



Statistics getting worse: 70% of born-again Christians no longer believe in absolute truth

But wait -- how does one know what is true?

Apologist offers courses for schools, adults on how to discern truth

Transparent:

How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You

by

Dave Richardson

Meet Author Dave Richardson at NRB

Book Signing Friday 10:15 – 11 am, autograph booth B

Meet and Greet Wednesday at 11 am, booth 345



NRB: February 20, 2024 – Only 30 percent of respondents in a recent survey self-identifying as “born again Christian” report they believe in absolute truth. This percentage continues to decline each year in the annual Barna survey. * In addition, statistics are almost as alarming for American Christian pastors across all denominations, averaging 39 percent who believe in absolute truth.

these statistics tell us why a million young adults raised in Christian homes walk away from their faith every year. But one can’t entirely blame the kids – stats also indicate only 24 percent of parents of preteens believe in absolute truth.



People not only no longer believe in absolute truth, they don’t know how to know if something is true, said Dave Richardson, an apologist who is founder and CEO of Assumptions Institute, and author of ***Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You.***

Richardson, an Oxford University-educated thinker, watches these Barna reports annually and has an idea of why these number are falling, but more significantly, has a solution to offer.

People need to learn how to discern truth, Richardson explains.

“First of all,” he said, “Today most people, including most Christians, have been taught that the Bible is true only if they accept it as true. The culture today is telling people that something is true only if they believe it is true. And that applies to the Gospel they’ve known all their life.”

“Starting with that confusion, it’s no wonder people state they don’t believe in absolute truth. They don’t know what to believe,” he added.

In his work to help people discern truth and engage the culture to influence others for Christ, he landed on this as a starting point: What assumptions are being made?

From there, he developed an innovative and powerful assumptions-based system to teach discernment.

“Almost every parent assumes that discernment is an innate skill that every person has. It isn’t! Hebrews 5:14 tells us: ‘Solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.’ Scripture is clear that discernment requires training and practice. If you don’t train a child and practice with them how to recognize truth, they may never recognize truth even when God and the Bible are the source. “

“Without deliberate coaching to recognize what is true, students will continue to think truth is relative, and too many of them will exit Christianity in ever increasing numbers,” he said.

“Learn to Discern is a systematic method to quickly and reliably discern what is and isn’t true in classrooms, the media, and the culture,” Richardson explains. “It relates Christian thinking to all these things. The result is being able to train both children and adults with this tangible discernment skill.”

His intriguing ideas have been praised by Josh McDowell, Eric Metaxas and William Lane Craig.

Learn to Discern (www.learntodiscern.com)

Richardson’s Assumption Institute recently launched Learn to Discern, a new initiative offering online courses they developed for use by Christian schools, home schoolers, individuals and churches or small groups. Available at Learn (learntodiscern.com) the courses provide tools to teach discernment of truth to kids – and adults.

The Critical Assumptions Test (CAT)

He’s even created a practical tool for revealing assumptions, the Critical Assumptions Test (CAT) available as an app. The CAT helps people quickly see through the messages they encounter daily in what they read, watch, and hear.

“I want to challenge you to use the Critical Assumptions Test to reveal the assumptions in the books and articles you read, the TV shows and movies you watch, the lectures and talk show debates you listen to, or conversations you have with friends,” Richardson says. “Once the assumptions surface, you’ll know if they are true or not and if you should accept or reject them. “

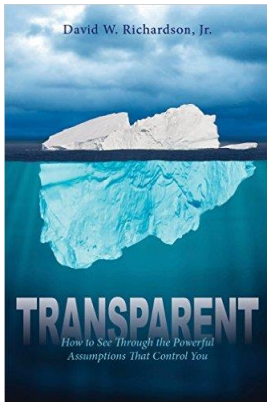
More about Dave Richardson

After decades with Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ) ministering to university professors, the Oxford University-educated author and speaker started with his development of the study of the assumptions we make in decision making and understanding truth, leading to his creation of Assumptions Institute and his book. A resident of the Atlanta area, Richardson holds a B.A. degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Portland, an M.A. degree in Theological Studies from the International School of Theology, and an MTh. degree in Applied Theology from the University of Oxford, England.

For more information about the Learn to Discern courses and Assumptions Institute, visit www.learntodiscern.com or www.assumptionsinstitute.org. **Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You** (Clovercroft Publishing) is available from selected bookstores, online retailers, and from <http://http://www.TheTransparentBook.com>.

* George Barna, “American Worldview Inventory 2022-23,” Cultural Research Center, Arizona Christian University, May 31, 2023.

