



Evangelism Course

“Reaching People – Changing Lives”

Thanks to:

Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry (carm.org)

Step-by-Step Ministries (step-by-step.org)

Jews For Jesus Ministry (jewsforjesus.org)

Goal: Equipping the Saints to effectively evangelize, while simultaneously creating an evangelistic ministry called “Real Life Stories,” through the development of a testimonial tracts outreach ministry.

Requirements: Each student must participate in at least one outreach event and contribute to the testimony ministry.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Week 1: Evangelism Course

Scripture memory helps

Scriptural mandates for evangelism

Walking the walk vs. talking the talk

Prayer

Bible study

Memory verse: Romans 1:16 “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.”

Week 2: Prayer, Do’s and Don’t’s of Witnessing & Writing and sharing your testimony

Memory verse: Revelation 12:11 “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.”

Week 3: Testimonial Tracts

Working on testimony tracts

Developing tract ministry – Getting tracts into local shops

Memory verse: 1 Peter 3:15 “But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”



Week 4: The Gospel Message

What is the Gospel

The implications of the Gospel

The Nature of the Gospel

The problem with the gospel (reasons for disbelief)

The results of the gospel message

The responsibility of the gospel messenger

Memory verse: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

Week 5: Leading Someone to Faith in Yeshua

God's role and ours

Communicating the essentials

The proposal statement

Pitfalls

New Testament Chain: Roman's Road to Salvation

Old Testament Chain: Trot through the Tenach

Memory verse: Romans 10:9 "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

Week 6: Apologetics

Definitions

Atheist

Creationist

Answering tough questions

Prayer, your secret weapon

Obedience vs. success

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



Week 7: Different types of Evangelism

Evangelistic tools: tracts, evangelism cards

Your sphere of influence – home, workplace, shopping, etc.

Outreaches

Mission Work

Street Evangelism

Servant Evangelism

Friendship Evangelism

Internet Evangelism

Utilizing the programs of the local church body

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

Week 8: Faith Comparisons

Jewish

Catholic

Mormon

Jehovah Witness

Hindu

Buddhist

New Age

Islam

Memory verse: John 3:3 “Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Week 9: Keys to Effective Evangelism

Listen

Love

Holy Spirit

Prayer

Obedience

Persons understanding of need

Repentance

Memory verse: Mark 16:15-16 “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved, but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.”



Week 10: Role Playing

Memory verse: Isaiah 53:5 “But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.”

Week 11: Role Playing

Memory verse: Ephesians 2:8 “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;”

Week 12: Final Exam

Final Exam

Write out 7 of the memory verses with Scripture references that we studied in the course of this class.

What is the gospel message?

Write out the proposal statement.



Week 1: Evangelism Reaching People – Changing Lives

Scriptural mandates for evangelism

Having a solid foundation

Scripture memory helps

Memory verse: Romans 1:16 “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.”

Why Should We Witness?

Have you ever asked yourself, "Why should I witness?" Several reasons should come to mind.

- First, because Jesus commands you to: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."* (**Matt. 28:19**). Also, **Ezek. 3:11** says, *"and go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or not..."*
- Second, you must witness because you love the unsaved (if you don't, you should). The most loving thing you can do is present the gospel in hopes of bringing others to salvation. **Galatians 5:22** lists love as one of the fruit of the Spirit. It is love's nature to give. Take for example **John 3:16**, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..."* Love gives, and if you have only a small portion of His love, you will want to give to others.
- Third, witness because it is a wise thing to do. **Prov. 11:30** says, *"...he who is wise wins souls."* Now, I know I am not a very wise person. But, since God says I'll be wise to win souls, or try to, then great, let me at it. I want to be wise in God's sight.
- Fourth, witness to keep people out of hell. Hell is a terrifying place of utter anguish and eternal separation from God. Those who are not saved go there. Witnessing is an attempt to keep them out of hell.
- Fifth, witness because it pleases God and brings glory to His name.
- And finally, and most important, witness so they may find the love and fellowship of God (**1 John 1:3**), the greatest of all treasures. I can think of no greater gift than salvation. It frees the sinner from sin, it delivers the lost from damnation, and it reveals the true and living God to those who don't know Him.



The angels of heaven rejoice greatly when anyone passes from judgment into salvation (**Luke 15:10**). Shouldn't we as Christians rejoice too? Shouldn't we weep over the lost? Shouldn't we ask the Lord of the field to send laborers into His harvest (**Luke 10:2**)? Certainly!

The salvation of others is the goal of your efforts. The love of God is your motive. Is there anything greater? So, give.

Foundations are First

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

Without a proper foundation, buildings don't stand, civilizations don't last, and Christians don't witness well. The foundation I am talking about is the foundation of basic Christian doctrine. Do you know what the Trinity is? How many natures does Jesus have, one or two? Are we saved by grace through faith or by grace and works? For what purpose did Jesus die? Did He rise from the dead? If so, why?

Perhaps you do not believe that knowing doctrine is important. Maybe you think that we should just tell people about Jesus and let them choose to accept Him or not. Unfortunately, witnessing isn't always that simple. Knowing what and why you believe is essential. For example, if someone says he wants to receive Jesus as Savior but doesn't believe that He is God in flesh, is that important? If someone says that the Trinity is not biblical, what would you say? Is the Holy Spirit a force or God? Doctrine is important because it defines who you put your trust in. It is not simply that you have faith, it's who you put your faith in.

How would you answer these questions?

How do you know the Bible is true?

How do you know you are going to heaven?

Why are your beliefs correct, and everyone else's was false?

If Jesus is God then why did He pray to God the Father?

Some Jehovah's Witnesses I was talked to a little while ago said that there was no such thing as the Trinity. They had a bunch of proof texts. Why should I believe you and not them? They have answers and they seem to know their Bible.



What are you called to do?

You are called by God to accurately know His word (2 Tim. 2:15).

You are called by God to grow in your walk with Him, *"Therefore, leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity..."* (Heb. 6:1).

You are called by God to search the scriptures daily, *"Now these were more noble minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so"* (Acts 17:11).

How good is your foundation?

Are you weak in your basic Christian foundation? Can you defend the Trinity biblically? Can you show someone in the Bible that Jesus is God in flesh or that salvation is by faith only and not by our works? Do you know if Jesus rose from the dead in the same body He died in or was it a different spiritual body? These questions are crucial and you need to have the correct answers. Do you? If your foundation is weak, then you need to strengthen it. Without a good foundation you won't be able to stand against a breeze of opposition. That is why you must first establish your foundation: you must witness in the strength of truth, not the weakness of error. Just as a baby must crawl before it walks, a Christian must know the basics before he can mature: *"Therefore, leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity..."* (Heb. 6:1).

Basic Christian Doctrine

1. There is only one God - Isaiah 43:10; 44:6,8; John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:5-6; Gal. 4:8-9
2. God is a Trinity - 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Pet. 1:2
3. There are no Gods before or after God - Isaiah 43:10
4. God knows all things - 1 John 3:20
5. God is all powerful - Psalms 115:3
6. God is everywhere - Jer. 23:23,24
7. God is sovereign - Zech. 9:14; 1 Tim. 6:15-16
8. God is spirit - John 4:24
9. God created all that exists - Gen. 1:1; Isaiah 44:24
10. Spirit does not have a body of flesh and bones - Luke 24:39
11. God has always been God - Psalms 90:2
12. Jesus is God - John 1:1,14; 10:30-33; 20:28; Col. 2:9; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 1:8
13. Jesus became a man - Phil. 2:5-8
14. Jesus has two natures: divine and human - Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:5
15. Jesus was sinless - 1 Pet. 2:22
16. Jesus is the only way to God the Father - John 14:6; Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22
17. The Holy Spirit is God - Acts 5:3-4
18. The Holy Spirit is not a force. He is alive - Acts 13:2
19. The Bible is inspired by God - 2 Tim. 3:16
20. All people have sinned - Rom. 3:23, 5:12
21. Man did not evolve, he was created - Gen. 1:26



22. Adam and Eve were real people - Gen. 3:20; 5:1; 1 Tim. 2:13
23. Death entered the world because of Adam's sin - Rom. 5:12-15
24. Sin separates us from God - Isaiah 59:2
25. Jesus died for all our sins - 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Pet. 2:24
26. Jesus' sacrifice was a substitution, for us - 1 Pet. 2:24
27. Jesus rose from the dead in His physical body - John 2:19-21
28. Those who reject Jesus will go to Hell - Rev. 20:11-15
29. Hell is a place of fiery punishment - Matt. 25:41; Rev. 19:20
30. Hell is eternal - Matt. 25:46
31. The unsaved go to hell forever - Rev. 21:8
32. Salvation is a free gift of God - Rom. 4:5; 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9
33. The Bible is the Word of God - 2 Tim. 3:16
34. Jesus will return visibly to earth - Acts 1:11
35. Christians will be raised from the dead when Jesus returns - 1 Thess. 4:14-17
36. There will be a rapture (being caught up into the clouds with Jesus) - 1 Thess. 4:14-17
37. There will be a final judgment - 2 Pet. 3:7
38. The damned will be thrown into a lake of fire - Rev. 20:15
39. Satan will be cast into the lake of fire - Rev. 20:10
40. There will be a new heavens and a new earth - 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1

How to Memorize Scripture

Many people don't think they can memorize their way out of a new shopping mall let alone remember a verse in the Bible. Many people say "I have a terrible memory." My answer to them is, "Nonsense!" Everyone memorizes all the time. You've learned to speak, haven't you? You've memorized thousands of do's and don'ts in life, right? You know your social security number, your phone number, your address, how many brothers, sisters, or children you have, how to get to work and what to do when you get there. The problem is not that people can't memorize, it's that they won't memorize.

The Bible is the foundation for witnessing and you must memorize verses to be able to use it -- this applies to your devotional life as well as witnessing. One serious problem is that most people have memorized fewer than seven verses. The average Jehovah's Witness has committed many more to memory and, given the opportunity, could make the average Christian feel about as knowledgeable as banana bread. Here are some helps to help you memorize better.



Four easy steps to memorization

There are four easy steps to Scripture memorization. Let's use **1 Peter. 2:24** as an example: *"and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by his wounds you were healed"* (NASB).

Step 1: Location

The first step is to memorize the location, not the verse. The reason for this is if you forget the verse, but you've memorized the location, you can always go look it up.

First, memorize the location: "1 Peter 2:24 ." Say "1 Peter 2:24 " over and over again. Don't worry about what it says at first, just memorize the location. Make sure that when you say 1 Peter 2:24 it flows smoothly off your lips. Say 1 Peter 2:24 emphasizing different syllables. Say **1 Peter** 2:24 , or 1 Peter **2** :24 or 1 Peter 2:**24** or even **1** Peter 2:24. But say 1 Peter 2:24 enough times that when you say 1 Peter 2:24, it is as natural as breathing.

Step 2: Gist

The second step is to learn the gist of what the verse is. In this case it is very simple, "Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross." Say, "Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross" in different ways. Say, "Jesus **bore** our sins in His body on the cross," or "Jesus bore our **sins** in His body on the cross," and "Jesus bore our sins in **His body** on the cross," etc. But say "Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross" enough times that when you say, "Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross," it is as natural as saying 1 Peter. 2:24. (Kind of repetitive, isn't it?)

Step 3: Association

The third part is more fun. This is where you associate the two together. Say, "1 Peter 2:24 is Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross. Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross is 1 Peter 2:24. 1 Peter 2:24 is Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross..." Say this over and over again, about ten times. In no time, if you do this, you will memorize.

This association part is important because it helps you to think of one part whenever you think of the other. For example, if someone asked you "Where does it say that Jesus bore our sin in his body?", you'd immediately reply with "1 Peter. 2:24." It works.

Step 4: A piece of paper

The fourth and final part is to take a piece of lined paper, 8 1/2" by 11", and draw a vertical line about one inch from the left hand side.

Write the verse location in the left column on your paper and on the right side simply write



the verse. Do this with each verse you want to remember. Fold it up, put it in your pocket or purse, and carry it with you everywhere you go. When you forget a verse or its location simply pull out the paper and refresh your memory. In no time at all, you'll have over one hundred verses committed to memory.

Memorization is like exercise. The more you do it, the easier it gets; the less you do the harder it gets. So do it. If you follow this procedure your mind will become like a sponge, you'll end up memorizing all sorts of stuff with the greatest of ease, like how many socks are in your drawer, everything that is in your refrigerator, and even where your car keys are.

And one more thing. You will be amazed at how the Lord uses what you've memorized.



Week 2: Evangelism - Reaching People/Changing Lives

Prayer

Do's and Don'ts of Witnessing

Writing your testimony

Memory verse: Revelation 12:11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death."

The Importance of Prayer in Evangelism

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:37-38).

Prayer is essential in the Christian's life. Without it your witness will be far less effective and you will be far more vulnerable to the enemy. When you witness, you need the blessing and support of the Lord. You need to be in fellowship with Him. Prayer makes this all possible.

When you witness you plant the seeds of the Gospel, but it is God who causes the growth (1 Cor. 3:6-7). In prayer you ask God to give that growth. In prayer you ask God to convict the unrepentant of their sin and by that awaken in them the need for salvation. In prayer you, "...let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6). Think back to your own conversion. Were there people praying and requesting your salvation?

Jesus prayed frequently (Matt. 14:23; 26:36; Mark 6:46; Luke 5:16; John 17). Paul prayed (Rom. 1:9; Eph. 1:16). Stephen prayed (Acts 7:55-60). You must pray. God wants you to pray to Him and have fellowship with Him (John 1:1-4). Why? One reason is that our battle is not against flesh and blood but against powers and the spiritual forces of darkness (Eph. 6:12). That is where the real battle is, in the spiritual realm. You need prayer. Prayer is one of God's ordained means for you to do spiritual warfare and sharing the Gospel is definitely spiritual warfare.

Another reason to pray is that you can actually influence God with your prayers. If you are doubtful then look at 2 Kings 20:1-7. King Hezekiah was told by the prophet Amoz that he should set his house in order because he was surely going to die (v. 1). Hezekiah prayed earnestly (v. 2,3). The Lord heard his prayers and said, *"I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD. And I will add fifteen years to your life"* (v. 5).

Hezekiah's prayer made a difference. That is why you, as a Christian, can be an effective witness, because you have influence with God and because you can ask God to save. Prayer is a vital part of witnessing.



What should you pray for?

Pray for more people to witness. Jesus specifically asked you to pray to the Father and ask Him to send workers into the field (Matt. 9:37-38). What is the field? It is the world of sinners. Who are the workers? They are people like you. Jesus wants people to find salvation and enjoy eternal fellowship with Him. He wants you to preach the Gospel. He has given the command *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..."* (Matt. 28:19). Your witness for God may or may not be verbal. But either way, you need to pray and ask God to give you strength, love, and insight.

Pray for compassion for the lost. Compassion is a necessary element in witnessing. It motivates you to speak, to teach, and to pray for others to come into the kingdom of God. Compassion helps you to cry over the lost and to come to God in humble request for their salvation. Paul said, *"Brethren, my heart's desire and by prayer to God for them is for their salvation"* (Rom. 10:1).

Pray for the desire to witness. Pray this regularly and watch the Lord change you and give you a desire to reach out and tell people about Jesus. God will grant your prayers and joy will fill your heart as you fulfill the command of God by witnessing.

