



A GLOBAL GOSPEL IN A WORLD OF RELIGIONS

with David Platt

SECRET
CHURCH™

KNOW HIS WORD. KNOW HIS PERSECUTED.

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For millions of believers around the world, faith in Christ and belief in the teachings of the Bible are not only discouraged but actually dangerous.

KNOW HIS WORD.
KNOW HIS PERSECUTED.

Periodically, Secret Church gatherings are held to engage in an intense six-hour Bible study as we identify with and pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters around the globe.

The objective of Secret Church is for you to pass along what you learn in these gatherings to others so that you can make disciples of Christ in all nations for God's glory.

secretchurch.org

What Is Secret Church?

Secret Church began in 2006 at The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama, based on time David Platt spent with brothers and sisters in underground Asian house churches. In those contexts, Christ-followers gather together at the risk of their lives for 8-12 hours at a time—simply to pray, worship, and study God’s Word. It’s simple, raw, and dangerous . . . all at the same time.

The leadership at Brook Hills began asking if they could do the same thing and decided to try it. They chose a Friday evening where people could gather for six hours for two main purposes: to worship through intensive study of the Word and to identify with our persecuted brothers and sisters by praying intentionally for them. Simply six hours of teaching and prayer.

Approximately 1,000 people participated in the first gathering to study through Secret Church: Survey of the Old Testament and to pray for peoples across Africa. Secret Church continued to grow, and before long, people were driving across the United States to be part of these special gatherings and asking if Secret Church could come to their church.

In 2011, Radical facilitated the first Secret Church simulcast, making it available to churches and small groups across the United States and around the world.

Beyond These Walls

We're glad you've decided to participate in Secret Church. But even if no one showed up, it would still be worth the effort. Actually, this Bible study will hopefully benefit far more people than just those who were in attendance. Here's how ...

AROUND THE WORLD

Most Christ-followers around the world don't have access to seminaries or Bible colleges. In fact, Christ-followers in many parts of the world have no formal Christian teaching at all. As David continues to lead additional Secret Church studies, numerous hours of Bible teaching on various biblical and theological issues are created. Together, the sessions will comprise a portable seminary, so to speak, with mini-courses in biblical training, which are accessible to anyone.

The teaching sessions at each gathering are recorded. Those recordings are then transcribed and translated into many different languages, including Spanish, Mandarin, Hindi, Arabic, and others. The translated versions of Secret Church will be available online as translations are completed.

You are permitted—and encouraged!—to share Secret Church teachings with friends who live in other parts of the world. We also enjoy hearing about the unique ways that short-term teams use Secret Church to train pastors and encourage Christ-followers among the nations.

WHERE YOU ARE

One-On-One Discipleship

Don't let Secret Church be a collection of "fill in the blanks" that exists merely for your own personal growth. Instead, use what you are learning to teach others. Purchase or download an extra study guide and invite a friend to join you as you watch the teaching sessions from a previous gathering and discuss them further. We think the first six Secret Church studies would be good discipleship material to walk through with new believers over a period of several months.

For Small Group Study

Many small groups use Secret Church materials as a weekly curriculum. This gives small group members the opportunity to engage in additional discussion around the topics discussed. We have begun creating Discussion Guides specifically for the purpose of assisting small group leaders in guiding discussion and study within their groups.

Churchwide Gatherings

Some churches use past Secret Church resources to hold gatherings at other times during the year. Some may have Secret Church gatherings once a month to "catch up" on gatherings they've missed. Others choose a topic that is of

particular interest to their faith families and invite the entire church to participate. Others may plan a churchwide gathering and then encourage their attendees to go back through the material in a small group setting, utilizing the Secret Church Discussion Guides.

SECRET CHURCH OFFERING

At each Secret Church gathering we take up an offering. All the proceeds will support persecuted Christians worldwide through ongoing ministry initiatives and provide Secret Church Bible teaching materials in multiple languages. Imagine a house-church leader in Asia or the Middle East, now able to hear hours of Bible teaching as he listens to Secret Church in his own language. With your help, this can become a reality.

If you would like to make a donation to Secret Church or would like any of the Secret Church resources in another language, go to Radical.net.

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A GLOBAL GOSPEL IN A WORLD OF RELIGIONS

Secret Church

Realities In The Present ...

- *The World Christian Encyclopedia* lists nearly 10,000 distinct religions and para-religions (including various branches, subgroups, and denominations).
 - Of these, 270 have followings of over 500,000 individuals.
 - NOTE: The “nonreligious” are included as a “religious stream” based upon the fact that their belief systems possess characteristics of religions: an unprovable set of beliefs and often a desire to propagate them.
- Christianity ...
 - A monotheistic religion based on the Bible and the life and teachings of Jesus.
 - Includes a multiplicity of traditions and confessions and varying degrees of commitment.
 - Population: Over 1.9 billion
 - Countries: 206
 - People Groups: 4,082
 - NOTE: For the numbers used here, “people group” refers to an ethno-linguistic group that shares a common self-identity.
 - Unreached People Groups: 1,251
 - NOTE: For the numbers used here, “unreached” refers to people groups among whom there is no indigenous community of evangelical Christians who are able to engage that people through church planting. Technically speaking, the percentage of evangelical Christians in that people group is less than 2%.
- Islam ...
 - A monotheistic religion articulated by the Qur’an and by the teachings and example of Muhammad, who is considered to be the last prophet of God.
 - Population: Over 1.7 billion
 - Countries: 149
 - People Groups: 2,317
 - Unreached People Groups: 2,121
- Atheism ...
 - A belief system which functionally denies the existence of a God or gods.
 - Population: Over 1.6 billion
 - Countries: 110
 - People Groups: 287
 - Unreached People Groups: 198

- Hinduism ...
 - A conglomeration of religious, philosophical, and cultural ideas characterized by a belief in reincarnation and the pursuit of liberation from the cycle of reincarnation.
 - Population: Over 915 million
 - Countries: 51
 - People Groups: 1,235
 - Unreached People Groups: 1,115
- Buddhism ...
 - The belief system of those who follow the Buddha, whereby saving oneself comes by following a regimen (path or ritual) marked by meditation and mantras.
 - Population: Over 250 million
 - Countries: 62
 - People Groups: 354
 - Unreached People Groups: 296
- Animism ...
 - The belief system which claims that non-human entities (animals, plants, inanimate objects) possess a spiritual essence or soul.
 - Includes the belief that there is no separation between the spiritual and physical worlds, and that spirits exist not only in physical objects but also in phenomena such as thunder, wind, and shadows.

(For more on these and other statistics, go to peoplegroups.org.)

Projections For The Future (By 2050) ...

- Overall ...
 - The number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians in the world.
 - The number of Christians is projected to rise at the rate of the world's population (about 35%).
 - The number of Muslims is projected to increase at twice the rate of the world's population (about 73%).
 - Though nonreligious adherents will increase, they will make up a declining share of the world's total population.
 - The global Buddhist population will remain approximately the same.
 - Like Christianity, the global Hindu population will increase at the rate of the world's population.
- Factors at work ...
 - Fertility Rates ...
 - The replacement level is 2.1 children per woman (the minimum typically needed to maintain a stable population).
 - The global average is 2.5 children per woman.

- By religions ...
 - Muslims: 3.1 children per woman
 - Christians: 2.7 children per woman
 - Hindus: 2.4 children per woman
 - Folk Religions: 1.8 children per woman
 - Nonreligious: 1.7 children per woman
 - Buddhists: 1.6 children per woman
- Age Differences ...
 - In 2010, 27% of the world's population was under the age of 15.
 - Christians: 27%
 - Hindus: 30%
 - Muslims: 34 %
 - In 2010, 11% of the world's population was over the age of 59.
 - Buddhists: 15%
 - Christians: 14%
 - Nonreligious: 13%
 - Folk Religions: 11%
 - Hindus: 8%
 - Muslims: 7 %
- Conversion Patterns ...
 - Christians are projected to experience the largest net losses.
 - Approximately 40 million people are projected to convert to Christianity.
 - Approximately 106 million people are projected to leave Christianity.
 - Buddhists are expected to lose approximately 3 million adherents.
- International Migration ...
 - Between 2000-2010, nine countries gained over 1 million international migrants.
 - United States: 8 million
 - Spain: 4.6 million
 - Italy: 2.3 million
 - Saudi Arabia: 2.2 million
 - The United Kingdom: 1.7 million
 - In Europe, the Muslim population is expected to increase from 5.9% to 10.2%. Without migration, the Muslim population would only rise to 8.4%.
 - In North America, the Hindu population is expected to increase from 0.7% to 1.3% (nearly double). Without migration, the Hindu population would remain approximately the same.
- Regions of the world ...
 - Sub-Saharan Africa ...
 - Due to high fertility rates, the population is expected to grow from 12% of the world to 20 % of the world.

- High fertility is projected to fuel growth in both Muslim and Christian populations.
 - Specifically, the Christian population is projected to double from 517 million to 1.1 billion (from 24% to 38% of the world's Christians).
 - In other words, approximately 4 out of every 10 Christians will live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Asia-Pacific ...
- The percentage of the world's population is expected to decrease from 59% to 53%.
 - Although India will continue to have a Hindu majority, by 2050 it is projected to have the world's largest Muslim population (surpassing Indonesia).
 - The Role of China ...
 - One study estimates that the Christian population in China grew at an average annual rate of 7% between 1950 and 2010.
 - If that rate were to continue, over half of China's population would be Christian by 2050.

"Though that scenario may be unlikely, it offers a rough sense of how much difference religious switching in China maximally could have by 2050. Extremely rapid growth of Christianity in China could maintain or, conceivably, even increase Christianity's current numerical advantage as the world's largest religion, and it could significantly accelerate the projected decline by 2050 in the share of the global population that is religiously unaffiliated."
 Pew Forum, "The Future of World Religions"

- Latin America and the Caribbean ...
- Christians are projected to remain the largest religious group (approximately 89% of the population).
 - The nonreligious are projected to increase from 8% to 9%.
- Europe ...
- The only region in the world where the total population is projected to decline.
 - The Christian population is projected to decrease by approximately 100 million people (from 553 million to 454 million).
 - Meanwhile, other religions are projected to increase:
 - Nonreligious: About 23%
 - Muslims: About 10% (up from 5.9%)
 - Hindus: About 0.4% (up from 0.2%)
 - Buddhists: About 0.4% (up from 0.2%)
- North America ...
- Christians are projected to decrease from 78% to 66% of the population.
 - Nonreligious are projected to increase from 16% to 26% of the population.

- The fastest growing religious groups are Muslims and followers of “other religions.”
- Unforeseen Events ...
 - War and _____ Conflict _____.
 - Disease and Famine.
 - Economic _____ Power _____.
 - Technological Innovation.
 - Political Upheaval.
 - Missional _____ Awakening _____.

(For more information on the above statistics, see “The Future of World Religions” at pewforum.org.)

Why We Are Here ...

- To discern how the gospel compares and contrasts with ...
 - Animism.
 - Buddhism.
 - Hinduism.
 - Islam.
 - Atheism.
- To decide whether or not the gospel is worthy ...
 - Of our _____ confidence _____.

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Acts 4:12

- Of the commitment of our lives to make it known in the world.

Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, “I believed, and so I spoke,” we also believe, and so we also speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 4:13-15

- As the church ... will we have _____ children _____?

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 1:27-28

- Will we change our casual approaches to marriage ?

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:31-32

- Will we counter cultural attitudes toward multiplication ?

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

Psalms 127:3-5

- In the world ... will we make disciples ?

While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Matthew 4:18-22

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

"For some years now I have been especially struck by accounts I have heard and read of people who have chosen to convert to Islam. Partly these stories are striking because they are so similar—and not only to each other. They are almost always

some variant of a story nearly any young person could tell. They generally go something like this: 'I had reached X age (often the twenties or early thirties) and I was in a nightclub and I was drunk and I just thought, "Life must be about more than this".' Almost nothing else in our culture says, 'But of course this is not all.' Instead the voice of our culture just says, 'repeat, repeat.' In the absence of such a voice they search, and they discover Islam. The fact that they land on Islam is a story in itself. Why do these young men and women (very often women) not reach out and find Christianity? Partly it is because most branches of mainstream Christianity have lost the confidence to proselytise."

Douglas Murray

THE GOSPEL, EVANGELISM, AND CONVERSION

What Is The Gospel?

The gospel is the good news that the only true God, the just and gracious Creator of the universe, has looked upon hopelessly sinful men and women and has sent His Son, God in the flesh, to bear His wrath against sin through His substitutionary death on the cross and to show His power over sin and death in the resurrection from the grave so that everyone who turns from their sin and themselves and trusts in Jesus alone as Savior and Lord will be reconciled to God forever.

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 3:21-26

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:1-10

- **G:** God's Character
- **O:** Offense of Sin
- **S:** Sufficiency of Christ
- **P:** Personal Response
- **E:** Eternal Urgency
- **L:** Life Transformation

G: God's Character

- The gospel is good news about God.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God ...
Romans 1:1

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."
*Romans 1:16-17**

- It presupposes everything the Bible teaches about the only true God, and it is therefore unintelligible apart from biblical testimony to the character and activity of God.

... know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.
Deuteronomy 4:39

*"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."
*Deuteronomy 6:4**

*Therefore you are great, O LORD God. For there is none like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears.
*2 Samuel 7:22**

*Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god."
*Isaiah 44:6**

*And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
*John 17:3**

*To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.
*1 Timothy 1:17**

*For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ...
*1 Timothy 2:5**

- In particular, the gospel is rooted in the _____ holiness _____ of God and His righteous hatred against sin, and the _____ love _____ of God and His undeserved grace and mercy toward sinners.

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

Isaiah 6:1-3

"I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King."

Isaiah 43:15

"The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he."

