

## Transcript 176

Shea Houdmann

Welcome to the Got Questions podcast. Joining me today is Elizabeth Urbanowicz. She is the founder of Foundation Worldview. We've had on before, but they've just released a new curriculum that we wanted to spotlight today. So Elizabeth and welcome back.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Well, thanks so much for having me on today Shea. It's a joy to be with you.

Shea Houdmann

Thank you for that. And those were talking ahead of time that you guys promote Got Questions a lot to your your listeners, to your group. So thank you for that as well. We always appreciate that. And and we've had many opportunities to point people towards Foundation Worldview as they've asked us for what's a good way to disciple my kids or to train our kids in apologetics and world view. So thank you for what you're doing as well. So for our listeners who may not be familiar, what is Foundation Worldview?

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Yes. So Foundation Worldview is an organization where we seek to equip Christian adults with the tools that they need to get their kids carefully evaluating every idea they encounter so they can understand the truth both of the biblical worldview. And the primary way that we do that is through curriculum that we create curriculum for kids, four on up, 8 on up, and 10 on up that parents can implement in their home or Christian educators can implement in school or church leaders can implement in a church. And we just want to provide, you know, really easily accessible tools to equip kids to think critically, and to think biblically.

Shea Houdmann

So I know you've just released a new curriculum, and what is this one about and what led you to make this the I think the second major curriculum that you've released?

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

So yeah, so this curriculum is our second one in the four on up category. We have three other ones for older ones, but it is the second one in that category. And it is called the attributes of God curriculum. Which at first I know for many people listening probably like, oh, attributes of God, I've heard of the attributes of God, no big deal. We're like wait a minute. Let's think about this, who God is. You know this is so important for our little ones to understand. And actually what made us decide to go this route to create a curriculum on the attributes of God, we're just seeing how different resources that were made available for children, sometimes even in really popular Sunday school curriculums that just didn't have a proper hermeneutic. And you know the way that they were looking at Scripture, they were just trying to twist out some moral lesson rather than approaching the text and looking at what has this text revealed about who God is.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

And then another thing that really led us to be interested in this is, as we started just listening to some more deconstruction stories of well known evangelicals, you know who have supportively, deconstructed or deconverted. They sort of listening, you know, to what they were describing their experience with Christianity and the Bible and then saying, oh my goodness, they're not really describing God as he is has revealed himself in Scripture. And we thought, wow, you know, when our kids are this young age we really want to make sure that we're grounding them in the truth of who God is. So anytime they hear something about God that doesn't actually align with his word, you know, whether it's in just some materials that have kind of like snuck their way into the church that are, like, really not biblically faithful, or whether it's hearing, you know, the story of someone who has deconstructed or deconverted their faith or just, you know, anything they're encountering in the media we want kids to have a biblically grounded understanding of the character and nature of God. And so that's why we set out to create these resources, to teach really big truths to little minds in a way that aligns with God's design for the child mind.

Shea Houdmann

You're exactly right about the deconversion stories. So many of the ones that we hear at Got Questions are people, I've left the Christian faith or I've at least left evangelical Christianity because I can't follow a God who does this or I can't follow a religion that teaches this. And in many of those cases, it's like God doesn't say that.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Right.

Shea Houdmann

Jesus didn't teach that. What you're rebelling against is the actions of a fallen human being. So grounding people in what God is truly like is hugely important. I imagine at some point you're going to do like a A who is Jesus curriculum as well to really focus him on both Jesus and his teachings, because that's often the next step after a attributes of God study. So don't want to put words in your mouth but on on gqkids.org our site for kids, we got a lot of questions of kids just trying to understand who God really is. And really neat stories, neat questions, different questions that we get from adults. So what you're doing is very much needed. And just looking at the curriculum briefly, I love how you broke it down, is trying to often we'll go with the for adults, the communicable and the incommunicable attributes and those sorts. I like your breakdown of attributes only God has and then attributes God invites us to reflect. I love that definition of what, what led you to break them down that way?