Pray for boldness. Pray for the courage to step out in faith and speak up when needed. Many Christians are timid because speaking a word for the sake of the Lord can be risky and frightening. Boldness gives you the courage to risk ridicule and to endure the scorn. Ask God for it. *"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord"* (2 Tim. 1:7-8).

Pray to the Lord to bind Satan and his angels. There is a hierarchy of demons seeking to hinder your witness and steal the seeds of the Gospel that you plant. You cannot fight spirits with reason or flesh and blood, but you can ask the Lord to fight. With prayer you can assault the camp of the enemy and weaken his false kingdom. Prayer is a mighty tool, a powerful tool. You need it if you are going to witness.

Pray for your needs. Do you have a close walk with God? Do you need a deeper fellowship with Him? Do you have sins you need to confess and forsake? If so, then pray. Enjoy your privilege of coming to the Creator of the universe who meets your every need. He loves you. He wants to hear from you and He wants you to make your needs known to Him. *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God"* (Phil. 4:6).



Hindrances to prayer

Prayer is important for many reasons, especially for witnessing. But prayer can be hindered. So that your prayers and witnessing might be as affective as possible, a discussion of the hindrances of prayer is necessary. Do any of the following apply to you?

Sin hinders prayer. *"If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear"* (Psalm 66:18). We all sin, but do you have unconfessed and unrepented sin in your life? If so, confess your sin, repent from it as you are commanded in Acts 17:30, and continue in witnessing and prayer.

Selfishness hinders prayer. *"You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures"* (James 4:3). Examine yourself. Make sure your prayers are not motivated by selfish desires. If you find that selfishness is a factor then confess it and repent.

Doubt hinders prayer. *"But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind"* (James 1:6). We all doubt. We all fail. But when you doubt be reminded of the man who said to Jesus, *"Lord I believe, help my unbelief"* (Mark 9:24). He believed and yet doubted and Jesus granted his request. Remember that God has given a measure of faith to every man (Rom. 12:3). Trust God, even when you have doubts. It does not matter necessarily how much faith you have as much as who your faith is in. Put what faith you have in Jesus. Trust Him. Watch Him be faithful to you.

Pride hinders prayer. Jesus spoke of the Pharisee and the tax-gatherer who both were praying. The Pharisee boasted about himself while the tax-gatherer asked for mercy from God. Jesus said in Luke 18:14 regarding the tax-gatherer, *"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other."* Jesus shows us that pride is sin and that it hinders prayer (James 4:6). Have the same attitude that Jesus had in heaven in His full glory as He had on Earth as a man. He was humble. If you are prideful, confess it as sin, repent, and continue in humility.

A poor husband and wife relationship hinders prayer. This may seem a little out of place here, but it isn't. A proper relationship with your spouse is very important. If there are problems because of selfishness, pride, argument, anger, unforgiveness, or any of the other multitudinous obstacles that can develop in marriage, then your prayers will be hindered. How are you doing with your mate? Are you witnessing while there is anger between you two? In Matt. 5:23-24 Jesus said, *"If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."* Are you reconciled to your wife or husband (for that matter, anyone you know with whom there is strife) before you offer sacrifices of witnessing and prayer to the Lord? If not, then be reconciled, so your prayers won't be hindered. 1 Pet. 3:7 says, *"You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."*



Prayer is a privilege

Prayer is a privilege. It is a powerful tool. Without it you will be a foolish worker in the fields of the dead. Pray and ask the Lord of the harvest to raise the dead to life. Bend your knees in fellowship with your Lord. Let Him wash you in His presence and fill you with the Holy Spirit. Prayer is where you meet Him. Prayer is where you are shaped. Pray.

The Do's and Don't's of Witnessing

"Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person" (Col. 4:5-6).

Like most things in life, witnessing has guidelines. Following is a list of 20 Do's and 12 Don't's. They should aid you while witnessing and help prevent serious errors. If, however, you choose to ignore them, witnessing will be difficult and awkward.

Do's

- Do Pray.
- Do speak to please God.
- Do read your Bible.
- Do start with a positive witness for Christ.
- Do keep things simple.
- Do keep Jesus as the focal point of the conversation.
- Do share your salvation experience with them.
- Do know what you believe.
- Do have a genuine love.
- Do be simple and define your terms.
- Do memorize appropriate Scriptures if possible.
- Do be ready to learn from the people you witness to.
- Do be patient and gentle.
- Do listen attentively.
- Do answer their questions.
- Do ask questions.
- Do bring him, if possible, to a decision about Jesus.
- Do encourage him to study the Bible by itself.
- Do use Scripture in context.
- Do remember that greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4)



Don'ts

1. Don't attack directly or make fun of someone.
2. Don't jump from one subject to another.
3. Don't expect too much from him.
4. Don't have a spiritual chip on your shoulder.
5. Don't lose patience.
6. Don't come on too strong.
7. Don't debate peripheral issues or doctrines.
8. Don't get sidetracked defending your denomination.
9. Don't be uptight.
10. Don't assume.
11. Don't argue.
12. Don't speak too fast or unclearly.

I hope these do's and don't's have brought to your attention areas that would improve your witnessing. If some of them have struck you as being particularly applicable then I would suggest you think them over and in prayer ask God to work on your heart and teach you the right way to witness. He will bless you. All you need is to trust Him and go witness.



Writing your personal testimony

Each one of us has a wonderful story to tell about how Jesus has changed and influenced our lives. One of the things we'll be doing within the context of this class is developing an outreach ministry. We are going to create tracts telling our personal testimonies and we will display these tracts at local businesses as an evangelistic ministry, and witness for Christ. "Real Life Stories" will be the name of the ministry.

What real life stories do you have that you could share with people in the form of a tract to inspire them and move them toward developing their own relationship with Christ?

This week prayerfully write out your testimony. You can give an overview of what the Lord has done in your life since He saved you, or you can share how his love has touched your life in more specific areas. You can share what having a relationship with God through Christ means to you. Think about someone who doesn't know the Lord reading your story. What would they think? Would they be inspired? Would they want to know the God who you know?

Don't worry about your personal writing skills. Just be honest and sincere as you talk about Jesus and how He has touched and influenced your life.

If you're using a computer try to keep the testimony to 1000 words or less. If you're writing it on paper try to keep it to 3 pages or less.

When you're witnessing to people verbally, in many cases what you use is your personal testimony. Taking time to write out your testimony helps you develop the most important aspects of it in your mind, so that you'll be able to use it in your own personal evangelism.

I encourage you to ask the Lord what He would want you to share with people. How will He best be glorified and how will He best use your story to bring people to faith in Him?

You'll be amazed and surprised how God will bring people into your life who need to hear your story. Through hearing it they will trust God and come to faith in Him and their lives will be saved and changed.



Week 3: Evangelism - Reaching People/Changing Lives

Working on testimony tracts

Developing tract ministry - Getting tracts into local shops

Memory verse: 1 Peter 3:15 “But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”

“Real Life Stories” Ministry development steps:

1. Prayer
2. Delegation of duties:
 - a. Editing Testimonies
 - b. Typing/ Writing Tracts
 - c. Printing Tracts
 - d. Getting Display Stands
 - e. Decorating Stands
 - f. Contacting Local Businesses
 - g. Distributing Displays/Tracts
 - h. Follow-up for restocking
3. More Prayer

Each tract will have our church address, phone number and service times on it, as well as an invitation to come to one of our church services or activities.



Week 4 : Evangelism- Reaching People/Changing Lives

The Gospel Message

Memory verse: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

What is the Gospel

The essence of the gospel in a nutshell is found in 1 Cor. 15:3-5.

In evangelism the message of this passage is central to our task. 1 Cor. 15:1-5

The Gospel Message: Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures. Is. 53:6

We all have sinned Is. 53:6

Eccl. 7:20 All have sinned. We all therefore deserve death.

Ezek. 18:4 The soul that sins shall surely die.

Is. 53:5,6,8 Jesus died for our sins

Jesus died for our sins and rose – that is the Gospel.

“I didn’t want to upset him by telling him he was dying.”

If a doctor finds out a patient is dying, will they tell them? They have to so the person has a chance at taking the appropriate steps necessary to being healed. We are spiritual doctors. We have the cure for the disease that is killing the people. People have to know they’re dying first of all. We have to be very clear to communicate this truth.

God never asks us how we feel about something he wants us to do – He just wants to know if we’ll do it! We are charged with the responsibility of telling people that they are sinners.

If we only proclaim that Jesus is the Messiah – we are not proclaiming the “Gospel”. The Gospel is the good news predicated on bad news.

Jesus is much more than just theory and philosophy. Theory and philosophy doesn’t die and be buried. We’re talking about a real person who died, was buried and was raised the 3rd day.



1 Cor. 15:5 tells us He is alive right now.

The implications of the Gospel:

1. The sacrifice was sufficient and atonement is available. (found in description of the Jewish Holy Day, Yom Kippur – because Priest came out of Holy of Holies alive – Jesus came out alive – sacrifice was accepted)
2. The scripture is reliable and true – He was raised according to the Scripture – Scripture said it would happen and therefore the Scripture is true. Is. 53; Psalms 22; 16:10 ;
3. There will be resurrection of the dead – He's the first fruits and just as it happened to Jesus there will be others.
4. The fact that there's newness of life now Rom. 6:4
5. There will be a judgment

Acts 17:31 Jesus is Judge. He is alive.

Essence of Gospel Message: Jesus died for our sins. He died according to scripture. He was buried and rose according to scripture. If we stand on that we are saved.

The nature of the Gospel Message:

1. The power of God – Rom 1:16
2. The wisdom of God – 1 Cor. 1:23, 24
3. The revelation of God's righteousness Rom. 1:17 – it is the power, wisdom and revelation of God's righteousness (Rom 1:17)
4. The demonstration of God's love – Rom 5:8

The problem with the Gospel message

1. The non-complexity of the Gospel 1 Cor. 1:23
2. The cold reality of the Gospel (we've sinned and good deeds won't be sufficient) Is. 64:6
3. Accountability of the gospel Luke 9:59-62 If it's true you can't ignore it because it says you're going to hell because you're a sinner....every person will deal with in either now or later at judgment. Compelling truth – compels you to action.



4. The cost – this is why the Jews don't believe in the gospel of Christ. – What would my family say? My grandmother would turnover in her grave? What would my Rabbi say – sociological/psychological reason.

A useful Question: If the scriptures are true and Jesus is the Messiah would you be willing to find that out and follow Him despite the consequences that may result. This confronts people with the cost with is key issue that needs to be dealt with.

The Effect of the Gospel Message

1 Cor. 1:23-24 salvation & separation – 2 effects

Something always happens with the proclamation of the Gospel.

The Responsibility of the Gospel Messenger

We have the responsibility to preach the gospel. We better know what it is.

What it isn't: your testimony; your views of end times events (eschatology); your political views; a presentation of God as a "sugar daddy"; your views on social issues.

Our responsibility:

1. We preach the gospel
2. Demonstrate the reality of the gospel message in your life (1 Cor. 2, 4, 5) – "You can't close the deal unless you demonstrate the product"
3. Ask for a response and at times even demand a response

Declare the message; define the issue; demand a response...

As disciples of Christ we carry the single most important message in the world. What an honor, privilege and responsibility.



Week 5: Evangelism - Reaching People/Changing Lives

Leading Someone to Faith in Yeshua

God's role and ours

Communicating the essentials

The proposal statement

Pitfalls

New Testament Chain: Roman's Road to Salvation

Old Testament Chain: Trot through the Tenach

Memory verse: Romans 10:9 "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

We are not alone in the work of evangelism the Holy Spirit is the persuader. Conviction is the inner need to react. We must act (share the Gospel). Our job is to seek out the remnant to whom God is speaking. God is Sovereign. Remember that. He's calling, choosing and leading. He just uses us as His instruments to direct us to the people He's calling. This allows us to move ahead in confidence. There's nothing you can or cannot do in evangelism to keep someone from coming to faith. In Matt. 28:19-20 Jesus told us to go. That's why we do it. In Acts 1:8 Jesus told them He had work for them to do; proclaiming His gospel so that people would hear, believe and be saved.

Because God is Sovereign our job is made very easy. All we have to do is find the people who want to be found; to win the ones God has rendered winnable.

John 15:16 who is leading whom to whom?

Eph 1:4-5 we were chosen

Rom 8:29-30 God foreknew us

There are 2 roads or paths that lead to a decision for Jesus:

1. The Damascus Road – an encounter and a conversion
2. The Berean Road – searching the scriptures – intellectual realization with heartfelt realization that (Acts 17:11) we must confess and repent



Remember what the person doesn't need to know to be saved. Avoid time consuming discussions on the inessentials.

Essential Gospel: 1 Cor. 15:2-4

5 principles:

- We are saved by receiving, keeping in memory and standing upon this gospel
- We are sinners
- Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures (Is. 53:5-12)
- Jesus was buried
- Jesus rose from the dead on the 3rd day according to the scriptures

This is what we need to communicate in witnessing

This presents the gospel clearly and quickly

Just because you use the words sin or salvation doesn't mean the person understands. Remember that there are many words that can be considered "Christianese." They're words that are very familiar to us as Believers, but to unbelievers they have no meaning. Examples are: repentance, atonement, redemption, justification, salvation, sin, eternal life...

We must be very careful to simply explain the things we are telling people.

There are 3 things a person must understand:

Sin – most think of it as a deed; people need to understand it's not just an action but an ailment or disease. Sin is a condition of human nature Is. 1:5-6; Prov. 10:23, 24:9; it's a natural inclination and we all suffer from its consequences.

Salvation – most people think "saved from what?" We need to stress the fact that faith in Jesus protects us from the defeats in everyday life. It gives solutions to the problems in our lives. It does much more than merely improving our life however, because it saves our life from the effect of a terminal illness.

Savior – faith in Jesus is the only effective cure. The Messiah took the disease upon Himself and let it be transferred upon Himself. He transferred it upon Himself and died, but He didn't stay dead. The cure is something we have to appropriate upon ourselves like medicine. We have to take it to be cured.



Dangers and pitfalls to avoid:

1. I never promised you a rose garden. John 16:33; Phil. 1:29
2. Pressing – know when to press and when to let up – ask the person if you're coming on too strong. You can pray for God to reveal to them the truth of the Gospel. God wants a decision based on repentance and faith not intimidation and fear.
3. Game of 20 questions. Don't allow yourself to get lost responding to many questions. You'll get sidetracked and won't get to the important questions.
4. You preach the wrong mountain. We're saved not on the promises of what He'll do when He returns. We're saved based on what He did 1 st time.
5. The missing Gospel – Jesus is the promised Messiah. However, we must never make the mistake of talking about Jesus without explaining what the purpose of His Messiahship and His first coming was. (1 Cor 15) He came to pay for our sins. Do not present His credentials without talking about the resultant atonement.

If you've gone through a discussion with someone and you want to present the gospel message in a simple and systematic way, there are many techniques you can use.