Deuteronomy 32:4

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people ...

Titus 2:11

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God ...

Ephesians 2:8

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. You destroy those who speak lies; the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you.

Psalms 5:4-7

- Ultimately, the gospel is _____ God _____-centered, with His nature and His actions at the heart of the message.

Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

Psalms 16:1

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall

see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.
Isaiah 53:10-11

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.
Titus 2:11-14

O: Offense of Sin

“In any domain, we are unlikely to agree as to what the solution of a problem is, unless we agree as to the nature of the problem. The religions of the world offer an enormous range of solutions to human problems. Some promulgate various forms of religious self-help exercises; some advocate a kind of faithful fatalism; others urge tapping into an impersonal energy or force in the universe; still others claim that mystical experiences are available to those who pursue them, experiences that relativize all evil. One of the critical questions to ask is this: What constitutes the irreducible heart of human problems?”

D.A. Carson

- The problem the gospel addresses is humanity’s sinful rebellion against God.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were

*naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."
Genesis 3:1-13*

- We are guilty before God.
- We have shame before God.
- We are afraid of God.

*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned ...
Romans 5:12*

*... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ...
Romans 3:23*

*"All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."
Romans 3:12*

"I would spend 45-50 minutes on the negative, to really show him his dilemma—that he is morally dead—then I'd take 10-15 minutes to preach the Gospel. I believe that much of our evangelistic and personal work today is not clear simply because we are too anxious to get to the answer without having a man realize the real cause of his sickness, which is true moral guilt (and not just psychological guilt feelings) in the presence of God."
Francis Schaeffer

- Because God is holy and just, human rebellion rightly provokes His wrath and necessarily deserves eternal condemnation.

*But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.
Genesis 19:26*

*While the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation. They put him in custody, because it had not been made clear what should be done to him. And the LORD said to Moses, "The man shall be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." And all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death with stones, as the LORD commanded Moses.
Numbers 15:32-36*

And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God.

2 Samuel 6:5-7

But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him. After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." But Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

Acts 5:1-11

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

- o While it is true that the gospel ministers to the consequences of sin in human life, the gospel identifies the rebellion of human sin as the root of our problem.

I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that was not called by my name. I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices ...

Isaiah 65:1-2

I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. We have not listened

to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. To us, O LORD, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you."

Daniel 9:4-8

- Further, the gospel reveals the infinite severity of our problem, for an _____ everlasting _____ hell awaits every sinner who dies in this state of rebellion against God.

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:11-15

S: Sufficiency of Christ

- The gospel centers around _____ Jesus Christ _____.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ ...

Romans 1:1-6

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ...

1 Timothy 2:5

- It is the good news that God the Son took on full humanity and became one of us while remaining fully God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 1:1-4

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

John 8:58

"I and the Father are one."

John 10:30

Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

John 20:28

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:15-17

For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily ...

Colossians 2:9

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high ...

Hebrews 1:1-3

- It is the good news that in Jesus, the kingly rule of God has physically broken into human history.

Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:12-17

- It is the good news that Jesus lived a life of perfect, sinless obedience—the life we have not lived—and then died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and to bear the wrath we deserve for our rebellion against God. Both in His life and in His death, Jesus traded places with us and served as our _____ substitute _____.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:15-16

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

1 Peter 2:22

You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.

1 John 3:5

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

- In Christ, God _____ seeks _____ the guilty.

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Luke 19:10

"O that we might appreciate more deeply the marvelous condescension of Deity in swooping so low as to care for and seek out such poor worms of the dust."

Arthur Pink

- In Christ, God _____ covers _____ the shameful.

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"
John 1:29

"Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.
Revelation 19:7-8

- In Christ, God protects the fearful.

And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."
Luke 2:9-11

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.
Revelation 22:1-5

- The gospel is the good news that Jesus triumphed over sin and death in His glorious resurrection.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live ..."
John 11:25

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.
1 Corinthians 15:3-5

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he

set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Colossians 2:13-15

- It is the good news that Jesus ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of God the Father, and that even now He intercedes for His people.

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

Acts 1:9

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Romans 8:34

- The gospel is the good news that Jesus will come again in glory, and that His kingdom will have no end.

And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Acts 1:10-11

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

Revelation 11:15

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 19:11-16

He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Revelation 22:20

P: Personal Response

- The gospel is a call to repentance and faith.

... and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Mark 1:15

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 2:38

Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out ...

Acts 3:19

God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

Acts 5:31

Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you.

Acts 8:22

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent ...

Acts 17:30

... but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.

Acts 26:20

And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Acts 16:31

"If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"

Acts 11:17

And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Acts 14:23

- The gospel is not just good news; it is also a royal summons for traitors against God to lay down their rebellion and return to Him through faith in Jesus.

*All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you.
Psalm 22:27*

*"Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other."
Isaiah 45:22*

*Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
Acts 2:37-38*

- The gospel clearly declares that there is no other way for sinners to be saved, and it categorically denies that sinners can earn their salvation by anything they do themselves.

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
John 14:6*

*"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
Acts 4:12*

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God ...
Ephesians 2:8*

*Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.
Romans 3:27-31*

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Romans 5:1*

- The gospel challenges and compels hearers to repent and believe the good news of Jesus, confessing Him as Lord.

... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

E: Eternal Urgency

- Heaven is a glorious reality for everyone who believes the gospel.

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Philippians 3:20-21

- Hell is a dreadful reality for everyone who does not believe the gospel.

This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering—since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

“And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”

Revelation 14:11

“Thus it is in Hell; they would die, but they cannot. The wicked shall be always dying but never dead; the smoke of the furnace ascends for ever and ever. Oh! Who can endure thus to be ever upon the rack? This word ‘ever’ breaks the heart.”

Thomas Watson

“When you look forward, you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts, and amaze your soul; and you will

absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all; you will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions and millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance; and then you will have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains.”

Jonathan Edwards

L: Life Transformation

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

- All who believe the gospel are forgiven, and they stand before God completely justified in His sight, clothed in the very righteousness of Christ.

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

1 Corinthians 1:30-31

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

- All who believe the gospel have been reconciled to God.

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Romans 5:2-11

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:17-20

- All who believe the gospel have been adopted by God and are alive in Christ, having been born again by the Holy Spirit.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:14-17

- All who believe the gospel now possess the Holy Spirit as a down payment and foretaste of their inheritance in Christ.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:11-14

- All who believe the gospel are a part of the body of Christ, the _____ church _____.

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows

*into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.
Ephesians 2:13-22*

- All who believe the gospel are kept by the power of God in salvation until they see Him face to face.

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
Romans 8:28*

*See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.
1 John 3:1-3*

- All who believe the gospel will one day be free from sin as they live with God forever in infinite joy and glory.

*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son."
Revelation 21:3-7*

*Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.
Revelation 22:1-5*

- These treasures, and not earthly health or _____ prosperity _____, are the true gifts of the gospel, and gospel presentations must be clear about this if they are to be faithful to Scripture.

Recap: What Is The Gospel?

The gospel is the good news that the only true God, the just and gracious Creator of the universe, has looked upon hopelessly sinful men and women and has sent His Son, God in the flesh, to bear His wrath against sin through His substitutionary death on the cross and to show His power over sin and death in the resurrection from the grave so that everyone who turns from their sin and themselves and trusts in Jesus alone as Savior and Lord will be reconciled to God forever.

- **G:** God's Character
- **O:** Offense of Sin
- **S:** Sufficiency of Christ
- **P:** Personal Response
- **E:** Eternal Urgency
- **L:** Life Transformation

What Is Evangelism?

Evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit with the aim of persuading people to repent and believe in Christ.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 1:8

- Evangelism always means _____ proclamation _____, and it always involves communicating the message of the gospel using language the lost can understand.

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:13-17

- Evangelism is proclamation of the _____ gospel _____. Evangelism involves proclaiming the full message of the holiness and love of God, the sinfulness of every human being, the atoning sacrifice and victorious resurrection of Jesus for our sins, and the necessity of repentance and faith for eternal salvation.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

Romans 1:16-17

- Evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel in the _____ power _____ of the Holy Spirit. We present the gospel message, but only the Holy Spirit can turn a person's heart and mind toward Christ.

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb."

Luke 1:13-15

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"

Luke 1:39-42

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David ..."

Luke 1:67-69

And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:2-4

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders ..."

Acts 4:8

And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:31

So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

Acts 9:17-20

But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.

Acts 13:8-11

"And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Acts 2:17-21

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls."

Joel 2:28-32

- Evangelism has the aim of persuading people to repent and believe in Christ. Evangelism is more than mere presentation of the gospel; it is persuasion with the gospel. Evangelism necessarily includes a call for the hearer to repent of sin and believe in Christ.

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.
Acts 2:37-41

Recap: What Is Evangelism?

Evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit with the aim of persuading people to repent and believe in Christ.

What Is Conversion?

Conversion is the divinely enabled personal response of individuals to the gospel in which they turn from their sin and themselves (repent) and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord (believe).

*Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
*Mark 1:14-15**

- Conversion is a divinely enabled response to the gospel. It is not something that fallen sinners can accomplish on their own. According to Scripture, unregenerate people are slaves to sin. They are unable to understand the things of God, unable to obey God or please God, and they are justly under His wrath. They are blinded to the gospel so that they cannot see it. They are not seeking God, but rather running away from Him. They are dead in their sin. Apart from the gracious initiative of God, no one can be saved.

I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your

*God. And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you.
Ezekiel 36:24-29*

*"I have heard Ephraim grieving, 'You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the LORD my God.'"
Jeremiah 31:18*

*Restore us to yourself, O LORD, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old ...
Lamentations 5:21*

*God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
Acts 5:31*

*When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."
Acts 11:18*

*... correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth ...
2 Timothy 2:25*

*And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.
Acts 14:27*

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
Ephesians 2:8-9*

*For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake ...
Philippians 1:29*

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
Hebrews 12:1-2*

... praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.
Acts 2:47

- Conversion is a divinely enabled response of repentance and faith. The gracious work of God in conversion in no way minimizes or eliminates the necessity and responsibility of sinners to respond to the gospel call. Repentance involves turning away from sin and self. It marks a radical break from a life of rebellion against God. Faith involves not only believing that what the Bible teaches about Jesus is true, but also trusting in Him alone for salvation while entrusting one's life to Him. Repentance and faith are not separate or disconnected actions, but rather two sides of the same response: turning away from a life of rebellion against God in repentance and in the same act turning toward God through faith in Christ. Neither is complete or adequate without the other.

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
Acts 2:38

And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."
Acts 16:31

- Conversion is a divinely enabled response to the gospel. Indeed, the gospel must be proclaimed for anyone to be converted. No one can be saved apart from receiving, understanding, and believing the gospel. This makes the task of evangelism critically urgent.

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"
Romans 10:13-15

- Further, the content of the gospel message matters. This is especially important in light of distortions of the gospel that are popular around the world. Any gospel message that denies or dilutes the full deity and humanity of Jesus, identifies the human problem as anything else or anything less than our sinful rebellion against God, does not major on the substitutionary death of Jesus and the reality of His bodily resurrection, or does not teach that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone is an unbiblical gospel that does not lead to biblical conversion.

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.
Galatians 1:6-7

- Conversion is radical. The Bible uses extreme language to describe it. Someone who has been converted has died to everything they used to be and received new life in Christ. They have, in fact, been crucified with Christ. They have been created all over again. They have been born again. Conversion to Christ is neither casual nor superficial.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
2 Corinthians 5:17

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

- Conversion is noticeable. While no believer attains perfection in this life, a converted person is a changed person. This is particularly evident in a Christian's belief in the gospel, love for God's people, and growth in holiness.

Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.
1 John 2:4-6

- Conversion is permanent. God never lets go of or loses anyone who has been truly converted. While it is true that some may profess faith for a time and then fall away, their very departure from the faith indicates that they were never truly converted. While God alone knows the condition of a person's heart, it is neither biblical nor safe to assume that anyone who has denied the faith, whose life shows no evidence of regeneration, or who has voluntarily abandoned the fellowship of the body of Christ has been converted, whatever they may have said or done in the past.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one."
John 10:27-30

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

1 John 2:19

Recap: What Is Conversion?

Conversion is the divinely enabled personal response of individuals to the gospel in which they turn from their sin and themselves (repent) and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord (believe).

Two Key Conclusions ...

- All who believe this gospel will be _____ saved _____ from their sin.

... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

- All who believe this gospel have been _____ sent _____ into the world.

"As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."

John 17:18

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Luke 24:45-49

- In a world of religions, we have been _____ authorized _____ to speak for God ...

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:20

- To persuade people to be reconciled to God through Christ.

*Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.
2 Corinthians 5:11*

- To plead for people to be reconciled to God through Christ.

*For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry ...
2 Corinthians 6:2-3*

- So we relinquish all our _____ rights _____, and we rearrange all our lives for the spread of the gospel.

*Do we not have the right to eat and drink? Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living?
1 Corinthians 9:4-6*

*If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.
1 Corinthians 9:12*

*But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting.
1 Corinthians 9:15*

*What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.
1 Corinthians 9:18*

- See the example of Paul ...
 - He had a right to financial support from the church at Corinth.
 - He surrendered this right and rearranged his life for the spread of the gospel in Corinth.
- Hear the exhortation to us ...
 - We have rights where we live and in the world around us ...
 - To life, friends, marriage, family, safety, security, health, and happiness.
 - To eat, drink, watch, wear, read, study, listen to, and say whatever we want.
 - To organize our schedule, spend our time, choose our career, make our money, use our money, take our vacation, and plan our retirement.

- To do what we want to do, go where we want to go, and live how we want to live.
- Christ compels us to _____ surrender _____ our rights and rearrange our lives for the spread of the gospel.