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Well, as you mentioned, you know this is a traditional way that you know, theologians throughout history have divided up God's attributes. You know, his incommunicable attributes, the ones that he alone possesses and then the communicable attributes, the ones that he invites us to reflect. And the reason that we chose to follow this model is first, we wanted kids to understand that God is so very different than us. Because as fallen image bearers, what we naturally do in our fallen state is we view God through the lens of who we are, you know? So we see our limits. We see, you know, times when we're loving times and we're not loving. Times when we're gracious. Times we're not gracious. And we then tend to project those things on to God. Where what we need to do is we need to have a biblically

grounded understanding of who God is. So specifically in the first unit, we have 13 lessons where we just cover God's incommunicable attributes, the ones that he alone has. And so what we do is in each lesson, we present a different attribute of God, you know, different scripture that points to that attribute. And then we have kids play games where they're actually comparing and contrasting to see how very different they are than this attribute of God. You know, we cover things like God is self-existent, he's self-sufficient, he's eternal, he's infinite. He's immutable. These things that we as humans do not have. And then what we do is after we introduce two different attributes of the God we introduce how should we respond to God based on this attribute. And we cover things like you know, we should worship God, we should trust God, we should seek God, we should obey God.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

And then in our next unit, we cover those communicable attributes are the ones that God invites us to reflect because we want little ones to understand that part of being an image bearer of the Holy God means that we get to reflect who God is to the world around us. And we want them to understand like what an awesome privilege that that is that God has invited us to reflect him. While at the same time we cover in that unit when we cover attributes, you know like God is wise, God is faithful, God is good, God is just, God is holy, when we cover these things, we help the kids see how you know we're a tiny, we can be a tiny reflection of that, but we're never going to reflect that perfectly. One because we're not God. Only God, you know, is perfectly wise, perfectly faithful, perfectly just. All of these things. And then two, because we're living on this side of Genesis 3 and because of the fall, you know, God's image in us hasn't been marred. But we don't perfectly reflect that and so then we're bringing in the truth of the gospel that, you know, we're never going to be all of these things that God has called us to be. But Jesus has fulfilled the law for us. You know that he's bore God's wrath towards our sins.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

So anyway, we just really wanted to make sure that kids understand that we're not supposed to look at who God is through the lens of who we are. We're supposed to look at who God is through the lens of who he has revealed himself to be in his word. And then understand that he is vastly different than us. And that is such a good thing because he is perfect.

Shea Houdmann

Well said, an excellent illustration that we often struggle with is people who have trouble picturing God as a father because of the miserable experience they've had with their own earthly father. So trying to interpret God in light of our experiences, who we are, and who we've experienced humanity to be, rather than viewing God based on what the word of God says about who he is, what it's like what his attributes are.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Right.

Shea Houdmann

That's hugely important, yes, we are like a God in many ways but nothing in humanity perfectly reflects God, and that's hugely important to remember that look for God, for the ideal, not not to ourselves or to people around us.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Yes. And in my own adult life, you know, I have seen how an incorrect understanding of who God is really plays out practically. I know of, you know, in conversations with friends in the past, I've heard, you know, beloved friends just say, like, I just can't believe that God would forgive me for that, you know. Which from a human standpoint, that is completely understandable, because how do we forgive? We forgive imperfectly, you know, like someone asks for our forgiveness and we extend that forgiveness. But we have to fight every day to continue extending that forgiveness because we remember the wrong that was done against us. And we have to struggle with that every day of our lives. Where if we understand that God is immutable, he is unchanging, then we can understand that. OK. So that means God's forgiveness is unchanging. God isn't giving forgiveness based on some emotional decision, as we often extend forgiveness. He's basing his forgiveness off of who he is. And therefore, when he extends that forgiveness, he doesn't ever take it back. It doesn't ever change. And so we really need this biblically grounded understanding of who God is to make sure that we are viewing him, as you said, you know, through the lens of who he has revealed himself to be in Scripture, not as our imperfect fallen human nature.

Shea Houdmann

Absolutely. Let me maybe give our listeners an idea of what we're talking about of why kids understanding the attributes of God is so important. You mentioned very beginning that's not maybe a typical study for younger kids, but I think you explained it very well, but maybe that this will help even a step further. How about give me an attribute that only God has and then also an attribute that God invites us to reflect that would be especially important for kids to understand. Obviously all of them are important. But what's something you found once kids get this like they have the eye opening moment. The light bulb goes off. What are some of those particular points that you've you've noticed in your ministry?