The Four Spiritual Laws

The first is the well known "Four Spiritual Laws" can be of help. They are simple, to the point, and use Scripture to convict, convince, and convert. They are:

1. God loves you:
 - *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).*
2. Man is sinful and separated from God.
 - *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23); "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23); "But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God" (Isaiah 59:2).*
3. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin .
 - *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me" (John 14:6); "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).*
4. We must individually receive Jesus as Savior and Lord .
 - *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12); "if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved" (Rom. 10:9); "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).*



The Roman Road

Another list of verses usable in the same way as the Four Spiritual Laws is the "Roman Road." The advantage to these seven verses is that they are all in the book of Romans. Sometimes this is an advantage when you don't want to flip through a lot of pages.

1. Rom. 3:10, *"As it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one...'"*
2. Rom. 3:23, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*
3. Rom. 5:12, *"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned."*
4. Rom. 6:23, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
5. Rom. 5:8, *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*
6. Rom. 10:9-10, *"if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."*
7. Rom. 10:13, *"For whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."*

I recommend you put the Roman Road in your Bible. Go to Romans 3:10 underline it and write Romans 3:23 next to it. Then go to Romans 3:28, underline it and write Romans 5:12 next to it, and so on. That way all you need to do is memorize where you start: Romans 3:10.



Unsaved Jewish people traditionally do not believe that the New Testament is the Word of God. The Gospel Message can be seen in Scripture within the Old Testament just as clearly as it is seen in the “Roman’s Road.”

Here’s an Old Testament chain reference called “**A Trot through the Tenach**” (Tenach is the Hebrew word for the Old Testament)

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 (53:5,6,10,12) covers the fact that we’re separated from God because of sin – the penalty is death – paid by Messiah – when Lord made Messiah’s soul an offering for sin that allowed us to be reconciled to the Father.

Is. 59:2 we are separated from God because of our sins;

Eccl. 7:20 all of us have sinned;

Ezek. 18:4 the soul that sins is destined for eternal death;

Is. 64:6 we cannot rectify the separation from God by performing good deed or Mitzvot;

Lev. 17:11 restoration can only be effected through a sacrifice;

Is. 53:10 the only effective sacrifice is the Messiah’s death and resurrection.



The Proposal Statement

- Can I ask you something?
- Who do you think Jesus is?
- “That’s true, Jesus was a _____, but he was much more than that.
- The Bible says that He is the Son of God.
- He came to die for your sins and mine.
- Incredibly, He rose from the dead according to the Scriptures.
- Do you believe that?
- God is proposing to you.
- He wants to be your Savior, and for you to be His person.
- But you must say yes.
- Are you willing to say yes to Jesus?
- Have you ever asked Him into your heart as your Savior?

If no: Is there any reason why you shouldn’t right now? Let’s pray together.

If yes: ask them about it.

If the person isn’t willing to pray to receive the Lord you can find out why and encourage them.

Perhaps they need more time or more information. You could offer to send them more information about Jesus. Ask them if they’d read it. You could ask them if they have a Bible and point them to scriptures to read. You can ask them to ask God for themselves if what you are saying is true. God has wonderful ways of revealing to people the truth of His personhood and plan of salvation in Christ.



Leading Someone to the Lord

Alright, so you know about the Law, the Gospel, sin, salvation, the Four Spiritual Laws, and the Roman Road, but how do you lead someone to the Lord? How do you introduce someone to Christ?

First of all, you tell them about God, sin, and Jesus dying on the cross. So, let's say that after all this, the person you're witnessing to is touched by God's Word and wants to become a Christian. You say...

"Do you understand what I've been telling you?"

"Yes."

"Do you want to receive Jesus as your Savior?"

"Yes. Yes I do."

"Good. But first, I need to tell you something. Being a Christian means living for Christ. It means seeking to do His will and not your own. It won't always be easy. Satan will make your life difficult at times. You may lose friends and things won't necessarily get better overnight. Being a Christian can be costly. In fact, Jesus said that you must deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Him ([Luke 9:23](#)). That is what Jesus wants you to do, to follow Him always -- even when others don't want you to.

"Now, If you still want Jesus as your Savior and Lord, I would be glad to pray with you."

"Yes, I do. I understand and I still want Jesus."

"Then let's pray." You tell him to repeat what you say, maybe bow his head and close his eyes, or not... It doesn't matter.

An example of what to say is "Dear Jesus, I know I have sinned against you. I confess that I am a sinner. I accept the sacrifice you made on the cross on my behalf. I ask you to come into my heart. Please cleanse me of my sin. And give me eternal life. I repent from my sins and put my trust in You. Thank you Jesus. Amen."

The preceding paragraph is only an example of how to lead someone to Christ. There is no one formula to doing this. What's important is a recognition of one's sinfulness before God, confession and repentance of sin, and trusting in Jesus' sacrifice for sin.

I would like you to take special note to tell the person that being a Christian is not easy. In a way, when you do this you are trying to talk him out of being saved. But what is really happening is three things: 1) you are making sure conversion is real, 2) you are warning him of what is to come, and 3) you are trying to prevent a 'false conversion' and the excuse he might say later like, "Oh, I tried Christianity once. It didn't help me." Remember, we receive Christ for the forgiveness of sins, not to "make things better." Also, you want someone to come to Christ with full knowledge of what it means to be a Christian.

If we aren't willing to follow Jesus through thick and thin, then we aren't worthy to be called His disciples. We are to love Him more than anything else (Luke 14:26 -28).

Also worth noting is the short sentences used in the prayer. Don't worry about exactly what to say, just speak the truth, confess sin, ask Jesus for forgiveness, speak slowly, and use short sentences. This way, there will be no confusion.



Trust God and Go Witness

It is one thing to read about how to witness to someone; it is another to put into practice what you've learned. I tell my students, "If you want to witness, then go witness." That is the best, though not the easiest, way to learn. I call it "Trust and Go." Trust God and go witness. My very first evangelistic endeavor was just such a case. This is what happened.

Are you available?

Are you available to God? Are you willing to pray, take a risk, trust God and go? If you are, if you have the desire and a willingness to learn, then God will use you. He desires a willing, teachable, and available person more than the most learned mind. If you make yourself available, He will make you able. Get ready! He will use you!



Week 6: Evangelism - Reaching People/Changing Lives

Apologetics

Apologetics
Atheism
Creationist vs. evolution
Answering tough questions

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

Apologetics

Apologetics is the practice of defending the Christian faith against those who raise objections to its validity. We are commanded to be apologists (those who defend the faith) in 1 Pet. 3:15 - ". . . always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you. . . "

The word "apologetics" comes from the Greek word "apologia," pronounced, "ap-ol-og-ee'-ah." It means, "a verbal defense." It is used eight times in the New Testament: Acts 22:1; 25:16; 1 Cor. 9:3; 2 Cor. 7:11; Phil. 1:7,17; 2 Tim. 4:16, and 1 Pet. 3:15. But it is the last verse that is most commonly associated with Christian apologetics.

Therefore, Christian apologetics is that branch of Christianity that deals with answering any and all critics who oppose or question the revelation of God in Christ and the Bible. It can include studying such subjects as biblical manuscript transmission, philosophy, biology, mathematics, evolution, and logic. But it can also consist of simply giving an answer to a question about Jesus or a Bible passage. The latter case is by far the most common and you don't have to read a ton of books to do that.

Apologetics is the work of convincing people to change their views. In this it is similar to preaching because its goal is ultimately the defense and presentation of the validity and necessity of the gospel. It is an attempt to persuade the listener to change his beliefs and life to conformity to biblical truth and to come to a saving relationship in Christ.

Jesus chose one highly educated religious person as an apostle. That was Paul. The rest were fishermen, a tax collector, a doctor, etc. They were normal people of the day who were available and willing to be used by the Lord. They were filled with the Spirit of God and they were used as vessels of God. God uses all things for His glory. So, we do apologetics by faith.



The Lord has called every Disciple to be ready to make a defense of his faith. That means you are called to give reasonable answers to questions regarding Christianity. Now, this does not mean that you must have a Ph.D or that you have to go to seminary. But it does mean that you should be willing to at least give an answer for your beliefs. If you find you cannot, then prayerfully take it to God and start studying.

What do you study?

You could pray and ask the Lord to teach you what He wants you to know. Ask Him to give you a burden for something to learn. It doesn't matter what it is. Just ask. Whatever you become interested in is what you should learn about because it is probably something God wants you to know for later use. It is like having tools in a tool shed. The more you have, the more you can accomplish.

Another way to find out what God wants you to study is through circumstances. Let's say that a Jehovah's Witness comes to your door and debates the deity of Christ with you and you find you don't know how to defend it biblically. In that case, you know you need to study biblical verses that teach Jesus is God in flesh. Or maybe a coworker asks you how you know the Bible is true? If you don't have an answer, pray, and start researching. Go to a Christian bookstore and get some books on it. Talk to your pastor. You'll learn.

Sometimes God will make a verse or subject in the Bible "come alive" to you and it might strike you as odd or interesting. You could get a commentary and read up on it. You could ask others about it. In so doing, you are preparing yourself through learning to be ready to answer questions and point people to the truth. You'd be surprised how many details God can use to help you in your witness, even through those apparently odd times when verses suddenly "come alive."

Get An Ignorance Notebook

The ignorance notebook is simple. Get a 3 ring binder and fill with blank pages. Then ask God to fill it with what you need to know.

God will put burdens on your heart, or cause you to find places where you are lacking in knowledge, or a Bible verse will strike you. Write down what you learn in your notebook. Date the pages as you go. You'll be amazed at what you learn.

Basically, apologetics is equivalent to theology in sneakers. It means getting the hay down off the loft and down to where the cows can eat it. Anyone can 'do' apologetics. All it takes is a willingness, a little work, and the Spirit of God in you.



Atheism

The word 'atheism' comes from the negative 'a' which means 'no' and 'theos' which means 'god.' Hence, atheism in the most base terms means 'no god.' Basically, atheism is the lack of belief in a god and/or the belief that there is no god. By contrast, theism is the belief that there is a God and that He is knowable. I need to mention that most atheists do not consider themselves anti-theists. Most consider themselves as non-theists.

Many atheists claim that atheism is not a belief system while others say it is. Since there is no official atheist organization, nailing down which definition of atheism to use can be difficult. Following are some definitions offered by atheists.

- "An atheist is someone who believes and/or knows there is no god."
- "An atheist lacks belief in a god."
- "An atheist exercises no faith in the concept of god at all."
- "An atheist is someone who is free from religious oppression and bigotry."
- "An atheist is someone who is a free-thinker, free from religion and its ideas."

Whichever definition you go by, atheism denies God.

There are two main categories of atheists: strong and weak, with variations in between. A strong atheist actively believes and states that no God exists. They expressly denounce the Christian God along with any other god. Strong atheists are usually more aggressive in their conversations with theists and try shoot holes in theistic beliefs. They like to use logic and anti-biblical evidences to denounce God's existence.

Agnostic Atheists, as I call them, are those who deny God's existence based on an examination of evidence. Agnosticism means 'not knowing,' or 'no knowledge.' I call them agnostic because they state they have looked at the evidence and have concluded that there is no God. But, the interesting thing with them is that they say they are open further evidence for God's existence.

Weak atheists simply exercises no faith in God. The weak atheist might be better explained as a person who lacks belief in God the way a person might lack belief that there is a green lizard in a rocking chair on the moon; the subject simply isn't an issue and they don't believe or not believe it.

Finally, there is a group of atheists that I call militant atheists. They are, fortunately, few in number. They are usually highly insulting and profoundly terse in their comments to theists, particularly Christians. I've encountered a few of them and they are vile, rude, and highly condescending. Their language is full of insults, profanity, and blasphemies. Basically, no meaningful conversation can be had with them at all.



Two Main Types of Arguments from Atheists

Atheist positions seem to fall into two main categories. The first is the lack of evidence category where the atheist asserts that the supporting evidence isn't good enough for him to affirm God's existence. The second is the category where they believe that the idea of God existing is illogical and contrary to the evidence at hand. To simplify, one says there isn't enough evidence to decide and the other says there is evidence contrary to God's existence. For those atheists who simply lack belief and exercise no energy in the discussion, neither category applies because are not involved in the debate.

A typical argument posed by an atheist to show why God does not exist is as follows: God is supposed to be all good and all powerful. Evil and suffering exist in the world. If God is all good he would not want evil and suffering to exist. If He is all powerful then He is able to remove all evil and suffering. Since evil and suffering exist, God is either not all good (which means he is not perfect and not God), or he is not all powerful (and limited in abilities and scope). Since either case shows God is not all good and powerful, then He does not exist.

Some Basic Tenets of Atheism

Presuppositions are important to us all. We look at the world through them. The atheist has a set of presuppositions, too. Though there is no definitive atheist organization that defines the absolutes of atheism, there are basic principles that atheists, as a whole, tend to adopt. They are listed below. Please note however, that not all atheists assert all of these tenets. The only absolute common one they hold to is that they do not believe in a God or gods.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. There is no God or devil. | 1. Generally, the universe is materialistic and measurable. |
| 2. There is no supernatural realm. | 2. Man is material. |
| 3. Miracles cannot occur. | 3. Generally, evolution is considered a scientific fact. |
| 4. There is no such thing as sin as a violation of God's will. | 4. Ethics and morals are relative |

For the Christian, atheism clashes with many aspects of our faith. Some atheists openly attack Christianity citing apparent contradictions in the Bible, perceived philosophical difficulties related to God, and what they consider as logical evidences against God's existence. But the atheists' criticisms are not without answers.

Most Christians mean well when they defend their faith. But, too often, many make fundamental errors when dialoguing with atheists. We need to make as few errors as possible, not simply to win an argument, but to help the atheist come to a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus.

Following are common mistakes made by theists when dialoguing with atheists.



Labeling Atheists

Some Christians have labeled atheists as evil, stupid, devil-worshippers, or morally void. Though there may be some atheists who fit these categories (as would many in the general population), atheists are not evil, stupid, devil-worshipping, degenerates with no morals. Many of them are fine citizens, honest, caring, loving, and patient. For a Christian, or anyone, to make a blanket statement about atheists in a derogatory manner is wrong. It is the same thing atheists sometimes do when they accuse Christians of being irrational, psychotic, or stupid. Such accusations have no place on either side of the argument of truth.

Generally, atheists are not stupid. Many of them have thought through their position over a long period of time. Some were raised in religious homes, have seen what religion has to offer, and have rejected it. Of course, I think that atheists have drawn incorrect conclusions about God, but it doesn't mean they are dumb. Some atheists have presented very cogent arguments against the existence of God -- which need to be addressed -- and rest their eternity on their arguments.

So, just because someone believes in God and encounters someone who doesn't, that does not mean that either side is stupid. Labeling and name-calling have no place in the discussion.

Ignoring Atheists' Questions

If you were standing on a railroad track and a train was heading your way, closing your eyes and ignoring the locomotive will not make it go away. If an atheist asks a question and you ignore it repeatedly, it would be fair for him to conclude you were incapable of answering the objection. Of course, this does not mean you have to always answer everything because dialogue flows both ways. But, it is important that you face issues. If you don't have an answer, admit it. That's okay. It doesn't mean you are wrong. It means you don't have an answer. Go study and get an answer and get back to him.

Stating that Atheism is a religion

Atheists will repeatedly tell you that they are not in a religion. A religion almost always is defined to include belief in a deity of some sort. Atheism is non-belief in a deity. It isn't necessarily a "belief that there is no God," but is "not believing either way."