For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship.
1 Corinthians 9:16-17

For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.
2 Corinthians 5:14-16

- We are _____ servants _____ of others so that they might be saved ...

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.
1 Corinthians 9:19-23

- In our culture.
- Across other cultures.
- We work to _____ contextualize _____ the gospel.
 - We _____ begin _____ where people are with what they believe.
 - We learn their history.
 - We learn their culture.
 - We learn their language.
 - We learn their worldview.
 - We _____ build _____ bridges to who Christ is and what He has done.
 - We remove every obstacle to the gospel.

If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.
1 Corinthians 9:12

- We minimize _____ cultural _____ barriers.
- We emphasize biblical truth.
- We never remove the _____ offense _____ of the gospel.

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

- We are _____ faithful _____ to communicate the gospel.

... but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...

1 Peter 3:15

- Individual gospel threads ...
 - God's Character
 - Offense of Sin
 - Sufficiency of Christ
 - Personal Response
 - Eternal Urgency
 - Life Transformation
- Complete gospel truth.

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

- We give our lives to the Great Commission in a world of religions for the glory of our God.

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run

aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.
1 Corinthians 9:24-27

- The requirements in this race ...
 - Sacrificial self-denial.
 - Stringent self-discipline.
 - Single-minded devotion.

And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.
Acts 20:22-24

- The rewards of this race ...
 - Others will experience the eternal _____ joy _____ of salvation.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.
Psalm 67:4

- We will fulfill the earthly _____ purpose _____ of salvation.

For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.
1 Thessalonians 1:4-10

For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.
1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

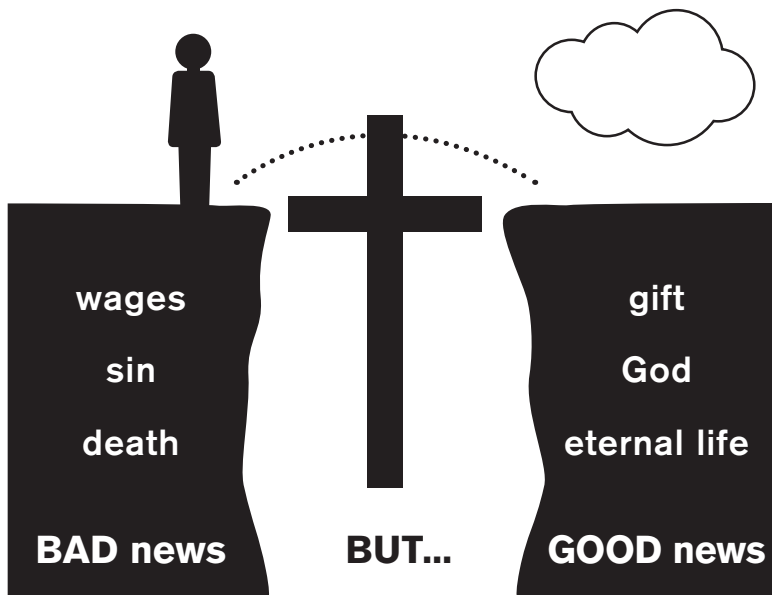
Five World Religions ...

- Animism.
- Hinduism.
- Buddhism.
- Islam.
- Atheism.

Three Primary Questions ...

- Who are they?
- What do they believe?
- How do we share the gospel with them?
 - We build bridges to the gospel so they might know and enjoy the glory of our God in Christ for all of eternity.

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 6:23*



ANIMISM

Debunking Myths ...

- Animists can only be found in Africa .
 - Animists are found in every region of the world.
- All animists are tribal peoples in villages and jungles who wear weird masks and dance around fires.
 - Animistic thought is often mixed with every religion of the world.
- All animists are primitive people with no education.
 - Your well-educated next-door neighbor might be animistic.

Who Are Animists?

- Animism comes from the Latin *anima*, which means “ soul ” or “breath.”
- Animists believe that the physical world is interpenetrated by spiritual forces.
 - Objects carry spiritual significance.
 - Events have spiritual causes.

“Animism is ‘the belief that personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces have power over human affairs and that humans, consequently, must discover what beings and forces are impacting them in order to determine future action and, frequently, to manipulate their power.’”

Gailyn Van Rheenen

“Animism is a belief in multiple spirit-beings and souls that inhabit the universe, whose existence is found in people or in nature. As most generally conceptualized such spirits are semi-autonomous beings who represent distinct spheres of influence over nature (such as trees, water, animals, weather, etc.); or locations (such as mountains, depressions, forest glens, etc.); or human beings (that is by causing sickness, inducing possession behavior, evil behavior, or by becoming familial, helping entities, etc.).”

Douglas J. Hayward

- Unique qualities of Animism ...
 - Not a formal religion (with an established set of doctrines and practices).
 - More a folk religion (varying from people group to people group).
 - Lacks written teachings.
 - Leans on oral traditions.
 - Can be distinct from other religions.
 - Can co-exist with other religions ...

- Islam + Animism
- Hinduism + Animism
- Buddhism + Animism
- Christianity + Animism

What Do Animists Believe?

- A Supreme Being ...
 - Far removed from creation.
 - Too abstract to be known.
- A Spiritual Realm ...
 - The material and physical universe are connected, so everything has a spiritual explanation.
 - Nature and Weather.
 - Events and Circumstances.
 - Fortune and Poverty.
 - Sickness and Pain.
 - Disaster and Death.
 - The world consists of personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces.
 - Personal spiritual beings ...
 - May possess power over:
 - Natural objects and events (trees, water, animals, storms, disasters).
 - Human endeavors (business, marriage, community relations, war).
 - Examples:
 - Human spirits.
 - Ancestral spirits.
 - Unborn spirits.
 - Animal spirits.
 - Earth spirits (sun, moon, sky).
 - Universal spirits (angels, demons, ghosts).
 - Impersonal spiritual forces ...
 - May infuse objects, words, actions, and rituals with power.
 - Examples:
 - Magic.
 - Mana.
 - Witchcraft.
 - Evil Eye.
 - Taboo.
 - Personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces need to be appeased, assuaged, and/or avoided.
 - Through prayer.

- Through ritual.
 - Through miscellaneous actions (think _____ superstition _____).
- Concept of Sin ...
 - _____ Offending _____ spiritual beings and/or forces.
 - Experiencing inevitable consequences.
- Fear and Power ...
 - Spirits are powerful and _____ unpredictable _____.
 - This leads to ...
 - Perpetual fear.
 - Constant manipulation.
 - Hopeless _____ fatalism _____.
 - Animists may look to ...
 - Shamans.
 - Healers.
 - Witch Doctors.
 - Diviners.
- Communicating with the Spirits ...
 - Divination involves ...
 - Discovering how one has offended a spirit.
 - Deciding how to counter a particular curse.
 - Discerning when to take a particular _____ action _____
(a marriage proposal, a business investment, etc.).
 - Examples include tarot cards, palm reading, astrology, omens, rituals, contacting the dead, or interpreting dreams and visions.
- Communalism ...
 - Animism thrives in cultures that prioritize community.
 - Respect for one's family/tribe/people extends beyond _____ death _____ to the worship of one's ancestors.
- The Afterlife ...
 - General belief in some sort of continued existence.
 - Specific belief in ancestral spirits that require continual homage.
- Focus on the _____ Immediate _____ over the Ultimate ...
 - Formal religions focus more on ultimate issues such as who we are, how we got here, and what happens when we die.
 - Folk religions focus more on immediate issues of everyday life.

How Do We Share The Gospel With Animists?

- Think _____ supernaturally _____.

“The influence of the enlightenment in our education, which traces everything to natural causes, has further dulled our consciousness of the powers of darkness.”

Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization

"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors, and hail a materialist or magician with the same delight."

C.S. Lewis

When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" He said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. And when the Syrians came down against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, "Please strike this people with blindness." So he struck them with blindness in accordance with the prayer of Elisha.

2 Kings 6:15-18

- Show sensitivity.
 - Listen empathetically.

*Jesus wept.
John 11:35*

- Pray continually.

*So the men took some of their provisions, but did not ask counsel from the LORD.
Joshua 9:14*

*For the shepherds are stupid and do not inquire of the LORD; therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock is scattered.
Jeremiah 10:21*

*So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance. He did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.
1 Chronicles 10:13-14*

- Demonstrate Christian community.

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
John 13:34-35*

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:13-22

- Communicate the gospel clearly.

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

- Understand context.

Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking. And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them.

Acts 14:8-18

- Exalt Christ.

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

- Not as a _____ means _____ to an end.
- But as the end.

... that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death ...

Philippians 3:10

- Start with the _____ similarities _____.
 - Ask all sorts of questions ...
 - What is the supreme God like?
 - Was there a time when God was close to humanity? What caused the original separation between humanity and God? Why does God seem distant now?
 - How do we offend God (or the gods, spirits, or ancestors)?
 - What are the consequences of such offenses?
 - Is there a way by which to divert those consequences?
 - Does God care about us now? If so, how?
 - Note areas of _____ agreement _____ ...
 - The existence:
 - Of a Supreme Being.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

Psalms 95:3-5

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:28-31

- Of the supernatural.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

- Fear:

- Of the _____ greatness _____ of God.

Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

Psalms 33:8

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 1:7

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28

And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

Luke 1:50

- Of the consequences of wrongdoing.

“And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, ‘where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.’”

Mark 9:43-48

... and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might ...

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

- Longing:
 - For help and guidance amidst life's challenges.

O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted.

Habakkuk 1:2-4

- For _____ peace _____ and confidence amidst life's uncertainty.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:14-16

- Then share the _____ differences _____ in your conversations.
 - God is not distant from us, but present with us.

"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

Matthew 1:21-23

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Revelation 21:3-4

- He _____ cares _____ about our immediate needs.

"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Matthew 6:25-34

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Matthew 10:29-31

... casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

1 Peter 5:7

- He provides for our _____ ultimate _____ need.

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'?" But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Mark 2:1-12

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.
Romans 5:6-11

- Christ has covered the consequences of our sin.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
2 Corinthians 5:21

- No other sacrifice is needed!

Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.
Hebrews 9:25-26

- Christ has conquered death.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.
1 Corinthians 15:3-8

- Christians have nothing to fear in life.

When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.
1 Corinthians 15:54-58

- The path has been paved for a personal relationship with God.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:3-14

- You can be _____ forgiven _____ of sin's consequences.

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 2:38

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:7-9

- You can have _____ power _____ over sin's slavery.

"... and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

John 8:32-36

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is

*death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 6:22-23*

- You can be free from sin's condemnation.

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
Romans 8:1*

- You can have victory over Satan's power.

*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
James 4:7*

*Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being
experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.
1 Peter 5:9*

*Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is
greater than he who is in the world.
1 John 4:4*

*We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he
who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.
1 John 5:18*

- You can rest secure in God's love.

*But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to
become children of God ...
John 1:12*

*For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor
things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 8:38-39*

- And show the differences in your life.
 - Live like God is with you.

*"... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with
you always, to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:20*

- Praying for God's provision in your immediate needs.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.”

Matthew 7:7-8

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

1 John 5:14-15

- **Confident in God's provision for your ultimate need.**

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Philippians 1:21

- **Live out of the overflow of grace in Christ, not _____ guilt _____ in sin.**

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Galatians 5:1

- **Live with trust in and dependence upon God's _____ Spirit _____ amidst life's challenges.**

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”

John 14:16-18

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

John 14:26-27

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:26-27

*And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory
in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:19*

- Live with joyful peace and humble confidence in God's
sovereignty over life's uncertainty.

*And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The
LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."
Job 1:21*

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for
you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
Psalm 23:4*

*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the
stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
Psalm 27:1*

*Listen to me in silence, O coastlands; let the peoples renew their strength; let
them approach, then let them speak; let us together draw near for judgment.
Isaiah 41:1*

*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in
me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved
me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20*

- Reframe the overall story.
 - Creation: The Creator God in relationship with created men and women.

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them
have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over
the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the
earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them,
"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the
fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that
moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding
seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You
shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the
heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath
of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw*

everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
Genesis 1:26-31

- **Fall:** Men and women were separated from God when they followed an evil spiritual being instead of Him.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.
Genesis 3:1-7

- **Redemption:** God sent a Mediator to make a way for us to be reconciled to God.

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.
1 Timothy 2:5-6

- **Restoration:** One day all who trust in Jesus will be reconciled to God in a new creation free of any curse.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.
Revelation 22:1-5

- **Tell the individual stories.**
 - Jesus' power over _____ nature _____.

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Mark 4:35-41

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Mark 6:30-44

And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them ...

Mark 6:48

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him and said to them, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away." And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?" And he asked them,

"How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." And he directed the crowd to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. And they had a few small fish. And having blessed them, he said that these also should be set before them. And they ate and were satisfied. And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full.

Mark 8:1-8

And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. And he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

Mark 11:13-14

As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. And Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered."

Mark 11:20-21

o Jesus' power over _____ demons _____.

"What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."

Mark 1:24-27

And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Mark 1:34

And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Mark 1:39

And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

Mark 3:11-12

They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been bound with shackles and

chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

Mark 5:1-13

But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And he said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." And he said to her, "For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter." And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

Mark 7:25-30

And someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a spirit that makes him mute. And whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." And they brought the boy to him. And when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."

Mark 9:17-29

o Jesus' power over _____ disease _____.

Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Mark 1:30-34

And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

Mark 1:40-42

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

Mark 3:1-5

And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.

Mark 7:33-35

And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said, "I see people, but they look like trees, walking." Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

Mark 8:22-25

And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him,

"Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

Mark 10:46-52

- Jesus' power over death .

Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement.

Mark 5:41-42

- Jesus' power over sin .

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Mark 2:1-12

- Jesus' power over Satan .