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Yeah. So, I mean, it's so hard to like narrow it down because you know all of God's attributes are equal. You know, God isn't broken up into parts, but I think, I am always, I always really enjoy teaching children that God is self-sufficient. That God does not need anything outside of Himself, for two reasons. One, because it's a lie that we humans constantly believe that we're self-sufficient. You know, we constantly think we have it all. Where we can't. You know, like if our oxygen supply was cut off, we would survive for a very short amount of time. You know, we have so many needs. And so I always love teaching children this, you know, like we talk about what are all of the things that you need and sometimes will have them draw pictures. You know, we need shelter. We need food. We need water. We need oxygen. You know, we need physical touch. We need other people. We need relationships. And we talk about is it the same with God, you know? And then we take the kids to scripture and you know about verses about God not needing to be served by human hands. You know, he is not in need of anything. And all of the sudden some not, not every child, but for many children, the light bulb starts to go on and that like, oh God doesn't need me, but he chooses to love me. And that is a really powerful realization for a child, but also for for adults as well. And that sometimes we feel like, you know, God's acceptance of us is based on our performance, you know, and if we don't do all of the right things, you know, God's going to cast us to the side. Where it's like, no, it's very clear in scripture that God accepts us based on the righteousness of Jesus, which has been given to us. But when we can understand, God has no need for

anything, including me, you know, God doesn't need me as a person. He doesn't need my worship. He doesn't need my praises. Those are things that I get to joyfully give to him and that, you know, he chooses to love me. So that's one that I just love getting to teach kids that because so many of them all of a sudden realize like whoa, God doesn't need me. But he still loves me. And that's just like an amazing realization.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

And then an attribute of God that's communicable that God invites us to reflect. I really again, I can't just choose one and be like, this is like, you know, the only light bulb moment. But one one that I really enjoy teaching kids is that God is just. He always does what is right. And punishes sin. Because this is an attribute. You know this is just a concept that first of all, justice is very the the understanding of justice is like very skewed in our culture as to what justice actually is. And as you kind of hinted at before, you know, people saying like, oh, I could never worship a God, you know who does this. We give lots of examples in this lesson of what it would be like if the children were living in a home if they're where their parents were not just. Where their parents didn't seek to do what was right and punish the sin of the children. And kids really, they understand really quickly when we give examples like what if your brother came into your room and he took your favorite toy truck and he didn't ask your permission? He played with it all day and then he broke it. And he didn't do anything about it. OK. And then your parents, they look at it and they say, you know what? It's not that big a deal. It's OK. You know what would you be thinking? What would you be feeling and you'd be feeling angry. You'd be feeling this is not fair because it's not fair. And talking about how God is a good God and part of his goodness is that he is just. Now of course, in the next lesson we talk about God being merciful. And the way that God is merciful is because of the cross. That he cannot give us the punishment we deserve because Jesus has already paid that price. But just loves seeing kind of like the light bulb turn on for kids and understanding like, oh, it's really important that God is just. That, that, you know, God would not be good if he were not a just God.

Shea Houdmann

I think it's amazing that you chose those two. Those would not be the first two that I would go with but like you said, all of the attributes of God, the the ones we do reflect in, the ones we don't crucially important. I mean the Bible reveals into us for the reason help us to understand God and and all of his fullness is as much as we are able to in our finite minds, of course. I love what Foundation Worldviews doing. I love how even advance that you don't treat kids like they can't understand these things. They're like, no, these are important things for children to learn to understand. What do you say to someone who would maybe say, I've seen children's ministries where it never amounts to much more than like Jesus loves me. This I know for the Bible tells me so. That's the the gist of every lesson. You're going significantly deeper than that. What? What gives you the confidence that kids can understand this and can actually apply it to how they relate to God and to then communicate God to other people.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

I love that question because I think it's a really important one, but it's also one that we don't ask often enough. And so what you know, gives me confidence that kids can actually understand these concepts? I think really understanding how God designed the child mind to learn that God has given children just these amazing intellectual capacities, we just have to understand how do children learn best. You know.