To label an atheist as a religious person is to put up a roadblock to effective communication. It would be like someone saying to a Christian, "You believe in a mean, tyrannical being who likes to torture people." The Christian would simply roll his eyes and think that the person doesn't know what he's talking about. So, how much effective conversation could there be in either instance? Not much.

Stating unsupportable facts

No one has all documentation for everything they say. It is not reasonable to require proof from an atheist on everything said. Nevertheless, if you are going to state a fact or two, it is good to have the documentation at the tip of your tongue -- at least occasionally. It adds an air of credibility to your argument. Of course, you don't have to document everything, but if you have some illustrious fact to use, try and have it documented.

Never admitting when you are wrong

Pride is a harmful thing. It caused the fall. It ruins marriages. It leads to anger and self-righteousness. It has no place in the Christian's life. Never admitting you are wrong is being prideful. If an atheist, or anyone, proves you wrong in something, be kind and courteous. Admit you made a mistake and go on. Everyone makes mistakes, even atheists. There is nothing wrong with admitting an error. It no more proves you are wrong about Christianity than being wrong about the color of a boat means boats don't exist. But, if you never admit when you are wrong, you will not be able to convince anyone in a discussion of your position. You will simply lose the respect of the one with whom you are debating.

Answers for Atheists

1. There is no God

- This is not a logical position to hold since to know there is no God means the person would have to know all things to know there is no God. Since he cannot know all things (if he did he would be God), then he cannot logically say there is no God.

1. I believe there is no God

- To say "I believe there is no God" is a conscious choice. Then, on what do you base your choice: evidence, logic, faith, or a combination of the three?

1. If evidence, then what positive evidence is there that disproves God's existence?

- There can be no such evidence since evidence is physical in nature (evidence is an effect and/or result of something in reality). How could evidence disprove God's existence who is, by definition, the creator of reality and separate from it?

(I am defending the Christian God as revealed in the Bible).

- Testimony is admissible in court as evidence, but no one can rightly testify that God does not exist.

1. If logic then what logical proof do you have that negates God's existence?

- At best, logic can only disprove theistic proofs. Disproving theistic proofs does not mean there is no God. It only means that the proofs thus presented are insufficient.
- Logic can only disprove theistic proofs that are presented and negating such proofs is not a refutation of all possible proofs since no one can know or present all possible proofs of God's

existence. Therefore, negation of proofs does not disprove God's existence.

- If there were a logical argument that proved that God did not exist, it either has not yet been made known. If it were known then it would be in use by atheists. But since no proof of God's non-existence has been successfully defended by atheists, we can conclude that thus far, that there are no logical proofs for God's non-existence.

1. If faith alone, then the position is not held by logic or evidence and is an arbitrary position.
2. If by a combination of evidence, logic, and/or faith, then according to the above analysis, neither is sufficient to validate atheism. A combination of insufficient means does not validate atheism.

- For someone to believe there is no God is to hold that belief by faith since there is no evidence that positively supports atheism and there are no logical proofs that God does not exist. It is, after all, virtually impossible to prove a negative.

1. There is no evidence for God

- This is not a logical position to hold since to know there is no evidence for God's existence necessitates that the person knows all possible evidences for God's existence. Since he cannot do this (if he did he would be God), then he cannot logically say there is no evidence for God.

1. I have not seen sufficient evidence for God's existence.

- To say you haven't seen sufficient evidence for God's existence is a more intellectually honest position, but it is really a form of agnosticism which maintains that God is not known or knowable while admitting that the possibility of God's existence.
- If a person has not seen sufficient evidence for God, then it means he has not yet seen all evidence and there might be sufficient evidence. This would mean that God may indeed exist and the person really is an agnostic concerning God and his atheist position is inconsistent with his statement.

1. I lack belief in God.

- To lack belief in God appears to be a defensive position since the assertive atheist positions are wrought with logical problems (shown above). If the atheist says he "lacks belief" in God, then it appears its goal is to maintain a position that is unattackable since then he has no position to attack.

The problem is that "lacking belief" in God is an intellectual position made by a choice to "lack belief." Therefore, it is a position since it is the result of a



choice. Any position held, must have reasons or it is not a position. It would be nothing. The atheist who asserts that he lacks belief is asserting a position of lack of belief.

- My cat lacks belief in God as does my computer. Are they also atheists? Therefore, simply lacking belief is not a sufficient statement since it can include animals and inanimate objects.
- If you say that "lacking belief" refers only to yourself as a human being, then see point A.

1. I don't believe in God.

- Is this a choice you have made? If so, why? What made you not believe in God?
- Is there an intelligent reason that you do not believe in God? Can you please tell me what it is?

1. Naturalism is true; therefore, there is no need for God.

- Naturalism is the belief that all phenomena can be explained in terms of natural causes and laws. If all things were explainable through natural laws, it does mean God does not exist since God is, by definition, outside of natural laws since He is the creator of them.
- Some might say that if all things can be explained via natural laws, then it means there is no evidence for God.
 - But, can all things be explained via naturalism? No, because naturalism has not explained all phenomena known today, nor can we assert that all things in the future will be explained via naturalism because we do not know all phenomena that can and will occur. Therefore, it is not a fact that naturalism can explain all things. Therefore, God is not negated via naturalism.



Creation vs. Evolution

See notes written by Jason Browning of the Creation Research Society.

Answering Tough Questions

I am not a sinner.

Are you saying you are perfect? If you are, then you're the first perfect person I've ever met.

Are you saying you've never broken the Law of God? Have you ever lied, cheated, or stolen? If you have, then you are a sinner whether you think so or not. The laws of God have punishments (a law without a punishment is only a slogan). As a sinner, you are separated from God (Isaiah 59:2). However, God loves you enough not to want you to be separated from Him. He sent Jesus (1 John 4:10) to pay for sins on the cross. So, the only way to have your sins forgiven is to put your trust in Jesus and the sacrifice He made.

The Bible says that everyone has sinned (Rom. 5:12). That means you, too.

What is sin?

Sin is doing what is wrong as well as not doing what is right. It is breaking the Law of God (1 John 3:4). In other words, it is doing what is against God's will. If He says do not lie and you lie, then you have sinned. If He says do not steal and you steal then you have sinned. And, according to God, sin separates you from Him (Isaiah 59:2).

Sin is an offense to God's character. Because God cannot lie, it is wrong for you to lie. Because God cannot steal, it is wrong for you to steal. Right and wrong, then, is a manifestation of the character of God. God is holy; He cannot sin. Sin offends Him personally because it is His laws of right and wrong you are breaking. If you have offended Him then you must find a way to "unoffend" Him. The problem is that you can't, but He can and has, by offering His Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross as a sacrifice for sin.

I am too big a sinner.

Nobody is too big a sinner. The love of God and the sacrifice of Jesus is capable of cleansing the worst of all sin. Even Hitler could have been saved if he would have turned to Christ. You have sinned the same as anyone else. It is just that your sins are yours. They aren't too big for God to wipe away. Sin has no power over God, only over you.



Let me ask you something. Do you think murder and adultery are serious sins? Yes? Well, David, a man in the Bible who was called by God a man after His own heart ([Acts 13:22](#)), was a murderer and an adulterer. He even tried to hide his sin from everyone. But God knew his sins and exposed them. David repented and threw himself on the mercy of the Lord. God forgave him and loved him. God loves you and He will forgive you if you put your trust in Jesus and ask Him to forgive you of your sins ([Rom. 10:9-10](#)).

What is salvation?

Salvation is the forgiveness of sins. It is only accomplished through faith in Jesus as Savior. He died on the cross for sins. If you want salvation, you need to trust in what Jesus did on the cross. Only then can you have eternal life and be with God.

Salvation is saving a person from damnation. Damnation is judgment upon the sinner. This judgment consists of God condemning the sinner to eternal punishment in hell. This is the destination of all who reject God's provision for the forgiveness of sins. If you want salvation, then you need to recognize that you are a sinner and ask Jesus to forgive you. He will.

What do I do to get saved?

Salvation is a free gift of God ([Rom. 6:23](#)). Jesus bore sin in His body ([1 Pet. 2:24](#)) and paid the penalty for breaking the Law of God, which is spiritual death (eternal separation from God). If you want salvation, you need to admit that you are a sinner and that you want Jesus to forgive you of your sins. You must acknowledge that there is nothing you can do to earn forgiveness. Pray and ask Him to forgive you. You need to trust in Jesus. Seek Him; He will save you.

Repentance is part of salvation. Once saved, you should stop doing those things that are displeasing to God. He will live in you and give you the ability and desire to resist sin ([1 Cor. 10:13](#)). When you are saved, expect to change -- for the better.

Is baptism necessary for salvation?

No. Faith in Jesus is sufficient for salvation. You don't have to do anything. Christ has done it all. However, baptism is very important and all believers should be baptized. If you refuse baptism after salvation, I would doubt your conversion.

There are Christian denominations that believe baptism is necessary for salvation. The arguments used, on the surface, seem to be powerful. However, upon examination baptism is found to occur after conversion and is not in anyway a cause or part of it. Take, for example, [Acts 10:44-47](#). While Peter was witnessing, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message...and they were hearing them speaking in tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?"



This passage shows that baptism happens after salvation. How do we know they were saved? They were speaking in tongues -- which is a gift from God (1 Cor. 14) to believers and they were exalting God. Non-believers do not exalt God. Also, Peter said they had received the Holy Spirit. That is only for Christians and it happened before baptism. (Note: speaking in tongues is simply a sign of salvation. It is not necessary that a Christian speak in tongues as a proof of salvation. Not all speak in tongues (1 Cor. 12:30)).

Another set of verses applicable to this issue is 1 Cor. 1:17. Paul says, "*For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel...*" The gospel is what saves and it is explained in 1 Cor. 15:1-4. Baptism is not part of the gospel; it is something that the believer does after salvation.

Baptism is only a symbol of that which saves and symbols don't save.

I am already good enough.

How good do you have to be to get to heaven? God is holy and requires holiness. Holiness is purity. Even though you may think you are good enough, even one sin disqualifies you from being in the presence of God. You could never be good enough. That is why you need Jesus.

The Bible says that there is none good enough. "*There is none who does good, there is not even one,*" (Rom. 3:12). Goodness is measured by God's standard not yours.

To say that you are good enough means that Christ did not have to die. But He did die to save sinners. The Bible says if righteousness can come by good deeds then Christ didn't need to die (Gal. 2:21), but He did, so being good isn't enough.

I am doing the best I can and I'm sincere.

Even if you could do far better than you are doing now you still can't do well enough because you don't please God by being good (Gal. 2:21), but by accepting Jesus (John 1:12).

Sincerity is not the way to heaven. What if you are sincerely wrong? (Remember John 14:6?)

If you are relying on your sincerity, then are you saying that because you are sincere, therefore you are good enough on your own to be with God." Don't you see, to appeal to your sincerity is to appeal to pride, because you are appealing to something that is in you and not God for your reason to go to heaven. I am sorry, sincerity is not enough. You must have faith, in Jesus.

How long have you been doing your best? Has it worked so far? Has it given you eternal life?



I am skeptical.

Are you honestly looking for answers? If you are, I would be very willing to talk with you more about Jesus, the Bible, or whatever else you want to talk about.

What are you skeptical about? Perhaps we can talk about some of the things that you feel keeps you from a saving knowledge of Jesus.

I tried Christianity once.

The Bible says that once you are saved, you are never the same again, you are a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17). If you have gone back to your old ways, then most probably you were never saved. If, however, you were saved, then God won't let you stay in rebellion for long. He will deal with you in whatever way is necessary to bring you back into fellowship with Him.

Did you become a Christian by going to church or by asking Jesus to forgive you of your sins? The latter makes you a Christian, the former doesn't.

I knew some Christians once and they wronged me.

Christians aren't perfect. They make mistakes like anyone else. I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive them. I think that is what they would do for you.

Maybe they didn't know they wronged you. Was it something really bad or was it just a mistake? Have you gone to them and spoken to them about it? Maybe if you were to forgive them you would begin to understand the forgiveness God has for you. We all need to be forgiven, don't you agree?

I'll take my chances.

With what, eternity? Eternity is a long time to be wrong. Why would you want to take a gamble on something as important as your eternal destiny? It takes only a moment to trust Christ for your salvation. There will be an eternity of pain and regret if you don't.

You don't take chances with guns do you? You don't take chances and run red lights do you? Why would you take a chance on something that is far more important than these? Don't take a chance on something eternal. It isn't worth it.

Jesus said He was the only way to God. He forgave sins, walked on water, calmed a storm with a command, raised people from the dead, and rose from the dead Himself. No one else in all of history has done that. If He can do all that, don't you think you should listen to Him.



I am not that bad a person.

Whether or not you feel you are bad or good is not the real issue. The Bible says that all have sinned (Rom. 3:23). If all have sinned, good or bad, then all will suffer the judgment of God. God does not require someone to be pretty good; He requires that he not sin at all. But He knows that you cannot be sinless. That is why He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

The Bible says that our good works are filthy rags before God (Isaiah 64:6). It isn't saying that we might not try to be good, it is saying that whatever good we do, it is not good enough. It also says that there is none who does good (Rom. 3:12). The standard God seeks is perfection. We cannot please God on our own. That is why Jesus died on behalf of sinners. If you want to be good enough, then you must let God see you through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. That is the only goodness that counts to God.

I am too old or too young.

You are never too old to trust in Jesus as your Savior. As long as you are alive you can call on Him to forgive you of your sins. He is as close as the call of your heart.

(Granted there may be some who are too young to understand the gospel message, but here we will address those who simply use that as an excuse.) Youth is a blessing from God. Don't use it as an excuse to stay away from Him. If you can understand what sin is and your need for deliverance from it, then you are not too young to receive Jesus as your Savior. He saves everyone, young and old.

I can't believe in a God who would send people to hell.

Hell was originally created for Satan and his angels. In the future it will contain those who join Satan in rejecting God. If you reject God's provision for the forgiveness of your sins then you will join the Devil who rejected God from the beginning. Is that what you want?

Could you believe in a God who would become a human, suffer at the hands of humans, and be killed by them, all so that His death could be the payment for their sins? That is extremely loving. God is saving people who deserve to go to hell -- and we all deserve that. Remember that the same God that sends people to hell also died for them. If they reject what God has provided then what is God left to do? He would have to judge them.

Whether you believe in something or not does not change the fact of its existence. Jesus spoke often of hell (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 16:19-31) and warned us so we would not go there. Would you say Jesus didn't know what He was talking about?



Are you implying that it is unjust for God to send people to hell? If so, then you accuse God of injustice. Sin is wrong and it must be punished. What would you have God do to those who oppose Him and do evil? Do you want Him to ignore that which is wrong? Do you want Him to turn His head and not be holy and righteous?

I will worry about it in the next life.

That you may very well do, forever. Eternity is a long time to be wrong, especially about Jesus.

God has warned us in the Bible that it is appointed for men to die once, then judgment (Heb. 9:27). After death you will be judged. Do you want to face eternity without the sacrifice of Jesus Christ accounted to you? God hates sin and you have sinned. God will punish sinners if they reject Jesus. However, He loves you. That is why He sent His Son to die for sins. If you want eternal life, then you need to worry about it now. Eternity is a long time to be wrong, especially about Jesus.