But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Mark 3:27

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:13-14

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
Colossians 2:15

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
Hebrews 2:14-15

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.
1 John 3:8

- **Warn against deceptive spirits.**

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
John 8:44

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.
John 10:10

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil ...
Hebrews 2:14

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
2 Corinthians 4:4

- If we can see through their deception, then we shouldn't follow them.
- If we can't see through their deception, then we should
 avoid them.

And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.
2 Corinthians 11:14

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

1 Peter 5:8-9

- Call animists to a _____ decision _____.

“Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

Joshua 24:14-15

He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel.” And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.”

Joshua 24:23-24

For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Psalms 51:16-17

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10:19-23

- Trust God's _____ power _____ to save.

Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

1 John 4:4

HINDUISM

- Population: Over 915 million
- Countries: 51
- People Groups: 1,235
- Unreached People Groups: 1,115

Debunking Myths ...

- All _____ Indians _____ are Hindu.
- Hindus pray to _____ cows _____.
- Hinduism is a religion with a certain founder, a clear authority, a common creed, and consistent beliefs.

Who Are Hindus?

- “Hindu” originally referred to a geographic area of the Indian subcontinent where people practiced innumerable diverse and seemingly contradictory religions.
- Hinduism is a complex set of religions ...
 - Pantheism mixed with _____ polytheism _____.
 - Pantheism: God is everything, and everything is god.
 - Polytheism: Many different gods exist ... over _____ 330 _____ million of them!
 - Sacred writings with different _____ gurus _____.
 - The Vedas are inspired sacred writings for Hindu belief.
 - Samhitas: praise songs to the gods.
 - Brahmans: guide to the priests, outlining rituals and prayers.
 - Aranyakas: instructions on how to worship and meditate.
 - Upanishads (including the Bhagavad Gita): mythical stories and philosophical teachings.

“Truth is the sovereign principle, and the Bhagavad-Gita is the book par excellence for the knowledge of Truth.”

Mohandas K. Ghandi

- Different gurus help lead and guide in Hindu practice.
- Communal culture with _____ individualistic _____ belief.
 - Culture is infused with a historical system of castes.
 - Brahmins: priests, genealogists, astrologers, traditional physicians.

- Kshatriyas: rulers, leaders, warriors, nobles.
- Vaisyas: record keepers, shopkeepers, moneylenders, goldsmiths.
- Shudras: slaves, laborers, artisans, carpenters, tailors, blacksmiths.
- Dalits: untouchables (technically no caste; subhuman).
 - Worship is more individualistic than it is congregational.
- Hindus practice their religion ...
 - However they want.
 - Whenever they want.
 - To _____ whatever _____ degree they want.

What Do Hindus Believe?

- Two Common Beliefs ...
 - Samsara (_____ Reincarnation _____).
 - Moksha (_____ Salvation _____).

Samsara (Reincarnation)

- Samsara (reincarnation) is the process through which every atman (uncreated, eternal soul) must pass until one reaches moksha (salvation).
- A _____ cyclical _____, non-linear view of physical life.
 - Linear: We're born, we live, and we die.
 - Cyclical: We're born, we live, we die, and we're born again, we live again, and we die again, and on and on ...
- Every atman is trapped in an endless cycle of living and dying and living again in a universe that is perpetually beginning, ending, and beginning again.
 - Past lives determine present lives.
 - Present lives determine future lives.
 - _____ Karma _____: what goes around comes around.
- Atmans endure suffering through hundreds, thousands, even millions of physical lives before reaching moksha.

Moksha (Salvation)

- Moksha is liberation from samsara.
 - The human problem is that the atman (soul) is trapped in physical samsara (reincarnation) and in need of _____ escape _____.
- Three paths to moksha ...
 - Dharma (the way of _____ works _____).
 - The human problem is moral.

- Therefore, dharma is the religious, social, and moral duty that one must observe.
 - Varies from person to person and caste to caste.
 - Good dharma creates good karma.
 - Jnana (the way of _____ knowledge _____).
 - The human problem is intellectual.
 - One ultimate spiritual reality exists: Brahman.
 - Every atman (soul) is ignorant of Brahman and in need of knowledge that everything (including every atman) is Brahman.
 - We need to see ourselves and the world as the illusions they are, and Brahman as the reality it is.
 - Therefore, jnana involves continual meditation and introspection until we realize our atman (soul) is one with Brahman.
 - Renunciation of self.
 - Reunion with Brahman.
 - Bhakti (the way of _____ devotion _____).
 - The human problem is spiritual.
 - Many gods exist (each of which may be manifestations of Brahman, the ultimate spiritual reality).
 - Three major gods:
 - Brahma: The creator of life.
 - Vishnu: The _____ sustainer _____ and protector of life.
 - Has many names.
 - Has appeared as many avatars (incarnations), including Krishna and Rama.
 - Shiva: The destroyer of life.
 - Therefore, bhakti emphasizes love and devotion to a god or gods with a view toward moksha.
 - Bhakti is the _____ most _____ popular of all paths to moksha.
- Important Practices ...
 - Yoga.
 - A path of mental, physical, and spiritual discipline that leads to moksha.
 - Uses the body to ...
 - _____ Clear _____ the mind.
 - Connect to Brahman.
 - Mantras.
 - Prayers, chants, and utterances which aid in meditation and worship.
 - Ritual Bathing.
 - Daily before devotions.
 - Periodically in rivers with cleansing power.
 - Festivals.
 - Celebrating events in history.
 - Expressing _____ devotion _____ to gods.

How Do We Share The Gospel With Hindus?

- Listen carefully.

A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.
Proverbs 18:2

- Look expectantly.

But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel."

John 5:17-20

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it."

John 14:12-14

- Pray boldly.

And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God."

1 Kings 18:36-39

- For Hindus.

Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. They have

hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.
Psalm 115:1-8

Set forth your case, says the LORD; bring your proofs, says the King of Jacob. Let them bring them, and tell us what is to happen. Tell us the former things, what they are, that we may consider them, that we may know their outcome; or declare to us the things to come. Tell us what is to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods; do good, or do harm, that we may be dismayed and terrified. Behold, you are nothing, and your work is less than nothing; an abomination is he who chooses you.
Isaiah 41:21-24

◦ **With Hindus.**

In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.
John 16:23-24

• **Point to Jesus _____ continually _____.**

*"I shall say to the Hindus that your lives will be incomplete unless you reverently study the teachings of Jesus."
Mohandas K. Ghandi*

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
2 Corinthians 4:4-6

◦ **His unique nature.**

*"[A Hindu] would find it easy to accept Christ as a divine incarnation and to worship Him unreservedly, exactly as he worships Krishna or another avatar ('savior') of his choice. But he cannot accept Christ as the only son of God."
Swami Prabhavananda*

"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).
Matthew 1:21-23

- Question to ask: "Do you know of any stories in Hinduism about various gods that have come to life?"
 - Bridge to cross: "Can I tell you a story in the Bible about how the one true God came to life?"

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 1:1-4

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

- His exclusive _____ claims _____.

"Many faiths are but different paths leading to the one reality, God."

Sri Ramakrishna

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6

- Question to ask: "Have you ever met a Guru who died and days later came back to life?"
 - Bridge to cross: "I know someone who is in some ways like your idea of a Guru, but who died and three days later came back to life. Can I tell you about Him?"

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

Matthew 28:1-10

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.
1 Corinthians 15:3-8

- His comforting _____ promise _____.

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
Matthew 11:28-30

- Question to ask: “What must a Hindu do to be saved from this world of sin and suffering?”
 - Bridge to cross: “Can I share with you what God has done to free you and me from sin and suffering in this world?”

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God ...
Ephesians 2:8

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”
Revelation 21:1-4

- Proclaim the _____ bad _____ news clearly.

“For it is an unbroken torture to me that I am still so far from Him, who, as I fully know, governs every breath of my life, and whose offspring I am.”
Mohandas K. Ghandi

... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ...
Romans 3:23

- Is it possible that we've incorrectly diagnosed the problem in and around us?

*So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments."
Genesis 35:2*

*"Pay attention to all that I have said to you, and make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips."
Exodus 23:13*

*... that you may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them ...
Joshua 23:7*

*And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.
Ezekiel 20:7*

*No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons.
1 Corinthians 10:20*

- Is it possible we've completely missed the solution right in front of us?

*"Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save. Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'
Isaiah 45:20-23*

*For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.
1 Thessalonians 1:9-10*

- Proclaim the good news joyfully.

*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 6:23*

Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Psalm 96:1-6

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Psalm 96:11-13

- o Affirm their _____ worth _____.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27

- Spiritually.

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'?" But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Mark 2:1-12

- Physically.

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the

last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 15:50-57

- Show them _____ hope _____.

"How many births are passed, I cannot tell. How many yet to come, no man can say:
But this alone I know, and know full well, that pain and grief embitter all the way."
Indian Folksong

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.
Titus 2:11-14

- You can know God ... _____ now _____!

Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD."
Jeremiah 9:23-24

- God is _____ personal _____.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.
Genesis 1:3

And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.
Genesis 6:6

God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
2 Peter 3:9*

- You can be saved ... forever !

*And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.
Hebrews 9:27-28*

*I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.
1 John 5:13*

BUDDHISM

- Population: Over 250 million
- Countries: 62
- People Groups: 354
- Unreached People Groups: 296

Debunking Myths ...

- All Buddhists are vegetarians .
- All Buddhists do is meditate all the time.
- All Buddhists wear robes .

Who Are Buddhists?

- Followers of Buddha ...
 - Siddhartha Gautama, former Hindu prince from northern India (modern Nepal), who lived from approximately 563-483 BC.
 - At age 29, he was exposed to suffering around him, and he decided to leave behind ...
 - His wealth.
 - His wife and son.
 - Longed to find ...
 - The cause of suffering.
 - The cure for suffering.
 - Looked for fulfillment in ...
 - Hinduism.
 - Asceticism.
 - After six years, he found “ Enlightenment ” while meditating under a Bodhi tree.
 - He subsequently taught others the path to “Enlightenment” until his death.
- Two primary schools of Buddhism ...
 - Theravada Buddhism ...
 - Approximately 38% of Buddhists.
 - Practiced mainly in southern Asia (Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam).
 - View Buddha as an earthly sage (wise teacher).
 - Enlightenment is available to the few (namely the monastic order) after many reincarnations.
 - Mahayana Buddhism ...
 - Approximately 56% of Buddhists.

- Practiced mainly in eastern Asia (China, Japan, Korea).
- View Buddha as an eternal savior (along with other gods like him who have achieved Enlightenment and now help others, called bodhisattvas).
- Enlightenment is available to the many now.
- Other schools of Buddhism ...
 - Vajrama.
 - Tibetan.
 - Zen.
 - New Age.
- Various Texts ...
 - Pali Canon: Compilation of Buddhist teachings.
 - Mahavastu: Collection of Buddha's life story.
 - Sutras: Sayings of Buddha.
 - Tantras: Advanced practices based upon the Sutras.

What Do Buddhists Believe?

- Four Noble Truths ...
 - Dukkha: All of life is suffering .
 - The trauma of birth.
 - The pathology of sickness.
 - The inevitability of fear.
 - The fear of death.
 - Attachment to what one dislikes.
 - Separation from what one loves.
 - Samudaya: The cause of suffering is selfish desire.
 - Tanha is selfish desire (rooted in oneself).
 - The problem, however, is that individual selves do not exist.
 - Nothing in life is permanent.
 - Everything in life is changing.
 - Therefore, we find ourselves in an endless cycle of selfish desire that causes suffering ...
 - Where the law of karma reigns.
 - Impersonal.
 - Unavoidable.
 - Do good, and good will come back to you.
 - Do evil, and evil will come back to you.
 - In which we experience constant reincarnations .
 - Nirodha: The cure for suffering is overcoming selfish desire.
 - The elimination of selfish desire will inevitably lead to the end of suffering.
 - The only way to overcome desire is by following the Eight -Fold Path.

- Eight-Fold Path ...
 - Right Views .
 - A right understanding of what reality is, not just what it appears to be.
 - Right Intent.
 - A deliberate pursuit of enlightenment.
 - Right Speech .
 - Honest and helpful speech.
 - Right Conduct.
 - Wholesome action that avoids harm.
 - Five Precepts ...
 - Abstain from harming living beings.
 - Abstain from stealing .
 - Abstain from false speech.
 - Abstain from sexual misconduct.
 - Abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs.
 - Four Virtues ...
 - Friendliness.
 - Compassion .
 - Sympathetic Joy.
 - Even-mindedness.
 - Right Livelihood .
 - An occupation that promotes life instead of destroying it.
 - Right Effort.
 - Diligent work toward improvement.
 - Right Mindfulness .

"All we are is the result of all we have thought."

Buddha

- **Clear consciousness.**

"One of them spends hours each day slowly walking about the grounds of the wat in absolute concentration upon the minutest fraction of every action connected with each step. The procedure is carried into every single physical act of daily life until, theoretically, the conscious mind can follow every step that goes into the generation of a feeling, perception, or thought. A fifty-year-old monk meditates in a small graveyard adjoining his wat, because he's undisturbed there. He seats himself, cross-legged and immobile but with his eyes open, for hours on end—through the driving rain at midnight or the blistering heat of noonday. His usual length of stay is two or three hours."

Lew Ayres, observing Buddhist monks in Thailand

- Right concentration .
 - Focused awareness of present reality, accompanied by freedom from desire.

“By ourselves is evil done,
By ourselves we pain endure,
By ourselves we cease from wrong,
By ourselves become we pure.
No one saves us but ourselves,
No one can and no one may;
We ourselves must tread the Path:
Buddhas only show the way.”
Buddhist Folksong

- Buddhist belief is often mixed with ...
 - Atheism.
 - _____ Animism _____ (including ancestor worship).