**Richardson will be at NRB Tuesday - Friday and is available for interviews.
For a review copy or to interview Dave Richardson, contact Joni Sullivan Baker, Buoyancy PR,
at [513/319-3231](tel:5133193231) or jbaker@buoyancypr.com. At NRB, visit Buoyancy PR at booth 345.**



Interview Questions

Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You

By Dave Richardson

Host: 70 percent of people who consider themselves Christians do not believe in absolute truth. How can that be?

Here's another one. But they aren't alone. Pastors, parents of preteens – the numbers of Christian people responsible for guiding the faith of others – also shifting in their view.

Why? What impact is this having?

Author Dave Richardson is someone whose ministry is defending the faith, and he has some ideas. He's spent decades learning how people come to faith, and why some abandon it.

He believes it's time to "Learn to Discern."

Dave is not only the author of a book, *Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You*, but he and his team at Learn to Discern recently launched online courses to fight back. We are delighted to have Dave with us today.

Q. Dave, let's dive in here—tell us about these alarming statistics and help us understand them.

Q. What can we do? How do we combat the concept of relative truth?

Q. You also tell us that one million young people each year are leaving faith?

Q. Where did that statistic come from?

Q: And why is this happening?

Q. But now your organization is launching an exciting new initiative with online courses called Learn to Discern. Tell us about those.

Q. Your organization is called Assumptions Institute. How did you come to develop this? Tell us a bit more about your background and how you came to focus on this area of ministry. We know your background includes a number of years working with Cru, formerly Campus Crusade for Christ, but working on college campuses with the professors, not the students.

Q. You want to help people come to faith, or strengthen their faith, by thinking things through, using the brains God gave us. Start us at the beginning. What is this about making assumptions?

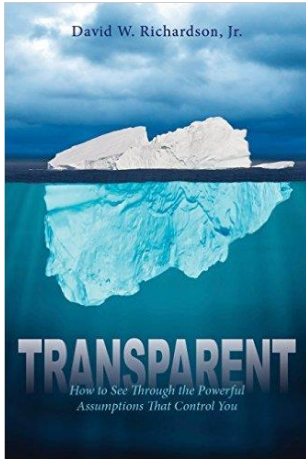
Q. You developed these ideas in your book called, **Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You**. Tell us more about the book.

Q. And how again can people connect with those online Learn to Discern courses?

Q. Thanks for being with us. Last but not least, how can we learn more and where can we get a copy of the book? Are you available for speaking engagements?

For more information about the Learn to Discern courses and Assumptions Institute, visit www.learntodiscern.com or www.assumptionsinstitute.org. ***Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You*** (Clovercroft Publishing) is available from selected bookstores, online retailers, and from <http://http://www.TheTransparentBook.com>.

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Author Bio: Dave Richardson

Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You

David Richardson is the founder of the Assumptions Institute and its Chief Executive Officer. Prior to founding the Assumptions Institute, Richardson served for 30 years on the staff of Cru, formerly known as Campus Crusade for Christ, devoting most of his ministry to university professors. The Atlanta-area resident founded the Christian faculty ministry in Atlanta at Georgia Tech in 1996.



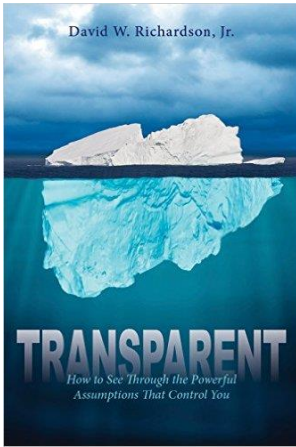
He holds a B.A. degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Portland, and an M.A. degree in Theological Studies from the International School of Theology. Richardson also holds an MTh. degree in Applied Theology from the University of Oxford. His dissertation, "Accepting Christian Faith in the Academy," was an important exploratory study of the religious attitudes and beliefs of university professors and how to reach them for Christ. He understands education and educators very well.

Richardson is the innovator who discovered the power of assumptions. His research about assumptions enabled him to create the Assumptions Sorter™ and the Critical Assumptions Test. His research, writing, teaching, and speaking is at the heart of the work of the Assumptions Institute, and led to creating a series of video courses called Learn to Discern (www.learntodiscern.com). The first courses launched in 2023.

Richardson's first book, *Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You* released from Clovercroft Publishing. It is available from Amazon and other online retailers, selected bookstores, and from [http:// www.TheTransparentBook.com](http://www.TheTransparentBook.com). More information on Learn to Discern courses is available at LearntoDiscern.com.

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What Others Are Saying About

Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You

By Dave Richardson

“Dave’s method helps people discover what is really true in the confusion of voices in the age of the internet. Not only that, but the Critical Assumptions Test can help lead people to Jesus and bring Him into every area of their lives. Dave Richardson and Assumptions Institute have done us all a great service.”