There is no next life. Reincarnation isn't true. The Bible says after death you face God (Heb. 9:27).

I don't want to give up what I like doing.

If you become a Christian, are you saying you must stop doing what you're doing now. That means you know it is wrong. Let me ask you something. If you were to become a Christian and God were to live in your heart and you looked back upon your life now, would you say to yourself, "I did a lot of things I wish I hadn't done."? Probably so. The Bible speaks about just such a thing. In Rom. 6:21 it says, *"What benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed, for the outcome of those things is death," (NASB)*. What you are saying is that God will require you to give up certain things that you like to do. Since God only wants what is good and right, and you say you don't want to give up what you are doing, then you are saying you want what is wrong.

Will you let your pleasures get in the way of salvation? Is your life of sin worth an eternity of pain? Jesus said, *"What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul?"* (Mark 8:36).

Christianity is boring.

Then you haven't experienced it. No one who is a Christian will ever say that it is boring. How do you know? Have you tried it? There are millions of Christians who have a lot of fun being Christian. We just do it with a lot less sin, and therefore, a lot less problems. Maybe it's only your problems that keep you from getting bored.



What do you think we do all day, sit around fireplaces and read Bibles? We ski, swim, play sports, read, have friends and problems like anybody else. Christianity is not boring. It is an adventure.

I am an atheist. I don't believe in God.

An atheist is defined in two senses: Someone who says he believes there is no God and someone who simply lacks belief in God. An atheist cannot say he **knows** there is no God because he would have to know all things in order to know if there is or isn't a God. If he says he believes there is no God ask him why he believes that way and begin there. If he says he lacks belief in God, then ask what he **does** believe in and start there. I always get around to the question of, "How did we get here?" Since creation and evolution are the only options, I have something further to work with.

Evolution has a lot of problems with it. It seems to me that it takes a lot of faith to believe that you developed out of ocean slime, simply by chance. At least as a Christian I have the evidence of the resurrection of Christ from eye witnesses as recorded by them in the gospels. Evolution or not, Jesus rose from the dead, said He was God, and forgave sins. I'll put my faith in Him instead of evolution.

An agnostic says he doesn't know if there is or isn't a God. (Usually after saying this I challenge them to explain the prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in the New. I state how the Bible is unique that way and that only God can make prophecies that are 100% accurate. Then I ask him to explain how that could be done if there is no God.)

If there is no God as you say, then in the end I lose nothing. But if there is a God like I say, in the end you lose everything.

Why don't you believe in God? Is there any reason for you to intelligently reject His existence? Or, do you simply desire not to believe in Him?

The Bible doesn't attempt to prove that God exists. It simply speaks as though He does. Maybe I can't prove to you there is a God, but I can introduce Him to you through His Son Jesus Christ and you can judge for yourself if the Words of Christ in the Bible convince you of His existence.

(Note: We exist. How did we get here? An atheist's only option would be to say evolution. If you study evolution, by reading Christian books that reveal and document its many serious problems, then you will be able to weaken the atheist's belief in it. The logic is simple: If evolution and creation are the only options, to remove one is to support the other. Therefore, learn as much as you can about evolution. Your witness will be greatly strengthened.)

However, evolution does not explain the origin of life, only its development. Discussions on origins of life are interesting in themselves.)



I am trying to be a Christian.

You become a Christian by simply putting your trust in Jesus and His sacrifice for you on the cross. There is no trying involved. If you trust Jesus, if you ask Him to forgive you of your sins and be your Savior, then you are a Christian. It is living like a Christian after you've become one that is difficult. If you believe that in order to become a Christian you must be good, then you misunderstand or don't have a good understanding of salvation. A Christian is a Christian by the gift of God (Rom. 6:23), not the work of man (Eph. 2:8-9). There is nothing you can do to earn salvation or keep salvation. It is simply something God freely gives you. If you want it, confess your sins, repent, turn to God, and trust Jesus as your only Savior. Then, and only then, will you become a Christian.



I am already religious.

Who said God wants you to be religious? He wants a relationship with you. Religion is man's attempt to reach God. Christianity is God reaching man. 1 Cor. 1:9 says that God wants you to have fellowship with Jesus. He is talking about a relationship, someone you can talk to. He doesn't want to weigh you down with a bunch of do's and don't's. He wants to extend a loving hand to you and help you live a good clean life. But that cannot be done until the real problem in you is done away with, and that is sin. Sin separates you from God (Isaiah 59:2). If you want salvation instead of "religion," then go to Jesus. Seek Him. He will never let you down.

I see. Where do you attend church?

I don't need God.

If you say you don't need Him, then you believe He exists. If you do, why would you say you don't need Him? Isn't He the One who determines your destiny? Doesn't He have the authority and power to do as He pleases and to send you to heaven or hell? It is foolish to say you don't need the One who is your Creator, who loves you and has provided the way for forgiveness of sin. You need God because only He can cleanse you from your sins. What do you need? Are you really doing that well without God? Are you happy with the way things are in your life? If you aren't, then you need Jesus. And even if you are happy, you still need Him, because you can't take what makes you happy with you when you die.

I have things I need to do before I become a Christian.

Like what? Why do you need to do these things before you come to God? Are they bad things or good? If they are bad, then you shouldn't do them. If they are good, why can't you become a Christian and then do them?

Nothing you can do could be more important than your relationship with God. To put Him off is unwise. What if you die before you become a Christian? Then you would be eternally without hope.

Your statement implies you believe following God will mean you won't be able to do the things you want to do. If that is true, then that means the things you intend to do would displease God? Are you saying you prefer to do something God wouldn't want you to do? If that is so, you are willfully sinning against God and putting yourself in a dangerous situation. That is all the more reason you need His forgiveness.



I prefer to remain open minded.

Open mindedness means looking at everything honestly. Are you willing to do that with Christianity? Do you want to see what Jesus has said and learn about what He can offer you?

If you say you are going to remain open minded and not accept Christianity, then in reality you are being very closed minded. Maybe Christianity is true. Your open-mindedness could keep you from discovering it.

I already believe in God.

Are you living your life as if that were true? Does your belief in God affect the way you live or do you still do entirely as you please?

If you say you believe in God, then how do you know what He wants for you? Are you in contact with Him? Do you just trust whatever you feel is right?

The Bible says the Devil believes in God (James 2:19) and he is lost. If all you do is simply believe that God exists, then you are no better off than he is. It is not intellectual acknowledgment of God's existence that God wants, but your accepting the sacrifice Jesus made on behalf of sinners that pleases God. Simply believing is not enough. You must choose to follow Him.

It is not **that** you believe; it is **who** you put your faith in. Who is this God you believe in? Is He the Christian one? Is he Allah? Is he from another planet? Is he whatever you feel is right? Is he loving? Believing in God is fine unless your god is false. The important thing is that you must believe in the true God, not a false one, and the true one is found in the Bible.

I'll choose God later.

If you won't choose Him now, what makes you think you'll choose Him later? The longer you go without God, the harder it will be for you to come to Him. The longer you sin, the harder your heart will become and the further from God you will be (Heb. 3:13). To wait is to invite damnation. God calls you to repent from sin now, not later. Which will you choose?

If you say you will choose Him later, do you admit then that you need Him now? If so, then why do you wait? You might die soon and then it would be too late.



There are too many hypocrites in the church.

Church is a good place for hypocrites, as well as liars and thieves. It is there where they will be exposed to the Word of God and learn that hypocrisy is wrong. For you to judge those in the church is to condemn yourself, because we are all hypocrites in one form or another. Your recognition and condemnation of it tells me you know it is wrong. Is it hypocrisy to point a finger at the church full of sinners when you yourself are one as well?

It has been said that you must be smaller than the thing you hide behind. Are you hiding behind the hypocrisy of others to keep yourself out of church? You must realize that you are responsible for yourself and God won't ask others about you on judgment day. He will come to you and ask you to give an account for your life. The hypocrites in the church will also stand before God, with or without you there.

People don't counterfeit pennies. Why do you think there are hypocrites? Because Christianity is valuable.

Why are we here? Or, Why did God make us?

God made us so we could glorify Him and have fellowship with Him (1 John 1:1-3). He made Adam and Eve and put them in the garden and then He walked in fellowship with them. He gave them the greatest thing they could have, His love and presence. After they sinned, God said, *"Adam, where are you?"* God sought Adam. In Exodus 25:8 God said to Moses while Israel was in the wilderness, *"And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them."* In the New Testament in John 1:14 it says, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us..."* (1) God seeks our

presence. He wants to have fellowship with us. He made us to give us His love and enjoy His presence. But, man sinned and separated Himself from God. That is why Christ died for sins, that our fellowship with God would be restored.



What about those who have never heard the Gospel?

That is a good question. The Bible says that God is a just God. We know that whatever He does is right. When it comes to those who have never heard the Gospel, He will do what is right, whatever that is. But as for you, you have heard the gospel and He will judge you according to how you respond. He is calling you to repentance, to turn from sin and come to Him.

In Romans 2:11-16 it speaks about those who have never heard the Law of God and how they will be judged according to the law that is written in their hearts. The Law written in their hearts is the knowledge of right and wrong. Perhaps God's judgment of those without a proper knowledge of Him is included there where it says that they will be judged according to their own consciences that *"bear witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them."* All I know is that God will do what is right and the only way to have your sins forgiven is through Jesus.

Jesus is only one of many great men of history .

Granted, Jesus was a great man of history. That is a fact. But, He is different from all the other great men of history. How many great men of history rose from the dead, calmed a sea, walked on water, raised others from the dead, healed sickness, and forgave sins? There aren't any others that I know of. Do you know of any? These things make Him more than great. They make Him special and unique.

You are right, Jesus was a great man. But let me ask you. If He were great, would He lie? Of course not. If He were great, would He be insane? No. You see, Jesus said He was God (John 1:1 , 14 ; 10:30-33 ; 20:28 ; Col. 2:9 ; Phil. 2:5-8 ; Heb. 1:8). If He were lying, we shouldn't listen to Him and we couldn't call Him great. If He were insane then we shouldn't listen to Him and again we couldn't call Him great. If He is great, then He must be telling the truth. And He was great, right?

John 1:1 says, *"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God."* Verse 14 says, *"and the Word became flesh..."* The Word is Jesus. This means that Jesus is God in flesh. If this is so, then He cannot be merely "a great man of history." He would be far more than that.

Why is there evil and suffering in the world?

The question implies that if a good God exists, then evil shouldn't because God being all powerful should stop it.

We need to ask and answer two questions. First, what is evil? It is that which is against God. It is anything morally bad or wrong. It is injurious, depraved, wicked. Some acceptable examples

might be murder, rape, stealing, lying, and cheating. Second, if we want God to stop evil do we want Him to stop all evil or just some of it? In other words, if just some of it then why? If He were to stop only part of the evil, then we would still be asking the question, "Why is there evil in the world?". Let's suppose that someone was about to commit murder. God would have to stop him, maybe whisper in his ear, or if that didn't work do something a little more drastic like have something fall on him, or stop his heart, or make his hands suddenly fall off. Anyway, God would have to do something. What if somebody wanted to steal? God would have to stop him too, right? Undoubtedly, God's imagination would permit a more practical method than I have suggested, but the end results would be the same. What about lying? If someone were to tell a lie, then to be consistent wouldn't you want God right there to stop that person from lying? After all, He couldn't let any evil occur could He? Let's take it a step further. Suppose someone thought something evil. Then, of course, God would have to step in and prevent him from thinking anything bad at all, right? The end result would be that God could not allow anyone to think freely. Since everyone thinks and no one thinks only pure thoughts, God would be pretty busy and we wouldn't be able to think. Anyway, at what point do we stop, at the murder level, stealing level, lying level, or thinking level? As your questions implies, if you want God to stop evil, you would have to be consistent and want Him to do it everywhere all the time, not just pick and choose. It wouldn't work. Evil is in this world partly because we give it its place but ultimately because God, in His sovereignty, permits it and keeps it under His control. Then you might say, "Couldn't He just make us perfect and that way we wouldn't sin?" He already did that. He made a perfect angel, Satan, but he sinned. He made a perfect man, Adam, and he sinned. He made a perfect woman, Eve, and she sinned. God knows what He is doing. He made us the way we are for a purpose. We don't fully understand that purpose, but He does.

God is sovereign; He has the right to do as He wishes. He has the right to permit evil for accomplishing His ultimate will. How can He do that? Simple, look at the cross. It was by evil means that men lied and crucified Jesus. Yet God in His infinite wisdom used this evil for good. It was on the cross that Jesus bore our sins in His body (1 Peter. 2:24) and it is because of the cross that we can have forgiveness of sins.

Consider the biblical example of Joseph in the Old Testament. He was sold into slavery by his brothers. Though they meant it for evil, God meant it for good (Gen. 50:20). God is so great that nothing happens without His permission, and in that permission His ultimate plan unfolds. In His plan He is able to use for good what man intends for evil. God is in control.



What makes Jesus so special?

Who He said He was. He said He was God. In John 8:58 , Jesus said, *"Truly, Truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."* When He said, *"I AM,"* He was quoting from the Old Testament in Exodus 3:14 . That is where Moses was talking to God and asked Him His name. God answered and said, "I AM." When Jesus said "I AM" He was claiming the name of God for Himself and thereby claiming to be God. Other great men of history point to a philosophy and teach good ideas. Only Jesus pointed to Himself, claimed to be God, and spoke with authority that matched His claim.

What He did. Jesus forgave sins (Luke 5:20). He rose from the dead (Luke 24 ; John 2:19-21), raised others from the dead (John 11:43-44), and He walked on water (John 6:19). No one on earth has ever done the things Jesus did. There is no way around it. Jesus is special, about that there can be no doubt.

Why did Jesus have to die in order for me to go to heaven?

Because the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Though Jesus never sinned (1 Peter. 2:22), He bore our sins in His body on the cross (1 Peter. 2:24) and died. He died in our place. Instead of God making us pay for our sins, He did it Himself by becoming one of us.

Two things happen when we sin: one to God and one to ourselves. When we sin, God is offended. Why? Because it is His Law that we are breaking. Also, when we sin we are killed. We don't die right there on the spot, we will face a death that is far more severe. Sin kills us (Rom. 6:23) by causing eternal separation from God (Isaiah 59:2). God hates sin (Hab. 1:13) and sin must be punished. Since we are unable to please God because we are all sinners, He made an offering that is pleasing to Him. That offering was the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. There was no other way. If there were, God would have done it.

What makes you think the Bible is the word of God?

Prophecy. The Old Testament was written before Jesus was ever born. The New Testament was written by the men who knew Jesus, who walked with Him, ate with Him, and learned from Him. In the O.T. there are prophecies concerning His birthplace (Micah 5:1-2), that He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), that He would be rejected by His own people (Isaiah 53:3), that He would be betrayed by a close friend (Isaiah 41:9), that He would die by having His hands and feet pierced (Psalms 22:16-18), and that He would rise from the dead (Psalms 16:10 , 49:15). In the N.T. all these prophecies, and many more, are fulfilled by Jesus. Now, this is the



question you must answer: "If the Bible is not inspired from God, then why does it have so many fulfilled prophecies?" How is that possible if the Bible were not from God? Only God knows the future, has power over it, and can look into it to tell us exactly what will happen. In the Bible we have the finger prints of God: fulfilled prophecy!