How Do We Share The Gospel With Buddhists?

- Recognize there are _____ superficial _____ similarities.
 - Honest realization of suffering in this world.

The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw. O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you “Violence!” and you will not save? Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted.
Habakkuk 1:1-4

- Ethical exhortations for life in this world.
 - Regarding _____ conduct _____.

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
2 Timothy 2:22

- Right Views.

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
John 14:6

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”
Acts 4:12

- Right Intent.

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31*

*What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.
James 4:1-3*

- **Right Speech.**

*I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak ...
Matthew 12:36*

- **Right Conduct.**

*"Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."
John 14:21*

*But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.
James 3:17*

- **Right Livelihood.**

*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.
Colossians 3:23-24*

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.
2 Timothy 2:15*

- **Right Effort.**

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of

- Buddhism teaches the illusion of the self.
- Christianity teaches the _____ importance _____ of the self.

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.
Genesis 1:27*

- Concerning Jesus ...
 - Buddhists might believe Jesus is an Enlightened _____ Master _____.
 - Christians believe Jesus is the Eternal Son.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
John 1:1-4*

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1:14*

*"And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."
John 1:34*

- Concerning Sin and Salvation ...
 - Buddhism teaches that self-reliance is the path to salvation.
 - Christianity teaches that self-reliance is the essence of _____ sin _____.

*In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him; all his thoughts are,
"There is no God."
Psalm 10:4*

- Buddhism teaches salvation through _____ work _____.
- Christianity teaches salvation through faith.

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing;
it is the gift of God ...
Ephesians 2:8*

- Buddhism's goal: the ultimate _____ elimination _____ of our desires.
- Christianity's goal: the ultimate satisfaction of our desires.

"The Thai King went out to fight the opposing Burmese ruler. Phrasiriyothai dressed up and joined the King's ranks, disguised as a Thai warrior. Unknown to her royal husband, she rode out to the battle. In the ensuing fight, the Thai King was losing the advantage. He was about to be cut down. Seeing this, the Queen deliberately drove her elephant between the Burmese King and her husband. She was slain by the long-handled knife wielded by the Burmese ruler, but her husband escaped. He later built a special memorial to her in honor of her bravery and sacrifice."

Lausanne Occasional Paper 15: Christian Witness to Buddhists

- **Court System.**

"Only good deeds erase bad deeds."

"That's interesting. Do you know of any court system in the world that uses the 'good deeds erase bad deeds' system? One bad deed requires punishment. But what if I told you there was a way for everyone in the world, including you and me, to escape any punishment for bad deeds?"

- **Think parables and stories in the Word.**
- **Think analogies and examples in the world.**

- **Be winsome with your life.**

- **Revere the _____ majesty _____ of God.**

Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word."

Isaiah 66:1-2

"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 5:13-16

- **Adorn the _____ mystery _____ of the gospel.**

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us. Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing,

not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Titus 2:7-10

- Be very sensitive to _____ **culture** _____.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience ...

Colossians 3:12

- Use varied means of communication.

- Stories.
- Videos.

(For video illustrations, visit creationtochristvideo.com.)

- Art.
- Music.

- Focus on the _____ **family** _____.

Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

Acts 16:30-34

- Community is critical in most Buddhist cultures.
- The church must be clear as the body of Christ.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

1 Corinthians 12:27

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so

that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.
Ephesians 3:8-10

- **Be patient.**

- Comprehension will take _____ time _____.

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
2 Peter 3:9

- Following Christ will _____ cost _____.

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”
Matthew 10:34-39

- **Be prayerful.**

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments ...”
Daniel 9:3-4

“Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.” While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the LORD my God for the holy hill of my God, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, “O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and

I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision."

Daniel 9:17-23

- Appeal to the heart.

- Acknowledge the _____ presence _____ of evil desires.

"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."

Genesis 4:7

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Genesis 6:5

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Jeremiah 17:9

But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

James 1:14-15

- Affirm the _____ possibility _____ of good desires.

Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Psalms 37:4

- We crave _____ love _____ in our lives.

And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:35-39

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

- We desire _____ forgiveness _____ when we fail.

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.
Ephesians 4:32

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

Psalms 103:10-14

- We long for _____ meaning _____ in our suffering.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:18-28

- We want to _____ serve _____ others who are suffering.

"Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in."

Isaiah 58:6-12

And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 4:17-19

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'?" But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Mark 2:1-12

- o Proclaim the _____ promise _____ of the gospel.

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 2:38

- God has severed the root of suffering on earth.
 - We don't point people to a smiling Buddha sitting on a lotus blossom.
 - We point people to a suffering Christ sacrificed on a cross.

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:3-8

- God has made it possible for us to be satisfied in eternity.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Revelation 21:3-4

- Free from suffering and death.

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

- Free from all evil desire.

But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 21:27

- Trust the power of the gospel.

Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Acts 9:36-42

- Hold out the _____ hope _____ ...

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

- Of power over _____ evil desire _____ now.

"Those who follow the Way might well follow the example of an ox that marches through the deep mire carrying a heavy load. He is tired, but his steady gaze, looking forward, will never relax until he comes out of the mire, and it is only then he takes a respite. O monks, remember that passion and sin are more than the filthy mire, and that you can escape misery only by earnestly and steadily thinking of the Way."

Buddha

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but

whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

John 16:7-15

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5:17

o Of power over _____ death _____ forever.

"Gone never to return. Asleep never to awake. There is no resurrection.

There is no escape."

Buddhist Funeral Chant

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

ISLAM

- Population: Over 1.7 billion
- Countries: 149
- People Groups: 2,317
- Unreached People Groups: 2,121

Debunking Myths ...

- All Muslims are Arabs.
 - Muslim is a religious term, while Arab is an ethno-linguistic term (i.e., an Arab is a member of a people group that speaks the Arabic language).
- All Muslims are terrorists who hate Americans.
 - Most Muslims are extremely hospitable and friendly ... and many are happy Americans!
- All Muslims hate Jesus.
 - Most Muslims have respect and reverence for Jesus.

“Lo! The angels said: ‘O Mary! Behold, God sends thee the glad tiding, through a word from Him, [of a son] who shall become known as the Christ Jesus, son of Mary, of great honor in this world and in the life to come, and [shall be] of those who are drawn near unto God.”

Qur’an 3:45

Who Are Muslims?

- A Muslim is someone who submits to God based on the teachings of Muhammad.
 - Islam means “submission.”
 - Central Islamic creed: “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet.”
- Muhammad ...
 - Born in 570 AD in the Arabian Peninsula (Mecca, Saudi Arabia).
 - Raised by his uncle.
 - At 25, married a wealthy widow named Khadija, who was 40 years old.
 - At 40, had a vision of the archangel Gabriel in a cave on Mount Hira near Mecca, where he received a command from God:

“Read in the name of thy Lord who created, who created man of blood coagulated. Read! Thy Lord is the most beneficent, who taught by the pen, taught that what they knew not unto men.”

Qur’an 96:1-5

- Began preaching in Mecca as a prophet with a clear message:
 - There is only one God.
 - We are obligated to submit to God's will.
 - NOTE: While Christians worship Jesus as God, Muslims do _____ not _____ worship Muhammad as God.
 - A day of judgment is coming when all people will be assessed on whether or not they have obeyed God.
- After the deaths of his wife and uncle, fled to Yathrib from Mecca in 622.
 - His flight, called the *hegira*, marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar.
 - Yathrib was later named Madinat an Nabi (City of the Prophet) and is now commonly known as Medina.
- Married multiple wives and became the religious and political leader of Medina.
- In 630, retook control of Mecca, where he destroyed idols and declared the Kaaba (the main temple in Mecca) to be the most holy shrine in Islam (the place toward which all devout Muslims direct their prayers today).
- United Arabian tribes into a vast army.
- Died in 632.
- Division over Muhammad's successor (caliph) led to a split among Muslims:
 - _____ Sunni _____ (approximately 80% of Muslims today): Believed successors should be chosen by consensus/election (first was Abu Bakr, who was Muhammad's father-in-law).
 - _____ Shiite _____ (approximately 10-15% of Muslims today): Believed successors should be from Muhammad's descendants (first was Muhammad's son-in-law, Ali ben Talib).
- By 732, Islam had spread westward all the way to Spain and eastward all the way to India.
 - By personal conversion.
 - By military coercion.
- Since that time, Islam has been the _____ dominant _____ religion throughout North Africa and the Middle East, Central Asia, and much of Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia).
- Qur'an ...
 - After Muhammad's death, Muhammad's recitations were written down and collated by Uthman (the third caliph) to form the official Qur'an.
 - An earthly version of a heavenly book.
 - Written in _____ Arabic _____, the language of Allah.
 - 114 chapters (called surahs), divided into verses (called ayats).
 - About the same length as the New Testament, but ...
 - Not a history.
 - Dictated by _____ one _____ human author.
 - A final holy book that _____ supersedes _____ all previous books (which have been corrupted):

- The Tawrat (Torah), given to Moses.
- The Zabur (Psalms), given to David.
- The Injil (Gospel), given to Isa (Jesus).

“We made a covenant of old with the Children of Israel [and] you have nothing of guidance until you observe the Torah and the Gospel.”

Qur'an 5:70, 68

- The Qur'an, given to Muhammad.
- Supplemental Teachings ...
 - Hadiths, which are traditions, stories, and teachings based on the life of Muhammad that inform and prescribe Islamic belief and practice.
 - Shariah, which are legal interpretations of Muslim teachings that prescribe religious and secular duties, including laws and penalties for breaking them.

What Do Muslims Believe?

- Five Pillars ...

- Shahada: The Confession.

- To become a Muslim, a person must say and believe this statement:

“There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet.”

- Salat: The Prayers.

- Recitation of prayers five times a day facing Mecca.
 - Salat Al-Fajr: Dawn.
 - Salat Al-Zuhr: Midday.
 - Salat Al-Asr: Afternoon.
 - Salat Al-Maghrib: Sunset.
 - Salah Al-Isha: Evening.
- Involves repetitions (rakaat) of standing, bowing, prostrating, and sitting before standing again.
- Preceded by ritual washing of the arms, face, and feet (Wudu).
- Prompted by a call to prayer (Adhan) in many places around the world.
- Benefits ...
 - Strengthens belief in Allah and submission to him.
 - Brings focus to “the good life” prescribed by Allah through Muhammad.
 - Leads to cleanliness and purity.
 - Builds unity with other Muslims.
- A prayer service led by an Imam takes place every Friday (Jumaa,

the name for the Muslim holy day) at the _____ mosque _____
(which also includes a sermon from the Imam).

- Zakat: The Giving of _____ Alms _____.
 - Muslims must give at least 2.5 percent of their income to the poor.
- Sawm: The _____ Fast _____.
 - Takes place during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, commemorating the month when Muhammad received his first revelation.
 - Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset and then break the fast with a special meal, the “iftar.”
- Hajj: The _____ Pilgrimage _____.
 - Every Muslim who is able (physically and financially) must make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once during his or her lifetime.
 - Each pilgrim walks seven times around the Kaaba, the holiest sight of Islam.

• Six Basic Beliefs ...

“It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness—to believe in Allah, and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for him; for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity.”

Qur’an 2:177

- Belief in _____ God _____ (Allah) ...

“I begin with the name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. All praise and thanks are for God, the Lord of the worlds. The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. Sovereign of the Day of Recompense. You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help. Guide us to the Straight Path (of Islam), the path of those You have blessed, not the path of those who have incurred Your wrath nor of those who have gone astray.”

Surah Al-Fatihah

- **NOTE: Allah is the Arabic word/name for God, used by all Arabic speakers, including both Arab Muslims and Arab Christians.**
- **There is one, unique, incomparable God who does not share His divinity or attributes with anyone or anything else.**

“Say, ‘He is God, the One. God, to Whom the creatures turn for their needs. He begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none like Him.’”

Qur’an 112:1-4

- **The primary sin in Islam is *shirk* (_____ idolatry _____): the worship of any other god besides Allah.**

- Allah has 99 names (attributes or characteristics): 73 in the Qur'an and 23 in the Hadith.
- Belief in Angels ...
 - Angels worship God alone, obey Him, and act according to His commands.
 - The angel Gabriel revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad.
- Belief in the Prophets ...
 - 25 main prophets amidst a total of 124,000 prophets.

"Say Ye: 'We believe in Allah and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: and we submit to Allah.'"

Qur'an 2:136

- Muhammad is the greatest and last of the prophets.

"Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but he is the Messenger of God and the last of the prophets ..."

Surah 33:40

- Belief in the Holy Books ...
 - 4 prophets brought about the Holy Books: Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad.
 - The Qur'an is supreme and final among them.

"Perfect is the Word of your Lord in truth and justice."

Qur'an 6:115

"Indeed, We have sent down the Qur'an, and surely We will guard it (from corruption)."

Qur'an 15:9

- Belief in Divine Decree ...
 - God is the Creator of everything.
 - God knows everything, including all that has happened and will happen.
 - God has recorded all that has happened and will happen.
 - Whatever God wills to happen will happen, and whatever God wills not to happen does not happen.
 - *Inshallah* is a common Muslim phrase that means, "If Allah wills it."
- Belief in Final Judgment ...

"The balance that day will be true (to a nicety). Those whose scale (of good) will be heavy, will prosper. Those whose scale will be light, will find their souls in perdition,

for that they wrongfully treated our signs.”

Qur'an 7:8-9

“Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy, they will be successful. But those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls; in hell will they abide.”

Qur'an 23:102-103

- **An ultimate day of reward for the faithful that leads to Paradise (Jannah).**
- **An ultimate day of punishment for the unfaithful that leads to Hellfire (Jahannam).**

“For those who reject Allah, is a terrible Penalty; but for those who believe and work righteous deeds, is Forgiveness, and a magnificent Reward.”

