

Evangelizing in a Postmodern World

(Listen, Interact, Challenge, Instruct)

Again it is my privilege to be here with you this morning.

Today, I would like you to consider these three areas with me: witness, apologetics, and evangelize, and how they fit together in this world we live in that is called postmodern. To begin with, let's define what these terms mean:

Witness – to bear witness to; testify to; give or afford evidence of.

Apologetics – the branch of theology concerned with the defense and rational justification of Christianity.

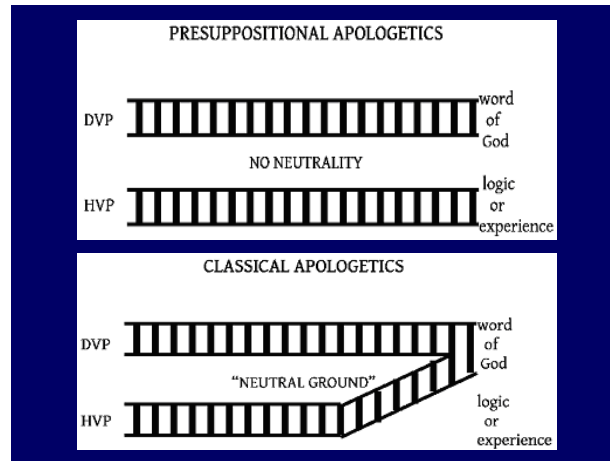
Evangelize - To preach the Gospel to; to convert to Christianity.

We seem to use the terms “witnessing” and “evangelizing” interchangeably. I prefer to use the word “evangelize” rather than the word “witnessing” because of the subjective inference witnessing seems to have of telling a personal story of what Jesus has done in my life. Not that He hasn't, but the glory needs to go to God, not me. Evangelism, on the other hand, points to Jesus Christ through Scripture and what He has done for humankind, which includes me. This keeps it more objective in my view. So, I would like you to consider this definition for witnessing in this presentation: ***To bear witness to; to testify to; the faithfulness and integrity of God as found in Scripture and borne out in a believer's life.***

All three are important – and all three will be used as we will see shortly.

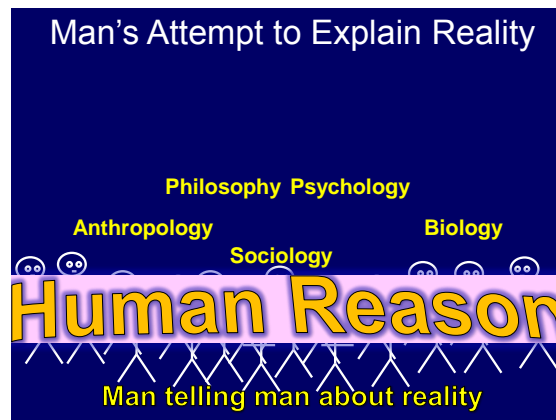
Here's what Dr. Van Til writes, “In the first place, every Christian must tell the non-Christian that he must be saved from his false views of God and himself.... It would be helpful to see just what apologetics has in common with theology, philosophy, and evangelism – as well as what makes it different. The key will be to recognize differences of degree between these activities and not escalate them into categorical differences of kind.....”. He goes on to say, “As it turns out, the apologist defends what the theologian has learned, with the tools and insights refined by the philosopher, for the evangelistic purpose of seeing the unbeliever's heart and mind changed.” (*Van til's Apologetics* by Greg L. Bahnsen)

As an example, Presuppositional Apologetics and Classical Apologetics play a big part in the consideration of evangelism in a postmodern world because as fundamentalist Bible believers we understand, from the Creator-creature distinction,



that there are only two world viewpoints and there is no “neutral” ground. We believe that God spoke into history and His ‘revelation’ was written down and preserved in what we now call “the Bible” (DVP). We do not accept human viewpoint (HVP) logic or experience because we know from the Bible that the unbeliever’s mind is blinded (2 Cor 4:4). Classical Apologetics, on the other hand, looks to “neutral ground” as the place to start so that we can logically work our way to understanding God through human reason.

Another way of looking at this might be:



and then God speaks into history:



Every day we need to remind ourselves about the **Creator-creature distinction!** God is the Creator. We are the creatures. We can know nothing without His Word. If God had not given us His revelation, we would just be babbling idiots on our way to the Lake of Fire; not knowing who we are, where we came from, where we're going. No purpose or direction in life. Sound familiar?

Instead, what has He done for the believer?

In 2 Cor. 5:18-20, we read "Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation." What is "the word of reconciliation" except the good news that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them."

Then verse 20, "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us;....."

What does the word "ambassador" mean?

Ambassador: a diplomatic official of the highest rank sent by a government to represent it on a temporary mission, as for negotiating a treaty.