Wisdom. The Bible is full of the greatest truths about man and God, sin, and salvation. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) is beautiful in its wisdom, humility, and love. The Psalms are incredible poetry of great depth and beauty. The N.T. epistles are great descriptions of love, forgiveness, longsuffering, kindness, etc. Even if you don't want to become a Christian, studying the truth God has revealed in the Bible will greatly help you in your life. (The aim is not to merely to get the person to use the Bible as a guide to good living, but to encourage him to read it. This way, he will at least be reading the Word of God and be that much closer to conversion because God's Word will accomplish what He wants it to (Isaiah 55:11).

The Bible was written so that it would only look like Jesus fulfilled prophecy.

Then what you are saying is that the New Testament writers lied about Jesus. He really didn't rise from the dead and all those miracles about Him are really false, right?

I could see your point, but there is just one problem. How do you account for the writers of the New Testament teaching about truth, love, honesty, giving, etc. all based on lies? Why would they suffer hardships like beatings, starvation, shipwreck, imprisonments, and finally execution for nothing but lies? What you are saying doesn't make

any sense and raises more questions than it answers. The only logical explanation is that the fulfilled prophecies really did happen. Jesus actually rose from the dead. He performed miracles and He forgave sins. He forgave sins then and He can still do it now. My sins are forgiven, are yours? Please note that many cult members will die for their faith as well. But they die for something they believe in, not that they have seen. Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses all die for their faith. But the New Testament believers died for what they **saw** and believed, not for what they believed only. That is a big difference. The NT writers died claiming that they had **seen** the risen Lord. The cult members die for what they believe and we know that believing doesn't make it true.



The Bible is full of contradictions.

Really. Do you know of any? Could you quote me one or two?

(Just in case someone actually does quote what he thinks is a contradiction, it is up to you to give a competent answer (1 Peter. 3:15). If you can't, don't worry. Simply tell him that you will research it and get back with him, and make sure you do.

There *are* areas of Scripture that are difficult to understand. This does not mean the Bible is untrustworthy. A very good book to have is the Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties by Gleason Archer, Zondervan Publishing House, (Grand Rapids Michigan).

How do I know which religion is right?

(This is a difficult question to answer because it involves discussing some principles that the person you are witnessing to may or may not agree with. For example, does he or she agree with you that truth is knowable, that God would attempt to communicate with His people, or that only one religion may be right? Usually, I start by acknowledging the difficulty of coming to an easy answer. However, I tell them that I do have an answer; I am sure it is the right one, because it is an answer based on evidence. What kind of evidence? Prophecy and its fulfillment (see question # 34), Jesus and His miracles, the resurrection of Christ, etc. Then I ask that person if he or she knows of these things happening in other religions. (1) The answer is invariably, "No." Then I point out that they have only happened in Christianity. If any religion were true, Christianity fits the bill.

Religion is whatever you feel is right.

How do you know what you feel is right? Haven't your feelings ever turned out to be wrong? Are you are saying that what you feel determines truth? If so, then you are putting yourself in the place of God and looking to yourself for what you "feel" is right.

If religion is whatever you feel is right then that could lead to chaos. What if some people had a religion where they felt stealing was acceptable? And what about lying and cheating? Would you trust someone who believed in a religion that felt it was alright to steal, lie, and cheat?

Hitler felt killing Jews was right. He was wrong. The Bible says that the heart is deceitful and untrustworthy (Jer. 17:9). If you could come to know truth by what you felt, then the Bible, which is the revelation of God, didn't need to be written. But, it has been written and it has revealed that only God is the Source of truth, not your feelings.



I've never known truth to contradict itself. What if someone felt that something was right and another person felt it was wrong? Would they both be right? If your statement is true, then how could there be a contradiction like that if feelings determined truth?

All religions are different paths to the same place.

If all religions are different paths to the same place then why do the paths contradict each other? Does truth contradict itself? Let's review the teachings of just three religions:

Buddhism is pantheistic and says there is no personal God and everyone can reach Godlikeness on his own. Islam says that Jesus was just a prophet and not the only way to God. Christianity says that there is a personal God and that the only way to Him is through Jesus ([John 14:6](#)). If these three religions are, as you say, different paths to the same place, then why do they contradict each other? Does truth contradict itself?

What about dinosaurs and evolution?

See the section on [Evolution](#) .

Also, you could read a couple of books: *Evolution The Fossils Say No!* by Duane T. Gish (Creation Life Publishers, San Diego), and *Man's Origin, Man's Destiny* by A. E. Wilder-Smith. Bethany House Publishers, (Minneapolis, Minn.). Both books will help you greatly.

Even if evolution were true (it isn't -- but just for the sake of argument), does that mean there is no God? How do you know God didn't use it to get us here? (I am not teaching that evolution is true, nor that God used it, which is called theistic evolution, I am simply reasoning with them.) If you believe in evolution does that mean you aren't a sinner? God won't accept the excuse that you believed in evolution and not Him.

Have you examined evolution to see if it is true? Evolution is not all that you are led to believe. There are all kinds of problems in the fossil record. New theories are being raised all the time to account for why there aren't any undisputed transitional forms found between any species of any kind, anywhere, anytime in all the fossil record. But, you wouldn't know these things because you haven't studied. You need to know the facts about evolution and you need to know the facts about Jesus.

1. Note: Be careful. Just because someone does not know if there has been any similar occurrences in other religions doesn't mean that there aren't. You should point that out. However, no other religion in the world has ever made the claims that Christianity has, and lived up to them.



Week 7: Evangelism - Reaching People/Changing Lives

Different types of Evangelism

Evangelistic tools: tracts, evangelism cards,
Outreaches, Mission Work, Street Evangelism, Servant Evangelism
Friendship Evangelism, Internet Evangelism
Utilizing the programs of the local church body
Your sphere of influence – home, workplace, shopping, etc.

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

There are many different kinds of evangelism. You’ll probably find yourself involved with different types and using different evangelistic tools as you walk with the Lord and He directs your path throughout your lifetime.

Evangelistic Tools

For the purpose of this class I’m defining evangelistic tools as things that we give or show people, or things we wear, in order to have them interact with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You’ve probably seen things that I haven’t seen, and by the time you read this I’ll have probably encountered some new type of evangelistic tool that I wish I would have shared in this section. God has given people great creativity and we, as Believers, love to use our creativity to share the Good News of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

Some of the evangelistic tools I have seen so far in my own walk with the Lord include: Tracts, Small crosses, Pennies, business cards, bracelets, necklaces, t-shirts, caps, tennis shoes, chewing gum, mints, bumper stickers, billboards, music, movies, videos, books, web-sites, etc.

Be open to the Lord directing you to utilize different evangelism tools in your own witness for Christ. They can be very powerful and effective to help you win souls into the Kingdom. A visit to a local Christian book store or some time spent “surfing” the internet will uncover many tools that you could use to witness to people.



Outreaches

In the book of Mark Jesus says:

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” (Mark 16:15).

In other words, Jesus is commanding us to reach out and tell people about Him. We’re supposed to step outside our comfort zones, reaching outside of the walls of our homes and local churches. This is the purpose for outreaches. Outreaches are events where we, as Christians, work together and share the love of God with the community in different ways. Through outreaches we share the love of God with people, which is the second most important commandment given to us by God.

“Teacher, which is the greatest 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 foremost commandment. The second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:36-39)

Outreach Ideas:

Outreaches are always aimed at people coming to know and experience the love that God has for them, so that they’ll be drawn into a personal relationship with Him themselves.

Community Services: Free haircuts, dentists, doctors, eye-glasses and other professional services

Outreach Day: Bring food, clothes, games, prizes, music & puppet shows to the people in hopes of seeing souls saved and building bridges between un-churched people and the church.

Treasure Hunts: Pray for clues from the Lord that lead you to people who are His ‘treasure’, and who He wants to minister to.

Other types of outreaches within a church community can include food banks, thrift stores, a Harvest Festival/Light in the Night outreach on Halloween, Thanksgiving feedings/turkey giveaways, Christmas Day Outreach/Toy giveaway and whatever else you can get people involved in.

As a disciple of Jesus Christ every believer should be involved in some type of outreach to the lost. We show our love of our Savior, by our obedience to His commandments. By taking part in outreaches with joy and a willingness to serve the Lord we have the delight of not only doing what the Lord commanded us, but we have the blessing of ministering directly to God, Himself.



In the book of Matthew the Lord tells us that when we reach out to our world we are touching Him. What a glorious reason to participate in outreaches with joy.

“For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me.” “Then they themselves also will answer, saying ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ (Matthew 25: 42-45)

Mission Work

Definition: \ "Mis" sion\, n. [L. missio, fr. mittere, missum, to send:

cf. F. mission. See { Missile}.]

1. The act of sending, or the state of being sent; a being

sent or delegated by authority, with certain powers for

transacting business; commission.

2. That with which a messenger or agent is charged; an

errand; business or duty on which one is sent; a

commission.

3. Persons sent; any number of persons appointed to perform any service; a delegation; an embassy.

4. An association or organization of missionaries; a station or residence of missionaries.

5. An organization for worship and work, dependent on one or more churches.





There are numerous ministries around the world whose mission is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with unsaved people. These ministries are always looking for people to serve with them. Usually when we think of mission work we think of missionaries who travel to India , Africa or some other far off country. While this is true, the bible says that each one of us, as believers in Christ, are appointed to “mission work.”

We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:20)

The Mission Field covers the entire earth. Everywhere there are people who need to hear about Jesus and experience the love of Christ. God has chosen to use us, His disciples, as His hands and feet. It's an awesome privilege to take part in mission work. In fact, though mission work is difficult, at the same time vastly rewarding. It is work not for the faint hearted, however we don't have to be afraid of the calling God has placed on our lives because God has promised to help us.

“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” (Phil. 4:13)

One of the biggest resources available to missionaries (people involved in mission work) are the prayers of the body of Christ on their behalf. I want to encourage you to not only pray for the mission work that God has for you in your life now, but to adopt a mission organization and pray for them. I can tell you from experience, I know that missionaries can feel your prayers. In times when discouragement and sometimes even life threatening situations face them it's the prayers of God's people on their behalf that gives them the strength to keep going and the provision and protection that they so desperately need on the “frontlines.”

As I've already alluded to, each one of us has mission work that God has ordained us to be part of. As a mother, father, son or daughter (in other words – all of us) your mission field is your family. As a church member, your mission field includes the outreaches your church is involved with and your brothers and sisters in Christ. As a disciple of Jesus Christ your mission is to the world that you function in, your school, your workplace, your community.

God has divine appointments for us to do his work in very surprising places. I've been used by God to lead people to Himself in many different kinds of places. Probably the most unusual place has been in the bathroom of a restaurant...who would ever think?! We never know what God is “up to” and we need to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we go about our daily lives. God is with us everywhere we go because He lives inside of us. Be open to the mission that He might send you on tomorrow when you leave your house.

As you can see, mission work has many different dimensions and different levels. None, however is more important than the other. They all require prayer, God's assistance, anointing and strength and they're all vastly rewarding.

As I've already said, evangelistic tools take many shapes and forms and so does evangelism. Here are a few different types of evangelism:



Street Evangelism

Street evangelism is used to raise awareness among the public and give an opportunity to those who perhaps don't know any Christians personally to take another look at the claims of Christianity.

Different methods and tools can be used to communicate the Gospel of Christ out on the streets, including tracts, pennies, evangelism cards (invitations to church), mime, drama, music, dance, conversations, etc..

All it really takes are 2 or more people who have hearts for the lost and will prayerfully go out into their city and look for opportunities to talk with people about Jesus.

God brings amazing opportunities in our paths to witness and share His love with people when we step out into street evangelism. I won't lie to you though, it's not always a bed of roses. Street evangelism does come with insults and rejection, but as followers of Christ that's part of our calling. We must always remember that it's not us who's being rejected, it's Jesus.

"He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not." (Isaiah 53:3)

"Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me." (Matt. 5:11)

If God is putting street evangelism on your heart I'll tell you from first hand experience that it's extremely rewarding and fun. Just be certain that you go out with a group and with prayer covering. You'll see God do amazing things right before your eyes!

"How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:14-15)



Servant Evangelism

Servant evangelism is a simple, straightforward approach to sharing God's love in simple, practical ways. It's a way to reach our neighbors, neighborhoods and cities by serving others with no strings attached. It's the offer of an act of kindness to people. With a smile, we can offer people free services, as bringers of God's kingdom into their lives.

"...but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 6:23)

This giving centered form of evangelism offers a safe place for ambitious people to expend their energy. It also provides an open door for the miraculous, if God moves. It's something families can do together and it's easily picked up by new Christians. It's allows shy people to launch into effective evangelism and is a simple way to reach people with the love of Jesus Christ.

One of the immediate results of applying Servant Evangelism is that non-Christians will begin to open their hearts to God's love. Also the church will become oriented toward action . When we ask the question "Why does the church exist?" what answer pops into your head? We certainly exist to worship God and to grow in wholeness and Christlikeness, but Jesus made it clear that we must also give of ourselves if we hope to keep growing. The Great Commission links God's special presence to the action of the church going into the world.

"Go therefore and make disciples... and lo, I am with you always..." (Matt. 28:19-20).

God is with us in an immediate sense as we carry His life into the world.

A long term result of doing servant evangelism is that the church would be redefined to the surrounding community. The church has taken a lot of blows over the last few years, especially in the wake of scandals involving sex and money. The world has falsely pictured the entire church as beggars always on the verge of going out of business. We've also been pegged as hucksters always looking to get something for nothing. The third picture the watching world has of the church is that of a monastery whose residents have only one message, "Come in and join us." The world isn't looking to be part of a failing cause, and they want nothing to do with fast-talking, slick approaches.

By doing humble acts of service in the community, we could restate our identity. Instead of separatists who are constantly judging the world, we must extend forgiveness, acceptance, and love from God. New definitions are slow to catch on, but hard work would get their attention. We would become viable in the eyes of the world as we got beyond ourselves and served our way into their hearts. In an age when the church has been judged by the world as being irrelevant and out of touch with people's very real needs and pains, servant evangelism can be a method to prove ourselves worthy of trust.