Qur'an 35:7

“The unbelievers among the People of the Book and the pagans shall burn for ever in the fire of Hell. They are the vilest of all creatures.”

Qur'an 98:1-8

“Whoever goes astray, he himself bears the whole responsibility of wandering.”

Qur'an 10:109

- **An important note:**
 - Islam teaches that humans are born spiritually neutral, capable of obeying God's commands, and that they remain this way even after they've sinned.
 - Humans are weak and forgetful, but they are not fallen.
 - Our great need, therefore, is not salvation, but instruction.
 - Consequently, Islam has prophets, but no savior.
- **Only Allah determines if a Muslim is worthy to enter paradise.**

“Allah ... punishes whom he pleases and forgives whom he pleases.”

Qur'an 5:40

- Leads to fear.
- Leads to insecurity.

“By Allah, though I am the Apostle of Allah, yet I do not know what Allah will do to me.”

Hadith 5.266

How Do We Share The Gospel With Muslims?

- Know (and understand) what they believe ...
 - “The Bible is not reliable.”
 - “It has been changed.”
 - “It has been corrupted.”
 - “Christians are immoral.”
 - “Just look at Western culture.”
 - “Christianity is an easy way out.”
 - “Christians worship three gods.”
 - “God the Father.”
 - “Mary the Mother.”
 - “Jesus the Son.”

“Indeed, they disbelieve who say, ‘God is the third of three (in a trinity),’ when there is no god but one God. If they desist not from what they say, truly, a painful punishment will befall the disbelievers among them. Would they not rather repent to God and ask His forgiveness? For God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. The Messiah (Jesus), son of Mary, was no more than a messenger ...”

Qur’an 5:73-75

- “Jesus is only a prophet and not the Son of God.”

“They say the God of mercy has begotten a son. Now have you uttered a grievous thing ... It is not proper for God to have children.”

Qur’an 3:78, 19:93

“O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: Nor say of Allah aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) a messenger of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His messengers. Say not ‘Trinity’: desist: it will be better for you: for Allah is one Allah: Glory be to Him: (far exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth.”

Qur’an 4:171

“Indeed, they have disbelieved who have said, ‘God is the Messiah (Jesus), son of Mary.’ The Messiah said, ‘Children of Israel, worship God, my Lord and your Lord. Whoever associates partners in worship with God, then God has forbidden Paradise for him, and his home is the Fire (Hell). For the wrongdoers, there will be no helpers.’”

Qur’an 5:72

- “Jesus did not die on the cross.”

“They slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them.”

Qur’an 4:157

- Some Muslims believe that Allah took Jesus to heaven just before the crucifixion because it is unthinkable that an approved prophet of God should face such a humiliating defeat.
- Other Muslims believe that Jesus was taken down from the cross in a coma and that he later revived and traveled to another area where he finally died.
- Know (and trust) what you believe ...

Know (and trust) what you believe about GOD ...

"To meditate on the three Persons of the Godhead is to walk in thought through the garden eastward in Eden and to tread on holy ground. Our sincerest effort to grasp the incomprehensible mystery of the Trinity must remain forever futile, and only by deepest reverence can it be saved from actual presumption."

A.W. Tozer

- Three Foundational Truths ...
 - God is _____ three _____ persons.
 - The Bible refers to God with plural pronouns.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:26-27

"Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech."

Genesis 11:7

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."

Isaiah 6:8

- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all _____ persons _____.
- Is the Holy Spirit a person or a power?

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

John 16:13-14

- **The Spirit teaches.**

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 14:26

- **The Spirit testifies.**

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God ...

Romans 8:16

- **The Spirit intercedes.**

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:26-27

- **The Spirit searches.**

... these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

1 Corinthians 2:10

- **The Spirit knows.**

For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 2:11

- **The Spirit gives gifts.**

All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

1 Corinthians 12:11

- **The Spirit speaks.**

And the spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot."

Acts 8:29

- **The Spirit is grieved.**

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:30

- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each _____ distinct _____.

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:16-17

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...

Matthew 28:19

There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Ephesians 4:4-7

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

1 Peter 1:1-2

- The Son is distinguished from the Father.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:1-2

- The Spirit is distinguished from the Son.

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 14:26

- The Father is distinguished from the Spirit.

And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:27

- Each person of the Trinity is _____ fully _____ God.
 - God the Father is fully God.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Matthew 6:26

But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

Matthew 6:30

- **God the Son is fully God.**

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 1:1-4

- **God the Spirit is fully God.**

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."

Acts 5:3-4

- **The Spirit is omnipresent.**

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

Psalms 139:7-8

- **The Spirit is omniscient.**

... these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 2:10-11

- There is one God.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Isaiah 45:5-6

- Recap: Three Foundational Truths ...

- God is three persons.
- Each person is fully God.
- There is one God.

- Three Additional Truths To Note ...

- The Trinity is a mystery, not a contradiction.
 - A contradiction: "God is one and not one."
 - A mystery: "God is one in three."
- The Trinity is eternal.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Genesis 1:1-2

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

Colossians 1:15-16

- The Father has always been and always will be God.
- The Son has always been and always will be God.
- The Spirit has always been and always will be God.
- The persons of the Trinity have different functions.
 - At times, the Son is functionally (not essentially) subordinate to the Father.

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him."

John 5:19-23

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

- **At times the Son is functionally (not essentially) dependent on the Spirit.**

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ...

Luke 4:1

- Consider creation ...
 - God the Father is speaking.
 - God the Son is implementing.
 - God the Spirit is hovering.
- Consider salvation ...
 - God the Father plans.
 - God the Son obeys.
 - God the Spirit applies.
- Consider the difference ...
 - The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are equal in their attributes.
 - The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are different in their roles.
- Three Dangerous Heresies To Avoid ...
 - Modalism: Denial of the first foundational truth.
 - Instead of three distinct persons, God has three distinct modes.
 - God wears three different masks.
 - Problems ...

- Denies the relationships within the Trinity.
- Ignores the separation of persons in Scripture.
- Undercuts the doctrine of the atonement.
- Arianism: Denial of the second foundational truth.
 - Denies the full _____ deity _____ of the Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - Claims the Son is inferior in essence to the Father.
- Polytheism: Denial of the third foundational truth.
 - The worship of _____ more _____ than one god.

“Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save. Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”
Isaiah 45:20-22

And the rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, “Deliver me, for you are my god!” They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand.
Isaiah 44:17-18

“What profit is an idol when its maker has shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies? For its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols! Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake; to a silent stone, Arise! Can this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it. But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.”
Habakkuk 2:18-20

- Three Practical Conclusions To Remember ...
 - Our God is _____ worthy _____.
 - It is appropriate to worship the Father.
 - It is appropriate to worship the Son.
 - It is appropriate to worship the Spirit.
 - Our minds are _____ finite _____.
 - The Trinity is divinely revealed, not humanly constructed.
 - The Trinity is incomprehensible.
 - Any analogy is _____ insufficient _____.
 - Can we know the doctrine of the Trinity exhaustively? No.
 - Can we know the doctrine of the Trinity truly? Absolutely.

“Love and faith are at home in the mystery of the Godhead. Let reason kneel in reverence outside.”

A.W. Tozer

- Our salvation is _____ secure _____.
- We are not saved by a creature; we are saved by the Creator.
- The One who saves us completely is completely _____
_____ God _____.

“Try to explain it, and you'll lose your mind;
but try to deny it, and you'll lose your soul.”

Anonymous

Know (and trust) what you believe about JESUS ...

- Jesus is fully _____ man _____.

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 2:17

- He was born of a virgin.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 1:18-20

And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.”

Luke 1:35

- He possessed the full range of human characteristics.
 - A human body.

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke 2:7

And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Luke 2:40

Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.
John 4:6

And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
Matthew 4:2

- **A human mind.**

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.
Luke 2:52

- **A human soul.**

"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour."
John 12:27

After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me."
John 13:21

Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me."
Matthew 26:38

- **Human emotions.**

When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith."
Matthew 8:10

Jesus wept.
John 11:35

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.
Hebrews 5:7-8

- **Human observation.**

And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished,

and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.
Matthew 13:53-58

- He is fully able to identify with us.

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
Hebrews 4:14-16

- He is familiar with our struggles.
- He is familiar with our sorrow.
- He is familiar with our suffering.
- Jesus is fully God.

"The doctrine of Christ's divinity seems to me not something stuck on which you can unstick but something that peeps out at every point so that you'd have to unravel the whole web to get rid of it."
C.S. Lewis

- His identity ...

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
John 1:1-4

- He is eternal.

But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom."
Hebrews 1:8

- He is Creator.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.
Colossians 1:15-16

- **He is Sustainer.**

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
Colossians 1:17

- **He is omnipotent.**

And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"
Matthew 8:26-27

Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.
Matthew 14:19

- **He is omniscient.**

And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts?"
Mark 2:8

... and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.
John 2:25

"Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God."
John 16:30

- **He is sovereign.**

And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"
Mark 2:5-7

*At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."
Matthew 11:25-27*

◦ His testimony ...

*Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."
John 8:58*

*"I and the Father are one."
John 10:30*

◦ Man's testimony ...

*Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"
John 20:28*

*For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily ...
Colossians 2:9*

*He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high ...
Hebrews 1:3*

*"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."
Revelation 1:8*

◦ Jesus is fully able to identify with God .

*"He suffered not as God, but he who suffered was God."
John Owen*

• The person of Christ is a mysterious unity of two natures.

*"Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man ... perfect God, and perfect man ... who although he be God and man; yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by taking of the manhood into God."
Athanasian Creed*

- The trilemma ...
 - Is Jesus a liar?
 - Is Jesus a lunatic?
 - Is Jesus _____ Lord _____ ?

"You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit on Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

C.S. Lewis

Know (and trust) what you believe about the CROSS ...

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Luke 19:10

- Jesus came to live a _____ sinless _____ life.

Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him."

John 18:38

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.

1 John 3:5

- He was obedient.

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

John 15:10

- He was righteous.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

1 John 2:1

- Jesus came to die a substitutionary death.

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 2:17

- He died in the place of the disobedient.
- He died in the place of the unrighteous.

But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.

John 11:49-53

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:6-8

For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died ...

2 Corinthians 5:14

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" ...

Galatians 3:13

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

1 Peter 2:24

- Sinless Substitution ...
 - The essence of sin:
 - Man substitutes himself for God.
 - The essence of salvation:
 - God substitutes Himself for man.

*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
2 Corinthians 5:21*

- o At the cross, God expresses His judgment on sin.
- o At the cross, God endures His judgment against sin.
- o At the cross, God enables _____ salvation _____ for sinners.

Know (and trust) what you believe about SALVATION ...

“The law is divine and holy. Let the law have its glory, but yet no law, be it never so divine and holy, ought to teach me that I am justified, and shall live through it. I grant it may teach me that I ought to love God and my neighbor; also to live in love, soberness, patience, etc., but it will not to show me how I should be delivered from sin, the devil, death, and hell. Here I must take counsel of the gospel. I must hearken to the gospel, which teaches me, not what I ought to do but what Jesus Christ the Son of God hath done for me: that He suffered and died to deliver me from sin and death. The gospel wills me to receive this, and to believe it. And this is the truth of the gospel. Most necessary it is, therefore, that we should know this article well, teach it unto others, and beat it into their heads continually.”

Martin Luther

- We are saved by _____ grace _____ alone ...

*If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?
Psalm 130:3*

*Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my pleas for mercy! In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness! Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you.
Psalm 143:1-2*

- Through _____ faith _____ alone ...

*That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all ...
Romans 4:16*

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Romans 5:1*

- In _____ Christ _____ alone.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Romans 5:6-9

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.

1 John 5:13

“How are you righteous before God?

Only by true faith in Jesus Christ. In spite of the fact that my conscience accuses me that I have grievously sinned against all the commandments of God, and have not kept any one of them, and that I am still ever prone to all that is evil, nevertheless, God, without any merit of my own, out of pure grace, grants me the benefits of the perfect [sacrifice] of Christ, imputing to me his righteousness and holiness as if I had never committed a single sin or had ever been sinful, having fulfilled myself all the obedience which Christ has carried out for me, if only I accept such favor with a trusting heart.”

Heidelberg Catechism

Know (and trust) what you believe about the BIBLE ...

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

- We believe the Bible because of its historical accuracy.

“No archeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions has often led to amazing discoveries.”

Nelson Glueck, Authority on Israeli Archaeology

“There have been thousand—not hundreds—of archeological finds in the Middle East that support the picture presented in the biblical record.”

Norman Geisler

- We believe the Bible because of its manuscript reliability.
 - Thousands more manuscripts exist for the New Testament than any other ancient writing.

- The earliest manuscripts are dated to within decades of the original manuscripts.
- These manuscripts are approximately 99.5% textually consistent.

“There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament.”

F.F. Bruce

- We believe the Bible because of its fulfilled prophecy.
 - Over 300 specific prophecies fulfilled in the coming of Christ.

“The very dimension of the sheer fulfillment of prophecy of the Old Testament Scriptures should be enough to convince anyone that we are dealing with a supernatural piece of literature . . . God has himself planted within the scriptures an internal consistency that bears witness that this is his Word.”

R.C. Sproul

- We believe the Bible because of its clear unity.

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Luke 24:27

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”

Luke 24:44-47

- Over 40 distinct authors.
- In 3 different languages.
- Across 1500 years.
- Concerning 1 central theme: the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- We believe the Bible because of its internal testimony.

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether.

Psalms 19:7-9

- “Thus says the Lord” — Over 3,000 times.

- This is God's Word ...
 - According to Jesus.

"For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

Matthew 5:18

"If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

John 10:35-36

"... and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

Luke 24:47

- According to other biblical writers.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness ...