So if I sat a child down and I talked at them for 30 minutes, they're not going to hardly get anything because that is not how God is primarily designed for them to learn. You even when you just think about a four or five year old, you know they're moving their body constantly, you know, and they love to run around. And with the way that God has designed their minds to learn is that if we can get their bodies involved in the learning when they're saying things, you know, they say things loudly or they say them quietly or they say them with their hands up, you know, they have to sit down. Whenever we can get their bodies involved from a physical perspective, you know, this is just getting the blood flowing, the oxygen, you know, circulating all the way up to their brain so that they can think well, but also it's helping form just muscle memory and really stimulating different regions of the brain. And so if we understand this, you know, with what God has allowed us to learn through modern medicine through, you know, through brain science. We can really understand that how kids learn best and what we can do to teach them these concepts at an early age.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

And now just thinking about you mentioned kids ministries where things are kind of dumbed down, early on in my teaching career that's that's my background. My background is in elementary education. I was teaching Sunday school at the church that I was attending at that time, I lived just outside of Chicago, and I had this one interaction with one of the third grade boys in my class that just kind of it kind of forever changed how I viewed teaching kids. And I was in the coffee bar area of the church in between services, just working on something. And this little boy from my class saw me and he, he said, saw me and he goes, oh, no, it's you. And I kind of laughed. And I was like, well, it's great to see you too this morning, Samuel. And then I was like, can you tell me why are you not super excited to see me? And he's like oh seeing you here means that you're probably going to be the teacher in our class, and I really don't like when you're our teacher. And I was like, whoa, well, this is different. My students generally like me like why? Why don't you like when I'm your teacher? And he goes because whenever anybody else teaches our class, I just say Jesus as the answer every time and they're fine with that, except for when you teach. You make me explain why Jesus is the answer. And he's like that makes me think. And I don't like that you're not supposed to think at church. That's what school is for. And you know, I kind of chuckled, you know, just that his ability to articulate this at 8 years of age. And I said, you see Samuel, I don't think you meant that as a compliment, but that is one of the best compliments a child has ever given me.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

But what he articulated so well is just what happens so frequently in kids ministries, at churches that we try to get them pumped up and excited about being in church, where I'm just like, OK where biblically in his ministry did Jesus, ever try to get people pumped up and excited about listening to his teaching? Like Jesus said, hard things that actually thinned the crowds. You know, throughout his ministry, he did that. And then when we look at the early church, like, where do we see the apostles trying to go out and get people excited about Jesus? You know, they were excited about Jesus and not because there was a pizza party and loud music, but because they're like, hey, the Messiah has come. Like you gotta see this. And so we need to really shift our focus from entertainment because kids pick up on that. And not be so concerned are they excited to be here? But are we actually helping them understand who God is? Are we helping them read, interpret and apply his word? Because you know what most kids actually would prefer that than the hyped up entertainment because they realize that they have a responsibility then to

do some thinking. And that they're old enough to learn. And when we actually give them that proper respect, you know, as an image bearer of God, they'll really quickly pick up on these concepts that we want them to, you know, understand. And so those two things, you know, we have to understand how God designed the child mind to learn, and then, you know, make sure we're teaching in a way that aligns with that. We need to just ditch the entertainment mindset and say no, these children are worth more. And God has designed them in a way where they can understand more and we're going to feed them. We're not going to try to entertain them.

Shea Houdmann

Excellent point. First you made me hungry when you mentioned the pizza party. So may I may have to change my lunch plans. Suddenly I'm in the mood for pizza. But even though with the learning styles, how children learn differently, I was just having a conversation with a friend the other day about how even adults have learning styles. I don't know what the percentage is, but it's only a certain percentage, maybe 20% of people who learn best through, like a lecture format, and yet that's become the dominant way that we teach, even in churches, to adults is just sit there and listen for half an hour, and you'll absorb the information you need to absorb. It's like that only works well for a small number of people. The rest of the population is learn to adapt because that's the only way they're presenting information. But even learning from kids like wow, there are other ways to learn than just through lecture. There's touch, sight, audio so many other things that can be part of the learning process and yes we grow and adapt from when we're kids, but the way we see and observe kids learning best I think is applications even beyond just kids too. And I think we need to could apply some of these principles you're talking about to how we teach adults as well.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Absolutely.