Here are a few Servant Evangelism ideas:

Public Places

Soft Drink Giveaways; Newspapers; Windshield Washing; Coffee Giveaways; Restroom Cleaning;
Grocery Bag Loading Assistance; Bag Packing at Self-Serve Grocers; Grocery Cart Returns; Quarters Attached to Cards for Phone Calls or Parking Meters; Donut Giveaway during Morning Traffic; Cookies;
Bottled Water Giveaway; Freshen-up Packs - (mints & moist towelettes)

Sporting Events

Coffee Giveaways; Soft Drink Giveaways; Popcorn; Popsicles; Windshield Washing; Peanuts; Sunglasses (cheap ones!); Hand Cleaning Towelettes; Freshen-up packs - (mints & moist towelettes); Trash Pick Up; Bottled Water Giveaway; Glow in the Dark Necklace Giveaway

Downtown

Windshield Washing; Soft Drinks for Shoppers; Parking Meter Feeding; Umbrella Escorts; Business Window Washing; Toilet Cleaning; Cart Token for Shopping Carts; Soft Drink Giveaway to Employees; Cookies; Cappuccino; Polaroid Photos at Carriage Rides; Shoe Shines; Hand Cleaning Towelettes; Stamps in Front of Post Office

Parks

Hot Dog Grilling; Helium Balloons for Kids; Polaroid Family Photos; Picnic; Ice Cream Coupons; Gatorade at Biking Trails; Pictionary in the Park; Flower Seed Packets; Face Painting; Doggie Dirt Cleanup; Doggie Wash; Golf Balls; Golf Tees; Golf Ball Cleaning; Pump-up Spray Water Bottles; Bottled Water Giveaway

Automobiles

Car Wash; Windshield Washing; Check Oil and Fill; Single Mom's Oil Change; Washer Fluid Fill; Tire Pressure Check; Interior Vacuuming; Interior Window Cleaning; Bulb Replacement; Car Drying at Car Washes; Windshield Washing at Self-Serve Gas Stations; Buy Down Gas to Bargain Price; Hand Cleaning Towelettes at Gas Pumps



House to House

Sunday Morning Paper and Coffee Giveaways; Leaf Raking; Lawn Mowing; Grass Edging
Screen Cleaning; Rain Gutter Cleaning; Garbage Can Return from the Curb; Food Delivery to
Shut -Ins

Kitchen Cleanup; General Yard Cleanup; Door to Door Carnation Giveaway; Tulip Bulbs;
Potted Plant Giveaways; Flower Seed Packet Giveaways; Sidewalk Sweeping; Windshield
Washing; Window Washing; Minor House Repairs; General Interior Cleaning; Community
Dinner; Doggie Yard Cleanup; Weed Spraying; Tree Limb Trimming; Light Bulb Replacement;
Dog Washing; Garage Cleaning Shopping Assistance for Shut-ins; Poinsettias at Christmas;
Picnics at Independence Day; Easter Baskets

Miscellaneous

Birthday Party Organizing; Pay Library Fines; Suntan Lotion; Summer Survival Kit; "Biggie
Size" Food Orders in Fast Food Drive Thru Lanes; Blood Pressure Screening; Mother's Day
Carnation Giveaways; Car Drying at Self-Serve Car Washes; Grocery Store Bag Packing; Free
Bird Feeders and Refills to Convalescent Home Residents; Christmas Tree Collection; Christmas
Tree Giveaways; Bait at Local Fishing Spots; Coffee at Bus or Subway Stops; Pay Laundromat
Washer and Dryer; Memorial Service for Unchurched; Carnations to Cemetery Visitors; Easter
Baskets; Pizza on Moving Day at Apartments; Move In Welcoming Party; Lawn Mower Tune-
up; Time Change Reminder Flyer; Cocoons on Good Friday;
Church Match Books; Scotch Tape at Christmas

As you can see the possibilities for servant evangelism ideas are limitless.



Friendship Evangelism

Definition:

\Friend\ (fr[e^] nd),

1. One who entertains for another such sentiments of esteem, respect, and affection that he seeks his safety and welfare; a wellwisher; an intimate associate; sometimes, an attendant.

In today's fragmented society, effective evangelism is based on relationships. Friendship evangelism should be the lifestyle of all believers, not just a job for pastors and vocational missionaries. We are *all* called to be faithful witnesses. Our response is a matter of obedience.

A friendship is an effective springboard for sharing the gospel. People are often more open to the gospel when you approach them as a caring friend.

As we can see from the definition of a friend, friendship involves relationship. Relationship is cultivated through communication. A good communicator is someone who spends more time listening than talking. Showing a person that you are interested in him will open his heart more than polished oratorical skills.

Poll a cross section of people about how they came to faith and participation in the church and approximately 90% will say "I was invited or brought by a relative, friend or neighbor." Friends invite friends to Jesus.

Today we live in the midst of a large spiritually yearning public. The mission field is no longer just overseas. It is in our neighborhoods and schools, our workplaces and homes. The hurts and hopes of a stress-filled, fast paced life contribute to a hunger for answers and meaning. Our congregations can be communities of hope and healing in a hurting and need-filled world.

Friendship evangelism is effective witness. It happens over time and is grounded in relationships and context. While some people experience dramatic conversion, most people come to faith and a relationship with Christ and the church over a period of time. During that time, the most effective witness happens through experiences of authentic and caring friends who invite and



model discipleship. In this kind of "process evangelism", invited friends discover the reality and love of God through the genuine relationships modeled by God's people.

Internet Evangelism

The Web is no longer just a Western toy. It has become a medium for outreach to unreached people around the world, including the 10-40 Window. There is a big need to create evangelistic sites to target these people in an effective and contextualized way, in both English and other languages. This is an opportunity for both evangelistic agencies and individuals, including returned or retired missionaries who can maintain an outreach to their field of service.

God has given us the internet to use as a highly-effective means of evangelism. Yet to a very large extent, it is only being used by Christian missions for the perfectly valid uses of publicizing their work to the wider Christian world, or communicating with and equipping missionaries on the field.

Indeed, the Church as a whole has been slow to use this new opportunity. The vast majority of Christian websites are designed to resource and inform Christian readers, rather than help non-Christians.

The potential of the Web extends way beyond the rich West these days: a projected 100 million people in China will be online within a year. Even sub-Saharan Africa is being wired up with Internet Cafes, and many small-town African teenagers are using them. The Internet is a key to sensitive evangelism in the Middle East, as well as being a lifeline to disciple isolated converts anywhere. There are a **wide range** of countries where online outreach could be vital.

Yet only a tiny handful of mission agencies are actually using this tool for evangelism. This is sad because who else is better equipped to understand the culture and language of other countries, and have the time and resources to produce evangelistic websites? I know of no website effectively targeting Hindus in India. There is nothing for Sikhs and Buddhists; none for Parsees, Falun Gong or Bahai; only a few sites effectively communicating with Muslims and Jews.

Internet ministry is not just for technical people! Simple websites are not so very hard to make. And anyone can make a virtual visit to another country to witness in a chat room. One man speaks of 'witnessing in Kuala Lumpur every Saturday night' - by chat room.



How Many Online?

The art of estimating how many are online throughout the world is an inexact one at best. Surveys abound, using all sorts of measurement parameters. However, from observing many of the published surveys over the last two years, here is an "educated guess" as to how many are online worldwide as of September 2002. And the number is 605.60 million.

World Total	605.60 million
Africa	6.31 million
Asia/Pacific	187.24 million
Europe	190.91 million
Middle East	5.12 million
Canada & USA	182.67 million
Latin America	33.35 million

Strategy to reach millions

"If you want to make an evangelistic page, don't write about the Gospel."

Are you serious?

But what are most people searching for online? The things that interest them!

- Sport
- Health
- Sex and relationships
- Advice on personal problems
- Hobbies
- Local information
- Tourism ideas
- Humor
- Films
- Music
- News-related things
- Famous people
- plus a million other things

Writing yet another presentation of the way of salvation is not going to reach any of them, unless we "fish on the other side of the boat", by using . . .



The Bridge Strategy: "*Be what they are searching for*"

"Bait the hook according to what the fish likes, not what the fisherman likes." (Hemingway)

Write pages on these secular subjects or felt needs and you can target any group of people. This is often called the 'Bridge Strategy'. Others may use a different name, but it means the same - identifying with the real interests. This does not mean that we make trick pages that are not really about the subject they claim to be. If we write a page about restoring VW cars, or breeding mice, or a favorite musician, the page must truly be 'about' that subject. It must be as good and informative as possible, maybe with many helpful links to other pages on the subject.

How to build a 'bridge'

There are several ways that you can draw people 'across the bridge' to pages which explain the Gospel:

a. Your testimony

Whatever sort of site you have, make a link to 'meet the webmaster' or 'my story'. Here is a chance to share your testimony. (But don't call it 'testimony' - that's a Christian jargon word.) Introduce yourself first, where you live, what you like, etc. Then go on to explain how something happened to you which changed your whole view of life. "People are interested in people." They always turn to the human-interest stories in newspapers first. Short audio or video clips of the person can also add interest to a testimony page.

b. 'Meaning of life' links

On any type of website, you can offer a link such as 'What is the meaning of life?' or 'Finding real fulfillment'. These do not sound preachy or even Christian, yet show some sort of non-threatening 'spirituality' content.

c. Parable meanings

Jesus used stories with a message as his main means of evangelistic communication. And he didn't always explain the meaning - he left people to go away and think! Whatever the subject of a website, it is possible to write a page which brings out a parable or allegory from the main subject. For instance, a site about restoring VW cars can include a page which suggests that just as old cars need new engines, we need something new inside our lives. A site about breeding mice, can include a page about how a mother mouse cares for her young, and this is the same as God's care for people. There is an angle like this for almost any subject. There is an angle like this for almost any subject. Films, books and music lend themselves very well to this approach. They often contain meanings which the writers never intended. All these types of pages can also link to a central part of the site which explains the Gospel in meaningful easy terms . . .



Explaining the Gospel

It is actually hard to explain the essentials of the Gospel in a web-page, taking these factors into account:

- using easy non-religious language.
- clearly explaining that the Gospel is completely free (few non-Christians understand this), yet balancing it with the other truth - that it is not 'easy-believism'.
- show that God wants to care and support people through every problem of life - yet there are no automatic promises of health or wealth.

It may better to link to an existing Gospel presentation, instead of writing your own. There are some high-quality presentations available from major ministries, and they often have the advantage of a follow-up system for inquirers. Power to Change is a good presentation in a growing range of languages:

Power to Change <http://www.web-evangelism.com/framelinks/12powertochange.php>

Other good Gospel presentations

<http://www.web-evangelism.com/framelinks/13gospelpres.php>

If internet evangelism interests you take time and prayer to find a clear strategy and focus for an evangelistic site. The best sites are usually preceded by months of prayer and online research.

The Internet is a powerful and God-given medium to help us fulfill the Great Commission. Even its name reflects the nature of the fishing net which Jesus spoke of in Matthew 13:47 and elsewhere.

***“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea,
and gathering fish of every kind.” (Matt. 13:47)***



Week 8: Evangelism - Reaching People/Changing Lives

Faith Comparisons

Memory verse: John 3:3 “Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

What other groups may teach about Jesus and the Bible response:

Jesus was not God (see John 1:1-5; John 1:6-18; John 8:56-58; Col. 1:15-20; 1 Tim. 3:16)

- Jesus was created by God (see John 10:30-38; Is. 7:14; Matt: 1:18; John 17:5; Col. 1:15-20)
- There are three separate gods, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, not one God in three persons (see Deut. 6:4; Is. 43:10; Is. 44:6-8; Matt. 28:18-19; 1 Peter 1:2; John 10:30-38; Is. 7:14; Matt: 1:18; Heb. 1:1-14)
- Jesus is not necessary because there is no sin. (see John 3:14-17; Rom. 3:23-30; 1 John 1:8-10; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:1-8)
- Jesus was not raised bodily from the dead. (see Luke 24:36-53; 1 Cor. 15:1-8; 1 Cor. 15:12-23)
- Jesus was a great prophet, but not God. (see John 5:17-18; John 5:23; John 10:30-38; Is. 7:14; Matt: 1:18; Col. 2:9-10)
- There are many ways to God, not just one. (see John 3:14-17; John 14:6-7; 1 Tim. 2:5,6)
- Jesus is not necessary because people must pay for their own sins. (see Rom. 6:23; Rom. 10:3-10; Eph. 2:8,9)
- Jesus died for sins, but people can't be saved unless they obey all of the teachings of the church. (see John 14:6-7; Rom. 10:3-10; Eph. 2:8,9)
- Jesus is God, but less than God the Father. (see John 5:17-18; John 5:23; John 14:6-7; Col. 2:9-10)
- Jesus was just a man. (see John 10:30-38; Is. 7:14; Matt: 1:18; John 2:18-22)
- Jesus is not the only son of God. (see John 3:14-17; John 3:36; Heb. 1:1-14)
- Jesus will never come again. (see Acts 1:11, 1 Tim. 2:5,6)

Faith Comparisons

Key person or founder	Biblical Christianity Jesus Christ. Founded about AD 30-33, in the Judean province of Palestine (Israel today), under the Roman Empire
Key writings	The bible, written originally in Hebrew and Aramaic (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament)
Who is God?	The one God is Triune (one god in three persons, not three gods): Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Often the title “God” designates the first Person, God the Father. God is a spiritual being without a physical body. He is personal and involved with people. He created the universe out of nothing. He is eternal, changeless, holy, loving and perfect.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is God, the second Person of the trinity. As God the Son, He has always existed and was never created. He is fully God and fully man(the two natures joined, not mixed). As the second Person of the Trinity, He is coequal with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. In becoming man, He was begotten through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus is the only way to the Father, salvation and eternal life. He died on a cross according to God’s plan, as full sacrifice and payment for our sins. He rose from the dead three days later, spiritually and physically immortal. For the next 40 days He was seen by more than 500 eyewitnesses. His wounds were touched and He ate meals. He physically ascended to Heaven. Jesus will come again visibly and physically at the end of the world to establish God’s kingdom and judge the world.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	The Holy Spirit is God, the third Person of the trinity. The Holy Spirit is a person, not a force or energy field. He comforts, grieves, reproves, convicts, guides, teaches, and fills Christians. He is not the Father, nor the Son, Jesus Christ.
How to be saved.	Salvation is by God’s grace, not by an individual’s good works. Salvation must be received by faith. People must believe in their heart that Jesus died for their sins and physically rose again, which is the assurance of forgiveness and resurrection of the body. This is God’s loving plan to forgive sinful people.
What happens after death.	Believers go to be with Jesus. After death, all people away the final Judgment. Both saved and lost people will be resurrected. Those who are saved live with Jesus in Heaven. Those who are lost suffer the torment of eternal separation from God (Hell.) Jesus’ bodily resurrection guarantees believers that they too, will be resurrected and receive new immortal bodies.
Other beliefs or practices	Group worship, usually in churches. No secret rites. Baptism and Lord’s Supper (communion). Active voluntary missionary efforts. Aid to those in need: the poor, widows, orphans, and downtrodden. Christians believe that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah promised to Israel I the Old Testament (Tanakh). Jesus said His followers would be known by their love for one another.



	Mormonism
Key person or founder Date, Location	Joseph Smith Jr. (1805-844), founded the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints in 1830 in New York . Headquarters in Salt Lake City , Utah .
Key writings	The Book of Mormon; Doctrine and Covenants; Pearl of Great Price; the Bible (King James Version only or Smith's "Inspired Version"); authoritative teachings of Mormon prophets and other LDS "general authorities."
Who is God?	God the Father was once a man, but became God. He has a physical body, as does his wife (Heavenly Mother). No Trinity. Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three separate gods. Worthy men may one day become gods themselves.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is a separate god from the Father (Elohim). He was created as a spirit child by the Father and Mother in Heaven, and is the "elder brother" of all men and spirit beings. His body was created through sexual union between Elohim and Mary. Jesus was married. His death on the cross does not provide full atonement for all sin, but does provide everyone with resurrection.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	The "holy spirit" is not God, but is an influence or electricity like emanation from God (also called the "light of Christ".)
How to be saved.	Resurrected by grace, but saved (exalted to godhood) by works, including faithfulness to church leaders, Mormon baptism, tithing, ordination, marriage and secret temple rituals. No eternal life without Mormon membership.
What happens after death.	Eventually nearly everyone goes to one of three separate heavenly "kingdoms," with some achieving godhood. Apostates and murderers go to "outer darkness."
Other beliefs or practices	No alcohol, tobacco, coffee, or tea. Baptism on behalf of the dead. Two-year missionary commitment encouraged. Door-to-door proselytizing. Secret temple rituals available only to members in good standing. Extensive social network. People of African ancestry not granted full access to Mormon priesthood and privileges until 1978.