2 Timothy 3:16

For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21

- Recap: Know (and understand) what they believe.
- Recap: Know (and trust) what you believe.
- On areas of disagreement with Muslims, do less debate and more dialogue.
 - Utilize questions.
 - "You worship three gods."
 - "Are you thinking God, Jesus, and Mary? Far from it. We worship one God, revealed in three persons—Father, Son, and Spirit. Let me ask you a question, 'Which existed first in eternity: God or His Word or His Spirit?'"
 - "You think Jesus is God's Son."
 - "Yes, but probably not in the way you're thinking. Christians believe Jesus' conception resulted from a miracle of the Holy Spirit. You don't believe God would defile Himself through a physical relationship with a woman, do you?"
 - "Jesus is only a prophet."
 - "The Qur'an, in Al-Imran 3:45, says that Allah names Isa (Jesus) 'Isa Masih' (EE-sah Mah-see) which means 'the promised salvation.' Why do you think Allah gave Isa this title?"
 - "Jesus didn't die on the cross."

- “You might be thinking, how could God let His prophet lose by dying on the cross. Let me ask you a question, ‘Which is greater, for God to save His prophet by keeping Him from death or to save Him by raising Him up and defeating death?’”
- “You have to pay for your own sins. Jesus can’t do that for you.”
 - “You’re right; sin is serious. Would you like to look with me at what the Bible says about Jesus forgiving our sin so that we have hope on Judgment Day?”
- “The Bible has been changed and corrupted.”
 - “If all books were originally true and given by Allah, who is able to preserve His Word, why is He able to keep the Qur’an free from corruption, but He wasn’t able to preserve the first three holy books, including the Bible?”
 - “Wouldn’t you agree that God is powerful enough to protect His Word? Who would be strong enough to corrupt God’s Word, and when would they have done it?”
 - After a pause, you might ask, “How about studying the holy books with me to see what they actually say?”
 - “In Qur’an 10:94, Allah tells Mohammad to go to the people of the Bible (The Book) if he has a question or doubt. If the Bible was changed or corrupted, why would Allah tell Mohammad to go to the Bible?”
 - “Which verses in the Qur’an say that the Bible has been changed or corrupted?”
 - “Which verses in the Bible have been changed or corrupted?”
- Use _____ illustrations _____.
 - Sinfulness: The severity of sin is determined by the one who is sinned against.
 - Incarnation: In matters of love, one must go himself.
- Your goal is not to win an argument; your goal is to gain a _____ hearing _____.
- Trust in God’s Word.
 - Give _____ Scripture _____.
 - In conversation.
 - As a follow-up.
 - Tell the _____ story _____.
 - In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve. There was a good relationship between them and God.
 - But they sinned and the relationship between them and God was cut off. Through one sin, death entered into this world.
 - However, God loved people.
 - God sent many prophets to the people to tell them of the Savior. The Savior would be born of a virgin and would die because of our sins.
 - At the right time, our Lord Jesus was born of a virgin. The Messiah is the Savior who will defeat Satan and death.
 - Our Lord Jesus is the Word of God, and He never sinned.

- Our Lord Jesus is the Lamb of God who died in our place and redeemed us from our sins.
 - But the Messiah rose from the dead and defeated sin and death (and Satan). He gives us new life with God.
 - God commands us to turn away from our sins and believe that the Messiah redeemed us from our sin by His death in our place.
 - If we do this, we are certain that our sins are forgiven and that we have a new and good relationship with God.
- Point to God's _____ love _____.

*Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.
1 John 4:8*

- He _____ forgives _____ us for our sin.

*"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him."
Psalm 103:8-13*

- He _____ adopts _____ us as His children.

*Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."
Matthew 6:9*

*See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.
1 John 3:1*

"That justification—by which we mean God's forgiveness of the past together with his acceptance for the future—is the primary and fundamental blessing of the Gospel is not in question. Justification is the primary blessing, because it meets our primary spiritual need. We all stand by nature under God's judgment. His law convicts us, guilt gnaws at us, making us restless, miserable, and in our lucid moments afraid. We have no peace in ourselves because we have no peace with our Maker. So we need the forgiveness of our sins, and assurance of a restored relationship with God, more than we need anything else in the world. And this the Gospel offers us before it offers us anything else.

“But this is not to say that justification is the highest blessing of the gospel. Adoption is higher, because of the richer relationship with God that it involves.

“What is a Christian? The richest answer I know is that a Christian is one who has God as Father. If you want to [know] how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all.”

J.I. Packer

- Pray in Jesus’ _____ name _____.

“Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”

John 14:13-14

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

1 John 5:13-15

- For Muslims.
- With Muslims.
- Be holy in your _____ lifestyle _____.

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 5:13-16

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.

Honor the emperor.

1 Peter 2:16-17

- Be hospitable and _____ loving _____.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 13:34-35

Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Romans 12:13

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

1 Peter 4:9

- Respect your differences.
- Be sensitive to their diet.
- Be patient as you share.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ...

1 Corinthians 13:4

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

- Be cognizant of suffering.

"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, and you will be hated by all for my name's sake.

But the one who endures to the end will be saved."

Matthew 10:16-22

- It may come their way if they follow Christ.
- It may come your way when you proclaim Christ.
- Get to the gospel.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

- Question to ask: “Do Muslims in your community know the book, Injil Sharif (‘In-jeel Shah-reef,’ the Gospels)? Did you know the meaning of the word ‘Injil’ is ‘Good News’?”
 - Bridge to cross: “I found one verse in the Injil that summarizes the ‘Good News.’ Can I share it with you?”
- Question to ask: “Is there one verse in the Qur’an that summarizes the entire Qur’an?” (Wait for a response).
 - Bridge to cross: “I found one verse that summarizes the Injil. Can I share it with you?”
- Question to ask: “Can I ask you two questions about a verse in your Qur’an? In Surah (Chapter) 5, verse 64, the Qur’an says that the Injil (Gospel) contains light and guidance.”
 - Bridge to cross: “What do you think is the ‘light’ and ‘guidance’ in the Injil?”
 - Bridge to cross: “Do you think the Injil contains information that can guide us on the Day of Judgment?”
 - Bridge to cross: “I have read the Injil (Gospel) and I found one verse that is like a light and gives guidance for Judgment Day. Can I share it with you?”
- Trust in _____ God _____.
 - He is at work.

But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.” This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.”

John 5:17-21

- He loves the _____ world _____ (including over 1.7 billion Muslims).

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16

ATHEISM

- Population: Over 1.6 billion
- Countries: 110
- People Groups: 287
- Unreached People Groups: 198

Debunking Myths ...

- Atheists believe in _____ nothing _____.
- Atheists have no _____ morals _____ in life.
- All atheists are either communist, left-wing, or _____ liberal _____.

Who Are Atheists And What Do They Believe?

- Atheists believe there is _____ no _____ God (or there are no gods).
- Agnostics believe it is impossible to _____ know _____ if there is a God (or if there are gods).
- Secular humanists apply atheistic/agnostic belief to a _____ formal _____ ideological system.

“For many, mere atheism (the absence of belief in gods and the supernatural) or agnosticism (the view that such questions cannot be answered) aren't enough. Atheism and agnosticism are silent on larger questions of values and meaning. If Ultimate Meaning in life is not ordained from on high, what other meaning can we work out among ourselves? If eternal life is an illusion, how can we make the most of our only lives? As social beings sharing a godless world, how should we coexist? For the questions that remain unanswered after we've cleared our minds of gods and souls and spirits, many atheists, agnostics, skeptics, and freethinkers turn to secular humanism.”

The Council for Secular Humanism

- Philosophical _____ Naturalism _____ ...
 - Affirms the natural.
 - Denies the supernatural.
 - Knowledge is gained by scientific inquiry into the natural, not simplistic appeal to the supernatural.
 - Scientific (not supernatural) authority is _____ superior _____ authority.
- Consequential _____ Ethicism _____ ...
 - Ethics and morals are determined over time by _____ results _____ in culture.

- Through human discovery.
- Through human achievement.
- Ethics and morals _____ develop _____ over time through progress in society.
- Examples ...
 - “Scientific Sam” ...

“After years of self-study in philosophy, religion, and science, I finally came to the conclusion that there are no gods and there have never been any gods. The whole god thing has been nothing more than an invention of humans looking for answers to the fact of existence. As I look back on the whole process I wonder why it took me so long to reach this obvious conclusion. I believe that the acceptance of the fact of evolution was the deciding factor in the conclusion that gods did not and do not exist. Evolution and the natural evil in the world settle the matter for me. There are still questions that science may not be able to answer: I still wonder why there is something instead of nothing; the complexity of life still awes me; I miss the comfort of old legends. But in the end, I prefer the truth instead of lies and falsehoods, however cold the truth may be.”¹

- “Moral Mark” ...

“Looking back on my youth, I realize that I wanted to belong to the good, true, moral crowd. But what I found out is that it isn’t a moral crowd and its teachings are not true. Religions are made up of lies and metaphors to scare their followers into practicing a certain kind of morality. Here’s my conclusion: man invented God; man desires power; absolute power corrupts absolutely; man feels guilt, fear, and compassion. These are the tools that are utilized to brainwash the uneducated and weak into believing that they alone are the moral elite. Brainwashed individuals that are infected with religious belief then infect their children, and this perpetuates ignorance and superstition. Religion is just amoral, intellectual slavery. My name is Mark, and I am proud to call myself a moral atheist.”¹

- “Insignificant Isabelle” ...

“I am grateful that I believed the stories in the Bible when I was little, because this gave me a calm childhood without any earth-shattering events that made me grow up faster. Once I did grow up, I started studying the natural sciences. Then, after three years of intense studying, it was clear that my eyes were opening wide and that it would be impossible to ever shut them again. After my twentieth birthday, I felt that I had finally grown into my own skin, and all my adolescent insecurities were gone. Now I was ready! Once my fear was gone, everything was easy to accept. First, there is no God. Second, I am an insignificant part of the universe. Third, when I die, I am dead, no ifs, ands, or buts. Fourth, there is no invisible Super-Parent who takes care of me or guides me through life. It was a scary, naked feeling at first, realizing that I am on my own and I better make the best of the one chance at bat

that I have. I found out that there is a heaven, but not your everyday Bible-thumping heaven: my heaven is the circle of trust and comfort I have created with those close to me. Together we walk through life. No crutches are needed and we stroll hand-in-hand down a short, bumpy road, pausing as often as possible to smell the roses as we gently approach the End.”¹

How Do We Share The Gospel With Atheists?

- Create _____ humble _____ dialogue.
 - “I don’t believe in God.”
 - “Tell me about the God you don’t believe in.”
 - “I think all religions are the same.”
 - “What makes you believe that?”
 - “I think all people are basically good.”
 - “Really? What about ...?”
- Cause _____ honest _____ questioning.
 - “Can you prove that God does not exist?”
 - Atheism is unprovable.
 - “Why have human beings throughout history believed in the supernatural?”
 - Atheism is contrary to human nature.
- Sharing the gospel with “Scientific Sam” ...
 - Questions to ask ...
 - “How did creation begin?” Or, “How was creation caused?”
 - “In the beginning, why was there something instead of nothing?”
 - Bridges to cross ...
 - Point to _____ creation _____.

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1:1*

*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no
speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through
all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for
the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong
man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit
to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.
Psalm 19:1-6*

- “*Ex nihilo nihil fit*” — out of nothing, nothing comes.
- Threefold progression:
 - Whatever begins to exist has a _____ cause _____.
 - The universe began to exist.
 - Therefore, the _____ universe _____ has a cause.

"The details differ, but the essential elements in the astronomical and biblical accounts of Genesis are the same This is an exceedingly strange development, unexpected by all but the theologians. They have always believed the word of the Bible. But we scientists did not expect to find evidence for an abrupt beginning because we have had, until recently, such extraordinary success in tracing the chain of cause and effect backward in time At this moment it seems as though science will never be able to raise the curtain on the mystery of creation. For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."

Robert Jastrow, Founding Director of
NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies

- Point to design .
 - God leaves the imprints of His glory upon the design of the earth.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Romans 1:18-20

"Through my scientific work I have come to believe more and more strongly that the physical universe is put together with an ingenuity so astonishing that I cannot accept it merely as a brute fact."

Paul Davies, One-time Agnostic

"The design of the universe is very magnificent and shouldn't be taken for granted. In fact, I believe that is why Einstein had so little use for organized religions, although he strikes me as a basically very religious man. He must have looked at what the Christians said about God and felt that they were blaspheming. He had seen much more majesty than they had ever imagined, and they were just not talking about the real thing. My guess is that he simply felt that religions he'd run across did not have proper respect for the author of the universe."

Charles Misner, on Albert Einstein

To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host

by number, calling them all by name, by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing.
Isaiah 40:25-26

- Sharing the gospel with “Moral Mark” ...
 - Questions to ask ...
 - “Do you believe in right and wrong?”
 - “Why do you have a sense of right and wrong? Where did that come from?”
 - “How do you know the difference between right and wrong?”
 - Bridges to cross ...
 - The existence of objective moral values points to a moral Creator.

They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them ...
Romans 2:15

- If God does not exist, then good and evil do not exist.

“If we are purely material beings, then we should no more object to mass murder than a river objects to drying up in a drought ... Our ability to distinguish between good and evil, and to recognize these as real, means that there is a moral standard in the universe that provides the basis for this distinction. And what is the source of that moral standard if not God?”

Dinesh D'Souza

- **An atheistic worldview provides no objective basis for distinguishing between good and evil.**

“The position of the modern evolutionist is that ... morality is a biological adaptation no less than are hands and feet and teeth. Considered as a rationally justifiable set of claims about an objective something, ethics is illusory. I appreciate that when somebody says ‘Love thy neighbor as thyself,’ they think they are referring above and beyond themselves. Nevertheless, such reference is truly without foundation. Morality is just an aid to survival and reproduction ... and any deeper meaning is illusory.”

