

# Muscular Christianity Radio Live

## Cast:

**Producer / Engineer: Callers:** Chris, Carson

**Vendor #1:** Kristen

**Vendor #2:** Vivian

**Hypemen:** Carter, Taylor, Amanda

## "Muscular Christianity" opening theme...

**Bruce** - Welcome to "Muscular Christianity!" I am your host Bruce Gust and you have landed smack dab in the middle of what we call, "Total Discipleship!" We talk about everything on this program! We leave no stone unturned in order that we might realize a more "muscular" Presence of Christ in every area of our lives.

If you're joining us for the first time, welcome aboard! We've got a lot to talk about today and we will be getting to your phone calls here in just a minute, but I wanted to start with something that's been in the headlines because, in a way, especially for our first time listeners, this represents a good example how Total Discipleship comes to bear in a practical way.

## Headlines

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While the elections for President are still a year away, Republicans are already gearing up. On one hand, you have their own media machine working to present what they're bringing to the table in the best possible light. On the other hand, you have the press who will report what best serves their agenda.

As you look over the political landscape, it can be both daunting and even a little frustrating as you try to separate what represents the candidates' true convictions from the headlines. And then you have the task of trying to decipher how those convictions will come to bear when it's time to lead our country.

Here's the thing: While some would want the citizens of this nation to perceive the phrase, "one nation under God" as antiquated, it is our motto as well as our the best approach we can possibly take when it's time to make our decision at the poles.

A man's policies need to be shaped by his theology. Our country lives and dies according to the extent to which we depend upon God and seek His Counsel. Consider the words of Noah Webster:

"[T]he Christian religion, in its purity, is the basis, or rather the source of all genuine freedom in government. . . . and I am persuaded that no civil government of a republican form can exist and be durable in which the principles of that religion have not a controlling influence." (<http://www.free2pray.info/5founderquotes.html>)

George Washington once said: Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Washington\\_and\\_religion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington_and_religion))

John Adams said:

The general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity. I will avow that I then believed, and now believe, that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God. (<http://www.wallbuilders.com/LIBissuesArticles.asp?id=8755#R132>)

...and all of this squares with Scripture. Consider Psalm 2:10-11 where it says:

**Therefore, you kings be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. (Psalm 2:10-11)**

And in Psalm 145, David talks about how God's leadership and Power equate to safety and prosperity. He says:

**Blessed are the people of whom this is true; blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. (Psalm 144:15)**

So, you can see how as believers we need to be approaching our responsibility to vote by honing in on those characteristics that line up with the way Scripture defines wise and effective leadership...what's that? OK, we've got a call. This is Chris from Mt Juliet. Hey, Chris! Welcome to the "Muscular Christianity Radio Live!

**Chris** – Hey, Bruce! Look, I wanted to ask you a question. You're saying that America was founded on Christian principles, yes?

**Bruce** – Absolutely!

**Chris** – And I want to believe that, but I came across something the other day and I wanted to get your spin on it.

**Bruce** - Hit me!

**Chris** – It's called, "The Treaty of Tripoli." You ever hear of it?

**Bruce** – Yep!

**Chris** – Well, then you're aware of how George Washington said in this document that: "The government of the United States is in no sense founded on the Christian religion."

**Bruce** - Well, that's what some people will tell you, but that's not true.

**Chris** – What do you mean it's not true?

**Bruce** – Well, first off, the "Treaty of Tripoli" was a document crafted in 1797 as a way to secure a peaceful resolution to the problem the United States was having with the Barbary Pirates. This was a group radical Muslims who had determined to make war against any country they perceived as being among the group of nations who were responsible for things like the Crusades and other violent acts committed against Islam. In other words, this was America's first encounter with Islamic Terrorists.

Washington deployed a number of emissaries who attempted to secure safe passage in the Mediterranean by making a Treaty with the Muslims. There were several Treaties and the one written in 1797 was distinctive in that it attempted to better define each country's religion in order to eliminate the idea of a "Holy War" between Christians and Muslims.

Chris, a moment ago you said, "The government of the United States is in no sense founded on the Christian religion." Fact is, that's only a part of Article XI. The entire article reads:

As the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion as it has in itself no character of enmity [hatred] against the laws, religion or tranquility of Musselmen [Muslims] and as the said States [America] have never entered into any war or act of hostility against any Mahometan nation, it is declared by the parties that no pretext arising from religious opinions shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony existing between the two countries.