Jehovah's Witnesses (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)	
Key person or founder Date, Location	Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) later Joseph F. Rutherford. Began 1879 in Pennsylvania . Headquarters in Brooklyn , NY
Key writings	All current Watchtower publications, including the bible (New World Translation only), Reasoning from the Scriptures, You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth. Watchtower and Awake! Magazines.
Who is God?	One person God, called Jehovah. No Trinity. Jesus is the first thing Jehovah created.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is not God. Before he lived on earth, he was Michael, the archangel. Jehovah made the universe through him. On earth he was a man who lived a perfect life. After dying on a stake (not a cross), he was resurrected as a spirit; his body was destroyed. Jesus is not coming again; he "returned" invisibly in 1914 in spirit. Very soon he and the angels will destroy all non-Jehovah's Witnesses.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	Impersonal "holy spirit" is not God, but rather an invisible, active force from Jehovah.
How to be saved.	Be baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses. Most followers must earn everlasting life on earth by "door-to-door work." Salvation in heaven is limited to 144,000 "anointed ones." This number is already reached.
What happens after death.	The 144,000 live as spirits in heaven. The rest of the righteous, "the great crowd" live on earth and must obey God perfectly for 1000 years or be annihilated.
Other beliefs or practices	Known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Meet on Sundays in "Kingdom Halls." Active members encouraged to distribute literature door-to-door. Once a year, Lord's Evening Meal; only "anointed" ones may partake. Do not observe holidays or birthdays. Do not vote, salute the flag, work in the military, or accept blood transfusions. Believe Armageddon will occur soon.

One of the main things I would ask a Jehovah Witness is what hope assurance does their faith give them when there are only 144,000 destined for salvation and that number has already been reached.

Christian Science	
Key person or founder	Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910) Founded 1875 in Massachusetts . Current headquarters in Boston , MA
Date, Location	
Key writings	Science and Health, With Key to the Scriptures; Miscellaneous Writings; Manual of the Mother Church ; and other books by Mrs. Eddy. The Bible (not as reliable.) Christian Science Journal, Christian Science Sentinel, and other writings.
Who is God?	God is impersonal Principle of life, truth, love, intelligence, and spirit. God is all that truly exists (matter is an illusion).
Who is Jesus?	Jesus was not the Christ, but a man who displayed the Christ idea. (“Christ” means perfection, not a person.) Jesus was not God, and God can never become man or flesh. He did not suffer and could not suffer for sins. He did not die on the cross. He was not resurrected physically. He will not literally come back.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	Holy spirit is defined as the teaching of Christian Science. Impersonal power.
How to be saved.	Humanity is already eternally saved. Sin, evil, sickness and death are not real.
What happens after death.	Death is not real. Heaven and hell are states of mind. The way to reach heaven is by attaining harmony (oneness with God.)
Other beliefs or practices	Members use Christian Science practitioners instead of doctors. Healing comes from realizing one cannot be sick or hurt and that the body cannot be ill, suffer pain, or die (matter is an illusion.) Attracts followers by claims of miraculous healing.

Scientology	
Key person or founder	L. Ron Hubbard (1911-1986) Founded 1954 in California . Current headquarters in Los Angeles , CA
Date, Location	
Key writings	Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health and others by Hubbard. The Way to Happiness.
Who is God?	Does not define God or Supreme Being, but rejects biblical description of God. Everyone is a “thetan,” an immortal spirit with unlimited powers over its own universe, but not all are aware of this.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is rarely mentioned in Scientology. Jesus was not the Creator, and not an “operating thetan” (in control of supernatural powers, cleared from mental defects). Did not die for sins.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.
How to be saved.	No sin or need to repent. Salvation is freedom from reincarnation. One must work with an “auditor” on his “engrams” (hang-ups) to achieve the state of “clear,” then progress up the “bridge to total freedom.”
What happens after death.	Hell is a myth. People who get clear of engrams become operating thetans.
Other beliefs or practices	Members observe birth of Hubbard and anniversary of publication of Dianetics. Controversy follows the group worldwide. Time magazine and Reader’s Digest have published damaging exposé’s. Various media have reported that church leaders have had indictments and/or convictions for burglary, wiretapping, conspiracy and other felonies.



	New Age
Key person or founder	Based on Eastern mystics, Hinduism, and paganism. Popularized in part by actress Shirley MacLaine, 1980-s – 90’s. Beliefs vary.
Date, Location	
Key writings	No holy book. Use selected Bible passages; I Ching; Hindu, Buddhist and Taoist writings; and Native American beliefs. Writings on astrology, mysticism and magic.
Who is God?	Everything and everyone is God. God is an impersonal force or principle, not a person. People have unlimited inner power and need to discover it.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is not the one true God. He is not a saviour, but a spiritual model, a guru, and is now an “ascended master.” He was a New Ager who tapped into divine power in the same way that anyone can. Many believe he went east to India or Tibet and learned mystical truths. He did not rise physically, but “rose” into a higher spiritual realm.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	Sometimes a psychic force. Man is divine and can experience psychic phenomena such as contacting unearthly beings.
How to be saved.	Need to offset bad karma with good karma. Can tap into supernatural power through meditation, self-awareness. TM, and “spirit guides.” Use terms such as “reborn” for this new self-awareness.
What happens after death.	Human reincarnations occur until person reaches oneness with God. No eternal life as a resurrected person. No literal heaven or hell.
Other beliefs or practices	Can include yoga, meditation, visualization, astrology, channeling, hypnosis, trances, tarot card readings, and contact with spirits. Use of crystals to get in harmony with God (Energy), for psychic healing, for contact with spirits, and for developing higher consciousness, or other psychic powers. Strive for world unity and peace, and holistic health.

Key person or founder Date, Location	Judaism Abraham of the Bible, about 2000 BC, in the Middle East . Three main branches of Judaism, each with its own beliefs.
Key writings	The Tanakh (Old Testament), and especially the Torah (first 5 books of the OT). The Talmud (explanation of the Tanakh). Teachings of each branch: Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. Writings of sages, such as Maimonides.
Who is God?	God is spirit. To Orthodox Jews, God is personal, all-powerful, eternal and compassionate. To other Jews, God is impersonal, unknowable, and defined in a number of ways. No Trinity.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is seen either as an extremist false messiah or a good but martyred Jewish rabbi (teacher). Many Jews do not consider Jesus at all. Jews (except Messianic Jews and Hebrew Christians) do not believe he was the Messiah, Son of God, or that he rose from the dead. Orthodox Jews believe the Messiah will restore the Jewish kingdom and eventually rule the earth.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	Some believe the Holy Spirit is another name for God's activity on earth. Others say it is God's love or power.
How to be saved.	Some Jews believe that prayer, repentance, and obeying the Law are necessary for salvation. Others believe that salvation is the improvement of society.
What happens after death.	There will be a physical resurrection. The obedient will live forever with God, and the unrighteous will suffer. Some Jews do not believe in a conscious life after death.
Other beliefs or practices	Meeting in synagogues on the Sabbath (Sabbath is Friday evening to Saturday evening). Circumcision. Many holy days and festivals, including Passover, Sukkoth, Hanukkah, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Purim. Jerusalem is considered to be the holy city.

Hinduism	
Key person or founder Date, Location	No one founder. Many sects. Began 1800-1000 BC in India
Key writings	Many writings, including the Vedas (oldest about 1000 BC), the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita
Who is God?	God is "The Absolute," a universal spirit. Everyone is part of God (Brahman) like drops in the sea. People worship manifestations of Brahman (gods and goddesses.) People are God, but are unaware of it.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus Christ is a teacher, a guru, or an avatar (an incarnation of Vishnu.) He is a son of God as are others. His death does not atone for sins and he did not rise from the dead.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.
How to be saved.	Release from the cycles of reincarnation. Achieved through yoga and meditation. Can take many lifetimes. Final salvation is absorption or union with Brahman.
What happens after death.	Reincarnation into a better status (good karma) if person has behaved well. If one has been bad, he can be reborn and pay for past sins (bad karma) by suffering.
Other beliefs or practices	Some disciples wear orange robes, and have shaved heads. Many Hindus worship stone and wooden idols in temples. Gurus demand complete obedience. Disciples meditate on a word, phrase, or picture. Yoga involves meditation, chanting, postures, breathing exercises. Foundation of New Age and Transcendental Meditation.

MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP

Hare Krishna (ISKCON)	
Key person or founder Date, Location	A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896-1977) Founded 1965 in New York . Based on Hindu teachings from the AD 1500s.
Key writings	Back to Godhead magazine. Prabhupada's translations of and commentaries on Hindu scriptures, especially Bhagavad-Gita, As It Is.
Who is God?	God is Lord Krishna (Kṛṣṇa). Krishna is a personal creator, the souls of all living things are part of him. ISKCON teaches that what Krishna does freely for his own pleasure (intoxication, sex outside of marriage) is prohibited to his devotees.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is not important. He is usually thought of as an enlightened vegetarian teacher who taught meditation. He is not an incarnation of God. Some Krishna devotees consider Christ to be Krishna . Others say he is a great avatar (teacher.)
Who is the Holy Spirit?	The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.
How to be saved.	Chanting Krishna 's name constantly, total devotion to Krishna , worshipping images, and obeying the rules of ISKCON throughout many reincarnated lives, releases a follower from bad karma.
What happens after death.	Those who are unenlightened continue in endless reincarnation (rebirth on earth) based on the sinful acts of a person's previous life.
Other beliefs or practices	Public chanting of Hare Krishna mantra, yoga, food offerings, soliciting donations. Vegetarian diet. No intoxicants, no gambling. Sex for procreation only. ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) attracts new members through feasts and Indian cultural programs. Followers are given new names and often cut family ties.

Buddhism	
Key person or founder Date, Location	Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama). Founded about 525 BC in India . Offshoot of Hinduism.
Key writings	The Tripitaka (Three Baskets), which has more than 100 volumes.
Who is God?	Buddhism is mostly atheistic. Many Buddhists do not believe in a God or Supreme Being of any kind. Others speak of the Buddha as a universal enlightened consciousness or as a god.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus Christ is not part of this belief. Buddhists in the West generally view Jesus as an enlightened man.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	The Holy Spirit is not part of this belief.
How to be saved.	Goal of life is nirvana, to eliminate all desires or cravings, and in this way escape suffering. The Eightfold Path is a system to free Buddhists from desiring anything.
What happens after death.	People do not have a soul or spirit. However, one's desires and feelings may be reincarnated into another person. No heaven or hell.
Other beliefs or practices	Eightfold path recommends right knowledge, intentions, speech, conduct, livelihood, right effort, mindfulness, and meditation. Some Buddhist groups talk about an eternal Buddha (life-force.) Some Buddhist offshoots include Zen, Nichiren Shoshu, and Tibetan (occultic) Buddhism.

	Islam
Key person or founder Date, Location	Muhammad (570?-632) About AD 610 in Mecca and Medina . Headquarters in Mecca , Saudi Arabia . Main sects: Sunni, Shi'ite.
Key writings	Qu'ran (Koran), scripture in Arabic. Hadith (Muhammad's words and deeds.) Biblical Law of Moses, Psalms and Gospel of Jesus (the Injil) accepted by Qur'an, but considered by Muslims to be "corrupted."
Who is God?	God (Allah) is one. God revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. God is a severe judge (though sometimes merciful) and is not depicted as loving.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is one of up to 124,000 prophets sent by God to various cultures. Abraham, Moses, and Muhammad are others. Jesus was born of a virgin, but is not the Son of God. Sinless, Not divine or god Himself. He was not crucified (he ascended to heaven without dying.) He is referred to as messiah and ayatollah (ayat allah, sign of God.) Jesus will return in the future to live and die.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	The Qur'an refers to Jesus as spirit of God. Muslim scholars see the angel Gabriel as the Holy Spirit.
How to be saved.	Humans are basically good, but fallible and need guidance. The balance between good and bad deeds determines eternal destiny in paradise or hell. God's mercy may tip the balances but it is arbitrary and uncertain.
What happens after death.	Resurrection of bodies. Final day of reckoning any rewards. Eternal paradise for those who believe in Islam. Eternal hell for infidels, those who reject Islam.
Other beliefs or practices	Followers are called Muslims. Go to mosque for prayers, sermons, counsel. Holy efforts to spread Islam (jihad.) Five pillars of Islam: Confess that Allah is the one true God and that Muhammad is his prophet. Pray five times daily facing Mecca . Give alms (money.) Fast during the month of Ramadan. Make pilgrimage to Mecca (once in a lifetime.)

Bahai World Faith	
Key person or founder Date, Location	Mizra Ali Muhammed (the Bab) and Mizra Husayn Ali (Baha'u'llah) Founded 1844 in Iran . Headquarters in Haifa, Israel .
Key writings	Writings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha; Kitab-I-Aqdas and Kitab-I-Iqan, The Bible, interpreted spiritually to conform to Bahai theology.
Who is God?	God is an unknowable divine being who has revealed himself through nine “manifestations” (religious leaders) including Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, Muhammad and Baha'u'llah.
Who is Jesus?	Jesus is one of many manifestations of God. Each manifestation supersedes the previous, giving new teachings about God. Jesus, who superseded Moses, was superseded by Muhammad, and most recently by the greatest, Baha'u'llah (“glory of Allah”). Jesus is not God and did not rise from the dead. He is not the only way to God. Jesus has returned to earth in the form of Baha'u'llah.
Who is the Holy Spirit?	Holy Spirit is divine energy from God that empowers every manifestation. “Spirit of Truth” refers to Baha'u'llah.
How to be saved.	Faith in the manifestation of God (Baha'u'llah). Knowing and living by Baha'u'llah's principles and teachings.
What happens after death.	Personal immortality based on good works, with rewards for the faithful. Heaven and hell are conditions, not places.
Other beliefs and practices.	Bahai originated as an Islamic sect and is severely persecuted in Iran . Bahai teaches that all religions have the same source, principles, and aims. Stress on oneness and world unity. Meetings called “spiritual assemblies.”

MESSIANIC PROPHECY IN THE JEWISH BIBLE

VERSES	TOPICS
Genesis 3:15	Messiah will defeat Satan
Deuteronomy 18:15-18	God will raise up a prophet
Isaiah 7:14	Messiah to be born of a virgin
Isaiah 9:5	Messiah is God
Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Suffering servant – perfect atonement for sin
Jeremiah 31:31-34	Messiah brings a new covenant
Micah 5:1	Messiah to be born in Bethlehem
Zechariah 9:9	Messiah will come lowly – riding on a donkey
Zechariah 12:10	Messiah will be pierced and Jerusalem will mourn
Psalms 22	Messiah will suffer
Daniel 9:24-27	Messiah will come at appointed time

For a comprehensive listing visit: www.messiahrevealed.org