**Josh McDowell,
Apologist, speaker and Best-Selling Author of
Evidence that Demands a Verdict and more than 150 other titles**

“This is an important book on a tremendously important subject. That there has been an intentional and systematic indoctrination of Americans with false and pernicious ideas is horrific, but this fine book helps us understand what has happened and helps us also see how we can – and absolutely must – oppose those ideas.”

**--Eric Metaxas, Host of the nationally syndicated *Eric Metaxas Show*
And New York Times best-selling author of *Bonhoeffer***

“Dave Richardson’s life and ministry have been characterized by an all-in attitude, the pursuit of God-inspired truth, and impact! His most recent work is truly ground-breaking and has the power to re-shape the spiritual landscape of generations. An investment in his ministry will pay eternal dividends!”

**— Mark Miller
Vice President of High Performance Leadership, Chick-fil-a Inc.**

“Dave Richardson’s book is the result of decades of reflection and hands-on experience ministering on secular university campuses. He has developed an effective method to help us excavate the assumptions that underlie much of what we hear in in the classroom, the news, movies, lectures, or just conversations with friends. *Transparent* is simple enough for students, but powerful enough for adults to enable them to integrate their faith with their fields of expertise. I heartily recommend it.

“Dave Richardson’s Critical Assumptions Test is a handy diagnostic tool for discerning a person’s assumptions in an otherwise foggy situation. It can help to identify another person’s deep and often unconsciously held presuppositions as well as to think integratively about one’s own academic discipline.”

**— William Lane Craig
Author, Debator, and Research Professor of Philosophy, Talbot School of Theology**

“David Richardson has simplified the foundational building blocks of theology to assumptions that help reveal the Truth. Bravo!”

— **Dr. Ted Baehr, Chairman of the Christian Film and Television Commission
and Publisher of MOVIEGUIDE®**

“There are a few thinkers whose insights changed the world. J.K. Rowling, a British woman, earned billions of dollars in her books about Harry Potter that became popular movies. The General Theory of Relativity that defines the sciences came out of Albert Einstein’s relentless curiosity. Hassan al-Banna assembled what became the jihadist movement, Muslim Brotherhood, which is behind the formation of the Muslim Student Association on American campuses. The founder of the globally dominant Apple, Steve Jobs, accomplished it before he died in his 50s. The inventors of nuclear power and the atomic and hydrogen bombs changed the world. And the Intelligentsia successfully infiltrated universities with ideas that emasculated Christianity and have changed America and the world.

“The main approach that Christians employ to defend their faith in the world is apologetics and worldviews. David Richardson goes beyond these and does something better. He does not simply ‘defend.’ He is the only one that I know who uncovers the weakness of the intellectuals in universities, the media, government, and culture. David provides a powerful offense, and does so in a winsome fashion. His thinking redefines what it means to be a public Christian. The words ‘changing the world’ are dangerous. The insights in *Transparent* show what changing the world means.”

—**J. Stanley Oakes,
Chancellor, The King’s College, New York City**

“David Richardson’s book *Transparent* is both insightful as well as of much practical help. It reminds us of the power of assumptions—assumptions that can either help us or harm us. This book is an important guide for persons from any background or walk of life. To ignore this book’s increasingly important message in our terribly fragmented culture is to keep ourselves enslaved to falsehoods, trapped in dead-end lifestyles, and removed from the possibility of transformation and growth.

“I strongly recommend David Richardson’s Assumptions Institute. It presents a practical pathway to proper self-understanding, a properly-aligned orientation to the world around us, and wise guidance in discovering a life that has been designed to flourish—once our core assumptions and hearts’ direction have been correctly aligned with the Ultimate Reality.”

— **Paul Copan, Pledger Family Chair of Philosophy and Ethics,
Palm Beach Atlantic University, West Palm Beach, Florida**

“David Richardson has written what is perhaps the most insightful book to date on the ‘spiritual but not religious’ generation. While most analyses of this phenomenon amount to little more than handwringing, *Transparent* tackles head on a likely source of the trouble: the lack of vital Christianity in the lives of parents and adults in the millennial generation. I highly recommend this book.”

—**Greg Thornbury, President
The King’s College, New York City**

“Searching for the truth? David Richardson maps three rivers through the land of assumptions and gives you a practical tool, the Critical Assumptions Test, to help you decide which route to take to reach Truth Territory. As he strips away false assumptions about life, you’ll reach surprising conclusions about the world and your place in it.”

— **Mike Donahue, prominent television journalist, Portland, Oregon**

“Dave Richardson’s seminar is helpful in identifying the basic types of assumptions and how they impact the understanding of various disciplines. I touch on philosophical aspects of science in my course introduction lectures. Dave’s seminar helped me improve and clarify this material.”