(<http://www.wallbuilders.com/LIBissuesArticles.asp?id=125>)

In other words, what the envoys were saying in this Article is that we are not a Christian nation in that we're not among those who have distorted and perverted the gospel in order to justify any kind of violence exacted against Islamic countries.

And by the way, Washington never said this. These were the words of his emissaries and the Treaty of 1797 never made it to the Oval Office until months after Washington had left.

And there's a lot more to this issue than what we have time to talk about today, but if you're interested in learning more about our nation's spiritual heritage, head out to wallbuilders.com. There you'll find the works of David Barton who brings to the table an amazing volume of facts and documentation that prove conclusively that our country is, in fact, a Christian nation.

## **Discipleship**

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Alright, Christopher, I think it's time for a little "Total Discipleship!" Hit me with some Discipleship grooves.

**Applause starts**

**Christopher plays the beginning of Toby Mac's "Boomin" (fade)**

**Applause fades**

**Bruce** – See! That's my kind of Praise and Worship right there! We're going to get back into some more "issues" a little bit later, but right now, I want to take a look at Colossians 3:4.

It says:

**When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Col 3:4)**

It's that phrase, "...who is your life" that, in my mind, rates some scrutiny. First, think about Galatians 2:20:

**I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20)**

Recognize that what these verses are saying is that God never intended to be a file folder, rather He is the filing cabinet. The whole of life is defined according to His Word, His Presence and His Pleasure:

**For in him we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28 [see also Rev 4:11])**

Think about this: We have a "Quiet Time," we worship on Sunday morning, we might do a little something extra on Wednesday nites. Most everything about the way in which we engage our Heavenly Father has a built in qualifier that allows us then to more easily segment our lives into categories. Over here we have the "God Thing," and then over here we have the rest of life.

However logical that might sound, it doesn't square with Scripture and it prevents us from being able to access all of what God would otherwise bring to the table to make the ordinary into something extraordinary.

The thing is, we will sometime subconsciously restrict Christ from certain areas of our lives. We'll be passionate in our little spiritual exercises one minute, then we'll turn around and move forward with whatever we're doing with no regard for how God's Word applies.

Let's talk about this. Tell me what you think. I'm saying that the whole of life needs to be processed in the context of your relationship with Christ. Is that practical? Is it Biblical? Does it make a difference?

OK, this is Carson from Hermitage. Carson, welcome to the show!

**Carson** – Yeah, I'm sorry, I don't agree with what you're saying.

**Bruce** – What do you mean?

**Carson** – Your whole thing about all of life being thought of in terms of your relationship with Christ.

**Bruce** – Well, Carson, it really doesn't matter if you agree with me. The question you need to be answering is whether or not you agree with God's Word.

**Carson** – Alright, well let me ask you a couple of questions: How would my relationship with Christ affect me working out in the gym?

**Bruce** – You mean, how does your being a Christian affect the way you might work out in the weight room?

**Carson** – Yeah! See I'm thinking that what you're suggesting could easily become ridiculous. Life isn't a big Sunday School class. There are going to be things that don't necessarily "fit" into a God shaped box.

**Bruce** – Well, look at 2 Corinthians 9:8 where it says:

**And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (2 Cor 9:8)**

Philippians 2:13

**LORD, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished you have done for us. (Phil 2:13)**

John 15:5

**I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (Jn 15:5 [see also 2 Cor 3:5])**

So, given the all-inclusive nature of these verses, the starting point for a response to your question is not so much "if" your relationship with Christ applies, but "how."

Most people work out by themselves, for themselves and answer to no one other than themselves. If asked, "Why do you want to get in shape?" or "Why do you work out?" the answer will be characterized by a large number of personal pronouns: I want to be healthy, I want to look better and I want to perform better.

None of those reasons are wrong, but if the primary motivation for getting in shape is to simply gratify yourself, it's an uphill battle right from the beginning because gratifying yourself can be done much easier by helping yourself to another serving of dessert as opposed to abstaining from sweets all together. Gratification comes a lot quicker by sleeping in than it does getting up early so you can get to the gym on time.

On the other hand, if your desire to get in shape is based on something that goes beyond yourself, than the results are more readily realized. For the believer, fitness isn't just about wellness and aesthetics. We're commanded to imitate God and Jesus, being God in the flesh, was in shape. So now your motivation is based on something far more compelling and motivating than a mere selfish impetus.