Shea Houdmann

So we're about out of time. I'll include links to Foundation Worldview, to the new attributes of God curriculum, and the other resources you offer. But so our listeners, what's the best way for them to find out more, perhaps order this? So who would specifically would you say the curriculum was for? We're talking before the interview a little bit about how you originally had one idea that how the content would be used and you found it being used in a different way, and that's great. So how can people learn more and what are the best ways for them to get in touch with your organization?

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Yes. So if you can just remember the organizations name, Foundation Worldview, you can go to [foundationworldview.com](http://foundationworldview.com) or if you just type in Foundation Worldview into your search engine, it should pop up because fortunately we have a good team that works on SEO. So we should be the first thing that pops up. So just go to [foundationworldview.com](http://foundationworldview.com) or type this into your search engine. And then is the question about who are these material for? As you and I were talking beforehand today Shea, I was saying how I'm a teacher, that's my background. And so initially when I created the first Foundation Worldview curriculum 5 years ago, I had Christian schools in mind, which we do have a number of Christian schools that use our curriculum. But over the years we found that 95% of our license holders are families, whether they be home schooling, families or families that do not home school but are just

interested in family discipleship. So families, schools, and churches all can go and check out the curriculum.

Shea Houdmann

And have you found parents who maybe don't have a whole lot of experience teaching its material is very family friendly. You don't need to have a teaching degree to be able to communicate this. I've I've I'm not a parent. God has not never chose to bless my wife and I with kids, but we do a lot of ministry with other people's kids and kids in our church. But for someone who maybe finds teaching kids to challenge them, I this, from what I've seen and gone through, I think your curriculum would seemed very easy to use. And so many different pointers on here's how to communicate this. Here's a lesson that goes along with it. Here's an activity. Here's an art project. So many different ways to to reach the kids and teach that you don't feel like you have to prepare a like we're talking about a 10 minute lecture to teach a lesson. There's it's very much more interactive than that.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Absolutely. And we say that as long as you know how to press print and play and sit there and interact with the child, you can implement these curriculums because we do have videos for all of the teaching times so that you don't even need to do the teaching if you don't want to. And then we have our activities. There is a guide, a sheet that goes along with it to guide you through the activities. So we've tried to make it as user-friendly as possible. So if you know how to press print and play, you can implement one of these curriculums with the children God is placed in your care.

Shea Houdmann

Fantastic. So again, we'll include links in the show notes and the description on YouTube and this video goes live and also at [podcast.gotquestions.org](http://podcast.gotquestions.org). So Elizabeth, last question. What's what's coming up next for Foundation Worldview?

Elizabeth Urbanowicz

Yes, so the next curriculums we're working on, I'm excited about also a little intimidated by. We know that there's so much confusion today about what it means to be embodied, what it means to have gender, what it means to be a sexual being, have marriage and family. And so we're actually creating a series of curriculum. First, it will be for four and up. Then Lord willing, 8 on up and then 10 on up, called God's God Design. Where we're giving kids a biblical reality based understanding of what is God's good design for gender, for sex, for marriage and family.

Shea Houdmann

Well, fantastic. That's much needed. It's that topic is exceedingly difficult to communicate to adults, so some practical tips on how to communicate that to kids in various ages, hugely important. So please do proceed with that. That's a fantastic idea. And again, much, much needed. Elizabeth, thank you so much for joining me today. I enjoyed our conversation as always, and we'll continue promoting and praying for Foundation Worldview because we absolutely love what you doing.

Elizabeth Urbanowicz



Now thanks and we will continue promoting Got Questions because we love what you guys are doing, it's so needed.

Shea Houdmann

Thank you for that. This has been the Got Questions podcast with Elizabeth Urbanowicz from Foundation Worldview. Got questions? The Bible has answers and we'll help you find them.