— **C. David Sherrill, Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry
Georgia Institute of Technology**

“As a veteran of ministry with students in many settings, Dave Richardson has ample experience of the kinds of questions raised against the gospel and the struggles that so many believers, often raised with what they see as strong beliefs, yet when confronted by other ideas, worldviews or claims, they find themselves unable to respond in a meaningful way or how to begin to frame a response to questions or challenges against their beliefs. This book is a thoughtful but also practical tool that gets to the heart of discussions and provides an accessible method that enables a conversation to get to the core, and those communicating to show quickly and effectively, why different assumptions have serious outcomes and what difference the differences make. I highly recommend this book and believe it will help many to seriously engage with other views and show a coherent and robust response.”

— **Stuart McAllister**

“David Richardson is a man of both uncommon wisdom and unbridled passion. It’s that mix of wisdom and passion that gets me really excited to watch how God can work in and through a person. When David first explained his Critical Assumptions Test to our staff, I was blown away and immediately saw the wisdom of his apologetic. Now that he has written this book, I believe that many will benefit from his knowledge. And not only that, the kingdom will grow. You will be blessed by this book!”

— **Daniel Fusco, Author and Lead Pastor
Crossroads Community Church, Vancouver, Washington**

“I’m not a smart guy. I always need outside help to think and live in a way that honors Christ and reflects His glory. David Richardson is one of my sources of help. His book *Transparent* helps us all—students and parents, pastors and people—understand the assumptions behind the beliefs and behaviors we encounter in all realms of life. David gives us much help as we bear witness to Christ and make ethical choices. I enthusiastically recommend the book!”

— **B. Keith Moore, Senior Pastor, Dogwood Church, Tyrone, Georgia**

“As a person with a Masters in Pure Mathematics, I found Dave Richardson’s explanation of what was at the ‘foundations’ of my subject to be better than what most people think they know about math from even a ‘graduate level understanding’ ... He was as near to ‘dead-on’ as I would know how to speak to an ‘eclectic group of people’ about my subject!”

— **James, a mathematician in California**

“I first met David Richardson several years ago when he was first beginning work on his book. As a career educator, I was impressed that his Critical Assumptions Test is the most innovative thing I have seen in 40 years. It is powerful enough for teachers and leaders, but simple enough for students and parents. *Transparent* will help you quickly see through the complex ideas and issues we face in a global society. It will give you the means to connect your faith with whatever you do or wherever you go. I guarantee you have never thought like this before. Get ready for an epic adventure.”

-- **Bill Gibbons
Superintendent, Cornerstone Christian Academy for Learning and Leadership,
Vancouver, Washington**

“Dave’s book and Critical Assumptions Test are a must in the existing environment of ideas, lifestyles, and concepts. They allow the person desiring to live biblically to assess foundational assumptions both in their professional and personal lives and provide a rapid way to assist the believer in taking ‘every thought captive.’”

-- Nolan Hertel
Professor, Nuclear and Radiological Engineering,
Georgia Institute of Technology

“*Transparent* is written as a) a popular book for the lay Christian audience, and as b) a scholarly treatise that will become an essential reference textbook for clergy and laity. It addresses the widespread problem of ‘Christian disengagement’ by the lay Christian people with the un-disciplined public in Western culture. [David] Richardson elaborates a careful study of the root problems facing Christians who attempt to engage a culture that is largely un-disciplined by the Christian movement. With the problems clearly analyzed, he moves on to offer a solution to the problems that can be used by young and more mature Christians. This solution will also appear as an app that can be placed on your appropriate electronic device. Numerous examples are given in the text to show how the tool can be used to engage effectively the un-disciplined person. In addition, Dave shows how this general methodology described in *Transparent* can be applied to one’s own profession to become a more effective disciple in that work arena. I endorse with enthusiasm the book *Transparent* as the next text that you buy for your library. It will become your next best ‘literary friend’ for many years to come.”

--Mark G. White
Ph.D., Director and Professor Emeritus,
Dave C. Swalm School of Chemical Engineering, Mississippi State University

“*Transparent: How to See Through the Powerful Assumptions That Control You* is a pioneering, practical, and simple tool for doing what the subtitle says. It shows how to look at your own thought or someone else’s, and pull the curtain back to see how those heretofore unrecognized assumptions in your life actually do shape your observations and actions. I plan to use *Transparent* with our students at Konos Academy. Why should the professionals have all the fun?”

--Charles Thaxton
Coauthor of *The Mystery of Life’s Origin* and *The Soul of Science*
President of Konos Connection. Dr. Thaxton is considered one of the
founders of the modern Intelligent Design movement.

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