**(background music (The Feeling) begins)**

So there's a way in which the Bible applies. Perceive your pursuit of physical fitness as a form of discipleship. Or, as we call it on this program: Total Discipleship.

We'll be right back!

**Applause starts  
(background music crescendos than fades as commercial begins)  
Applause fades**

**Kristen** – This first ten minutes of Muscular Christianity Radio Live is brought to you by newhopeforyou.com. Visit newhopeforyou.com to stay current on what's going on and how you can get involved. That's newhopeforyou.com. New Day. New Life. New Hope.

**(Theme music (Muscular Christianity Theme) starts as subtle bed underneath Bruce's announcement)**

**Bruce** – And don't forget after the service today, the Student Ministry will be hanging out for some food and down time. Meet upstairs immediately following the second service today.

(Theme music ends)

## Arts and Entertainment

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**Applause**

**Theme music ends**

**Applause fades**

**Vivian:** This holiday season, New Hope will be offering a great Christmas Eve service featuring music and all those things that families need and appreciate during this special time of year. Mark your calendars and plan on spending Christmas Eve 2011 with your New Hope Family. For more information head out to [newhopeforyou.com](http://newhopeforyou.com). New day. New life. New Hope!

**Applause starts**

**Theme music (Muscular Christianity theme) plays**

## Diet and Exercise

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**Applause and music fades as Bruce starts talking**

**Bruce** - Welcome back! With the Holidays coming up, some people will cringe at the thought of the number of calories that will inevitably be consumed, simply because that's just the way the holidays are typically structured.

Listen, if you're trying to lose weight, there's no better approach to take than the one that uses accountability to keep you on track.

Of course I'm talking about that passage in Ecclesiastes:

**Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: <sup>10</sup> If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! <sup>11</sup> Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecc 4:9-12)**

But even if you're not dieting, it's still not going over the top to be sensitive to what you're eating and how you're exercising because if you're not giving your body what it needs in the midst of giving your body what your stomach wants, then you run the risk of getting sick and you don't want to do that.

And listen, the book of Leviticus outlines several feasts. The Hebrews were commanded to party from time to time and party they did. There's nothing wrong in enjoying yourself and eating the fruitcake and the cookies etc. So feel free to indulge! Have a great time! But avoid the extremes that often get you into trouble and again, that's coming from the book of Ecclesiastes:

**Do not be overrighteous, neither be overwise— why destroy yourself? ☐ Do not be overwicked, and do not be a fool— why die before your time? ☐ It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. The man who fears God will avoid all extremes. (Ecc 7:16-18)**

So, how do you avoid extremes? Accountability. Write down what you're going to eat before you start the day. If you're going to be enjoying yourself a little bit, maybe there's a company party this afternoon – plan on it! And then structure the remainder of your diet that day in the context of the extra that you might be allowing yourself at the party.

Write it down and then email that to someone you designate as your accountability partner. Plan it out first, document it throughout the day and then email your actual diet to your accountability partner at the end of the day. Do the same with your exercise routine. Write out what you're going to do before you get to the gym, knock it out once you're there and then send then to your accountability partner as well.

I'm telling you, accountability makes all the difference and the fact that it's a concept coming out of God's Word you can rest assured that when properly deployed, genuine results are just around the corner. And that's what Total Discipleship is all about. That, ladies and gentlemen, is "Muscular Christianity!"

**Applause**

**Background music (Mighty To Save) comes in and fades**

## **High Altitude**

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Christopher, I'm thinking it's time for a little "High Altitude," what do you think?

If you're not familiar with the "High Altitude" section of our show, this is where we're just flying by the seat of our pants...

Audience participation time

**Theme music begins**

## **Wrap Up**

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Folks, we're coming up to the end of our show. I want to thank you for joining us and remember, "Muscular Christianity" – the pursuit of a more "muscular" Presence of Christ in every area of our life, is not some new spin on Scripture. It's not a gimmick or a sales pitch, it's simply revisiting and reinforcing the Biblical command that has been issued to all of us and that is to imitate God and to abound in every good work. God is not a file folder, He's the filing cabinet. Make that your approach! Don't just give Him the wheel, give Him the keys! Don't just exist, "live" the life that God would live in and through you and we will see you next time!

**Applause**

**Music fades**