face of my experience. So, take that, Dawkins.

[00:40:02] **Tiffany:** [whispers] Whoever that is.

[00:40:06] **Ray:** He's the high priest of the Neoatheist movement. Brief story, there's a movie that stars-- I can't remember the name of the movie and I can't remember the name of the guy who stars in it. Ben Stein and the movie is about whether or not there really is a God, is atheism real or is there really a God? Ben Stein who was Ferris Bueller's teacher- Bueller-- What did Troy say?

[00:40:28] **Tiffany:** Troy said about the movie *Unforgiven*, "Babe, it's Clint Eastwood," like 80 times. [laughs]

[00:40:34] **Ray:** Yes, Troy.

[00:40:38] **Tiffany:** Yes, it looks that's the next movie I'm watching with him.

[00:40:40] **Ray:** I knew it, I knew he would not let me down. Ben Stein does this movie where he's interviewing all these different people about whether there's a god or not, he actually somehow, I don't know how, convinced Richard Dawkins, the world's most vocal, bitter, angry, outspoken atheist who wrote a book called *The God Delusion*. It's been an international bestseller now for years. He's the leader of what's called the Neoatheist movement, he eloquently argues against the existence of God. Somehow Ben Stein convinced him to be interviewed in this movie that was actually pro-God. He asked him all the hard questions and he got down to the bottom of all the questions which was, "Okay, Dawkins. If God didn't create life, where did it come from?" Dawkins' answer, "Aliens."

[00:41:29] **Tiffany:** This actually leads me to wonder where his hate and bitterness toward God came from.

[00:41:36] **Ray:** That's always a question.

[00:41:37] **Tiffany:** Does he explain that ever?

[00:41:38] **Ray:** No. He says he doesn't hate God, just think it's an irrational idea.

[00:41:43] **Tiffany:** So he's never experienced God yet.

[00:41:45] **Ray:** So he says. I know there's a part of the Bible that says, "Well, they may not have read the Scriptures but they've seen the heavens, they have no



excuse." Anyway, we make meanings out of things because that's what we decide they mean. I believe that if we are believers, this is a season of faith, we believe that something extraordinary happened a couple 1,000+ years ago on earth when God came to intersect with man and bring peace on earth and goodwill toward men. We believe that's extraordinary, it's the pivotal moment in history. We believe. We're believers. It's our nature to believe.

This is the weirdest Christmas episode of a podcast ever, my question for you in this season is what do you choose to believe? Do you choose to believe the best or choose to believe the worst about anything?

[00:42:40] Tiffany: I think it depends.

[00:42:43] Ray: If you're choosing to believe the worst, what if you'd made a different choice, would that change your life?

[00:42:49] Tiffany: Totally.

[00:42:50] Ray: I believe it would. If you don't believe it would, just try it on like a coat. Try to catch yourself believing the worst over the next week or so and decide, "What if I believe the best, what would I believe then about the situation?" See if it doesn't change things. We've all had a little experience, with this we've all had situations where we turned our thinking around and realized, "Oh, it's totally opposite of what I thought it was." Even if we were wrong, even if it was the bad thing, thinking the best ultimately helped us more than thinking the worst.

[00:43:20] Tiffany: Absolutely.

[00:43:22] Ray: So with that-

[00:43:24] Tiffany: Merry Christmas you guys.

[00:43:25] Ray: Merry freaking Christmas. Hope you get what you want, also hope you get what you need.

[00:43:30] Tiffany: Yes, I rarely get what I want. [laughs]

[00:43:33] Ray: Somebody asked me what I wanted for Christmas yesterday and I had to think about it for a long while. I said, "I can't think of anything I don't have."

[00:43:41] Tiffany: Well, you can physically buy all the stuff that you want, anybody can.

[00:43:45] Ray: There's other stuff that I want that I can't afford to buy yet, but if I wanted to buy it, I could probably find a way to get it, but really? If you define 'want', like I really, really long to have this thing that I don't have, there's things that would be nice, but I've got everything I really want.



[00:44:02] Tiffany: What I really want right now is my she shed all done and cute, and the money to do it with. That's what I really want and I'm actually going to get that for Christmas. So Merry Christmas to me. [laughter]

[00:44:19] Ray: Oh, Tiffany. All right. We will be back next week. Until then, have a wonderful holiday. Spent some time with your family and if you're not with family, I realize some of you are not, let me just take a moment to speak to this. If this is a time of separation for you or sadness, just remember you can think about the good times, the good times to come if you're a believer, and you can find other things to focus on. If all else fails, if it's come to this, you could pray that God will give you comfort and company and peace. You might be surprised how he answers that prayer. Merry Christmas.

[music]

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[00:45:31] [END OF AUDIO]