Michael Ruse, Noted Agnostic Philosopher of Science

“We have not been able to show that reason requires the moral point of view, or that all really rational persons should not be individual egoists or classical amoralists. Reason doesn't decide here. The picture I have painted for you is not a pleasant one. Reflection on it depresses me ... Pure practical reason, even with a good knowledge of the facts, will not take you to morality.”

Kai Nielsen, Atheist Ethicist at the University of Calgary

- Atheism is left with ...
 - Hopeless _____ subjectivity _____.
 - Changing society.
- The implications are _____ frightening _____.

"In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, other people are going to get lucky, and you won't find any rhyme or reason in it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no other good. Nothing but blind, pitiless indifference. DNA neither knows nor cares.

DNA just is. And we dance to its music."

Richard Dawkins

- Sharing the gospel with "Insignificant Isabelle" ...
 - Questions to ask ...
 - "If the universe is ultimately impersonal, and therefore we are all insignificant, then why do we have a personal desire for meaningful relationships like you mentioned?"
 - "If we really *are* insignificant in the whole of creation, then why do we have such a strong desire inside of us for significance?"
 - "If we really *aren't* insignificant in the whole of creation, then where does that strong desire for significance come from?"
 - "Is there a part of you that desires ultimate justice in the world or transcendent meaning beyond this world? Where do you think that desire comes from?"
 - Bridges to cross ...
 - Our search for significance comes from a _____ personal _____ Creator.

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

Genesis 1:27

- Our longing for love comes from a _____ loving _____ Creator.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

And he said to him, "You shall love the lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:37-39

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:1-2

Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4:8

- Our desire for justice comes from an ultimate Judge .

And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say, "Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was, for you brought these judgments."

Revelation 16:5

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

Revelation 20:12

- Our desire for meaning comes from a majestic God.

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living

creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!" And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

Revelation 4:1-11

- Realize that objections aren't just in a person's head; they're in a person's heart.

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good.

Psalm 14:1

But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.

Isaiah 63:10

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

2 Timothy 4:3-4

As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

Hebrews 3:15

- Remember that the gospel proclaimed and portrayed has power to save.

... so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Colossians 1:10

- Call atheists to turn ...

"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments."

Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

Joel 2:12-13

*And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
Acts 2:38*

- From their way of thinking.

*And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God."
Luke 16:15*

- From their way of living.

*For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God ...
1 Thessalonians 1:9*

- Urge atheists to trust ...

*... but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
John 20:31*

- In the Creator who rules over them.

*You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!
James 2:19*

*... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
Romans 10:9*

- In the Savior who will redeem them.

*God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
Acts 5:31*

- Point them to the pursuing love of God in the perceived narrowness of the gospel.

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
John 14:6*

A GLOBAL GOSPEL IN A WORLD OF RELIGIONS

Three Conclusions ...

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

- An eternal _____ hell _____ awaits every person in the world who does not believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Acts 4:12

... since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might ...

2 Thessalonians 1:6-9

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:11-15

- An eternal _____ heaven _____ awaits every person in the world who does believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16

*But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior,
the Lord Jesus Christ ...*

Philippians 3:20

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’”

Revelation 21:1-4

- God has ordained our _____ mouths _____ to be the _____ means _____ by which the gospel goes to every person in the world.

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

Luke 24:45-49

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:12-17

Three Exhortations ...

But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:24

- Let's _____ pray passionately _____.

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Matthew 9:37-38

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6:10-20

- Let's _____ give sacrificially _____.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Matthew 6:19-21

Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.

Luke 12:48

- Let's _____ go confidently _____.

But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:24

- To _____ people _____ right around us.

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

1 Peter 3:13-17

- To _____ peoples _____ around the world.

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Matthew 24:14

"God alone knows the definition of terms. I cannot precisely define who all the nations are, but I do not need to know. I know only one thing; Christ has not yet returned; therefore, the task is not yet done. When it is done, Christ will come. Our responsibility is not to insist on defining the terms; our responsibility is to complete the task. So long as Christ does not return, our work is undone. Let us get busy and complete our mission."

George Ladd

- Knowing there will be _____ risk _____.

"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many

*astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.
But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”
Matthew 24:9-13*

- To our reputation.
- To our _____ comfort _____.
- To our careers.
- With our _____ finances _____.
- In our future.
- In our _____ families _____.
- To our safety.
- In our _____ lives _____.

*When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.
Revelation 6:9-11*

- Looking to our _____ reward _____.

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
Hebrews 12:1-2*

*Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”
Revelation 12:7-12*

End Notes

¹The stories in the Atheism section were taken from the Positive Atheism online forum.

Recommended Reading

If you are interested in exploring specific topics from our Secret Church gathering further, the following resources are recommended. Please note, however, that though these books are recommended, Dr. Platt does not necessarily agree with everything written in every one of them. We urge you to read and learn from these books, but at the same time, to filter them through the truth of God's Word.

On the Gospel, Evangelism, and Mission ...

- Greg Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?*
- Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*
- John Piper, *Let the Nations be Glad*

On World Religions ...

- Dean Halverson, ed., *The Compact Guide to World Religions*
- Winfried Corduan, *Neighboring Faiths*
- Fritz Ridenour, *So What's The Difference?*
- Gerald R. McDermott, *World Religions*
- Ravi Zacharias, *Jesus Among Other Gods and Can Man Live Without God?*

On Sharing the Gospel with Animists ...

- Gailyn Van Rheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*

On Sharing the Gospel with Hindus ...

- Ravi Zacharias, *New Birth or Rebirth?: Jesus Talks with Krishna*

On Sharing the Gospel with Buddhists ...

- Ravi Zacharias, *The Lotus and the Cross*

On Sharing the Gospel with Muslims ...

- Nabeel Qureshi, *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*
- Thabiti Anyabwile, *The Gospel for Muslims*

On Sharing the Gospel with Atheists ...

- Albert Mohler, *Atheism Remix*

Praying For India

You can find a little bit of everything in India. As one of the most spiritual places in the world, India has followers of almost every major religion, including Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs. With just over 1.2 billion people, India is incredibly diverse, containing 1,469 distinct people groups and an estimated 200 different languages.

Indians can be found in any number of jobs from street vendors, rickshaw drivers, rural farmers, business executives and everything in between. Often people living in extreme poverty and immaculate wealth can be found in the same city.

Despite this incredible diversity, 80 percent of people in India follow Hinduism, a religion with thousands of gods. For many people, to be truly Indian, one must also be Hindu. Of the over 1,400 people groups in India, 1,245 groups are unreached, meaning less than two percent are evangelical Christian. Of those, 477 people groups, or over 23 million people, have no access to the gospel and no one is currently working to reach them.

For many Christians in India, the decision to follow Christ is costly. Christians make up only 2.2 percent of the population of India. In the 1960s the government began to pass Freedom of Religion Acts, commonly known as anti-conversion laws. A new Hindu government rose to power in 2014 and has tightened laws that discriminate against converts to Christianity and other minority religions, especially those from a Hindu background. In recent years, fundamentalist Hindus have heavily influenced government at the top level.

Open Doors ranks India 17th on the World Watch List for Christian persecution. Becoming a Christian can be a dangerous decision, especially for those from Hindu backgrounds. It is not uncommon for Christians to face societal pressure or beatings because of conversions, and sometimes Christians are killed for their faith. Believers face pressure from the government, radical religious groups, their communities, and often their own families.

Despite these challenges, the church in India remains faithful to Christ and is expanding all over the country. Church leaders are boldly proclaiming the gospel in the face of persecution and have frequent opportunities for training. Believers in India could face tighter restrictions and more persecution in the coming years as the government cracks down on conversions. Indian Christians will need the support of the global church to continue to be bold in their faith no matter the cost.

As we gather together, let us pray for our brothers and sisters who face persecution for their faith in India. Let us ask the Father to continue to grow the church in India and strengthen their faith to make them bold witnesses to Indian people who have yet to hear the gospel.

How To Pray For India

- Choosing to follow Christ in India can often mean facing pressure from families, communities, and the government.
 - **Pray** for new believers in India to find Christian community and support as soon as they choose to follow Christ.
 - **Ask** for leaders to come alongside new Christians to teach them how to follow Jesus in the midst of persecution.
- Over one billion people in India are unreached with the gospel, and more than 23 million have no access to hear about Jesus.
 - **Pray** for Indian believers to be bold to share the gospel far and wide in India.
 - **Ask** for language and cultural barriers to be broken down and for the gospel to reach those who have yet to hear.
- Lately anti-conversion laws have been tightened in many states, and the government is cracking down on Hindu conversions to Christianity and minority faiths.
 - **Pray** for church leaders to stand strong despite this opposition and for the church in India to continue to grow.
 - **Ask** for those in government to hear the gospel and give their lives to Jesus Christ.
- Materialism has taken the hearts of many in recent years, widening the gap between rich and poor.
 - **Pray** for the rich of India to see that only Jesus can ultimately satisfy them, not their possessions.
 - **Ask** that the poor and marginalized in India would be cared for and would hear of the God who loves them.

For more about India and ways you can pray, visit PrayingForIndia.org.

About The Teacher

Dr. David Platt, President of the IMB, is deeply devoted to Christ and His Word. David's first love in ministry is making disciples—sharing, showing, and teaching God's Word in everyday life. He has traveled extensively to serve alongside church leaders throughout the United States and around the world.

A lifelong learner, David has earned two undergraduate and three advanced degrees. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism (A.B.J.) from the University of Georgia and a Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Master of Theology (Th.M.), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He previously served at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary as Dean of Chapel and Assistant Professor of Expository Preaching and Apologetics, Staff Evangelist at Edgewater Baptist Church in New Orleans, and eight years as the Senior Pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama. David has written several books: *Radical, Radical Together*, *Follow Me*, and most recently *Counter Culture*.

David founded Radical (Radical.net), a ministry devoted to serving churches and providing disciple-making resources toward the end that the gospel might be made known in all nations.

David and his wife, Heather, have four children: Caleb, Joshua, Mara Ruth, and Isaiah.

About Radical

Radical exists to serve the church in accomplishing the mission of Christ.

We long to see the church equipping followers of Christ to make disciples who make disciples who make disciples throughout the world—from neighbors across the street to unreached people groups across the globe—all for the glory of God.

As the resource ministry of teacher and author David Platt, we serve alongside the local church by providing resources in multiple languages, organizing catalytic events like Secret Church, and facilitating opportunities through multiple avenues all with the aim to encourage followers of Christ in the global purpose God has designed for us as His people. Our prayer is that these resources will support disciple-making efforts in local churches around the world.

As followers of Christ, we are committed to obeying His commission. We believe the Scriptures are the inerrant and infallible Word of God, providing the foundation for all that we believe and do. Based upon His Word, we are driven by the following core values:

- Desperate Prayer
- Unconditional Devotion
- Humble Service
- Biblical Integrity
- Global Compassion
- Trusting and Teaching the Word
- Making Disciples through Local Churches
- Reaching the Unreached

The Secret Church simulcast is facilitated and produced by Radical. In addition to the simulcast, Radical transcribes, translates, and distributes the teachings from Secret Church in many different languages. Most recently Radical began producing a Discussion Guide to help small group leaders use the online resources in a six-week small group study. All of the audio, video, transcripts, and study guides from the Secret Church gatherings are available for viewing and download on the Radical website.

To learn more about Radical, visit our website, Radical.net.

Additional Resources

PAST SECRET CHURCH RESOURCES

Past Secret Church resources (DVDs, CDs, and Study Guides) are available for purchase at Radical.net/Store. Secret Church resources, including audio and video recordings of the teaching sessions, downloadable Study Guides, and links to additional information about the persecuted church, are also available on the Secret Church website (SecretChurch.org) and through the Radical website (Radical.net).

TRANSLATED RESOURCES

Secret Church resources and other message series have been translated into multiple languages. Audio recordings, transcripts, and Study Guides can be downloaded from the Radical website in the Resource Library (Radical.net/Resources). Current languages include Arabic, Spanish, Mandarin, Hindi, Indonesian, Russian, Farsi, French, Vietnamese, Amharic, and Thai. New resources and languages are continually being added.

BOOKS BY DAVID PLATT

David Platt is the author of several books: *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream*, *Radical Together: Unleashing the People of God for the Purpose of God*, *Follow Me: A Call to Die. A Call to Live.*, and *Counter Culture*. These books are available through our online store at Radical (Radical.net).

For more information about the books, visit RadicalTheBook.com, RadicalTogether.com, FollowMeBook.org, and CounterCultureBook.com. All proceeds from book sales go toward promoting the glory of Christ in all nations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional resources such as sermons, Small Group Guides, Family Worship Guides, and more are available on the Radical website (Radical.net). Free, downloadable discipleship resources can also be found at MultiplyMovement.com.

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A GLOBAL GOSPEL IN A WORLD OF RELIGIONS

A multiplicity of religions exists in the world, all claiming to hold to (at least) some portion of the truth about who we are, how we got here, what we should be doing, and where we're going. Billions of people believe in Christianity, while others embrace Islam. Some are Hindu and others are Buddhist. Amidst it all, many are atheist, or at the very least agnostic. In light of these realities, certain questions come to mind . . .

- How should we think about this massive marketplace of religious ideas?
- Is there one way to God or are there many ways?
- How does the gospel compare and contrast with other world religions?
- How should we share the gospel with people of other faiths?

In this Secret Church study, David Platt compares the foundational truths of the gospel with the beliefs of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Animism, and Atheism. The goal is to make sure that we hold fast to the gospel in a world filled with religious options, and that we know how to share this good news with people of other faiths.

For more resources from David Platt, visit
radical.net

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