What does the word "diplomatic" mean?

Diplomatic: Diplomatic suggests a smoothness and skill in handling others, usually in such a way as to attain one's own ends and yet avoid any unpleasantness or opposition.

We are lights in this world of darkness while we are here, and as ambassadors we need to be familiar with the cultural mindset of those around us.

Do we evangelize to fulfill the Great Commission?

Matt 28:18-20 reads, "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

Dr. Fruchtenbaum comments on this. He writes,

"This is referred to as the "Great Commission," but it has often been misunderstood to mean merely to evangelize. The way the English reads, it appears that the command is: *Go*. In many missionary conferences, they emphasize that the Bible says, "Go to all the nations." This is not what the Greek text is saying whatsoever. Matthew 28:19 in the Greek text has only one imperative: *make disciples*. The Great Commission is not to evangelize, as such, but to make disciples....

If the Great Commission is to be fulfilled, it requires the making of disciples. This involves three things: preaching the gospel; baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit; and teaching New Testament truth as an addition to Old Testament truth."

(From Vol. 75: *The Messianic Bible Study Collection*)

So, yes, we want to preach the Gospel, but, as Dr. Fruchtenbaum rightly points out, “the Great Commission is not to evangelize, as such, but to make disciples.”

In Romans 10:17 Paul tells the Christians in Rome, “... faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” This is why Pastor Jeremy begins each Sunday service quoting **Heb 4:12, 2 Tim 2:15, and 2 Tim 3:16-17**. What’s that doing? It’s reminding us how penetrating God’s Word is, how important it is for us, as disciples, to study and learn it properly in order to handle this TRUTH accurately, and because Scripture is inspired by God, we can be confident that it will bear fruit in us as we remain loyal to His Word.

Heb 4:12

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

2 Tim 2:15

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

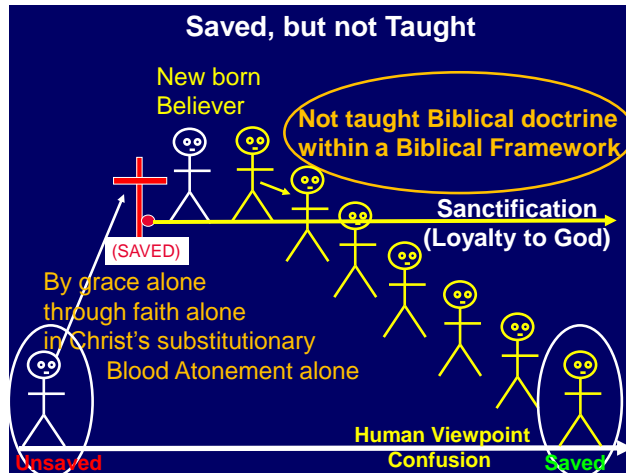
2 Tim 3:16-17

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

This is fulfilling the “Great Commission”.

Then there’s the question of “who are we evangelizing”?

The problem we have, as Bible believers, is to discern whether a person is truly an **unsaved person** or a **saved person “untaught”**. They look the same from the outside. What’s the difference? They are not taught Biblical doctrine within a Biblical framework.



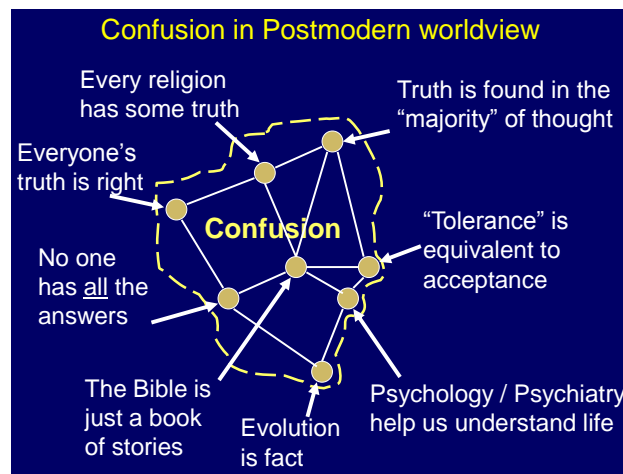
An example of this might be a person like Oprah Winfrey. At age 7 or 8, while attending a Baptist church with her grandmother, she no doubt heard and may have believed the Gospel message, but Scriptural teaching may have been weak or non-existent. So, today, she is promoting the idea that the “best you” is inside you and you

have bring it out in self realization. She is a product of our time. Perhaps she is what the Bible describes as “shipwrecked”. Unfortunately, this happens all too often these days of mega-churches, legalistic churches, and churches who want to return to the first century. There are a lot of misguided, confused, and untaught believers out there as well as the hard core unbelievers. Yet, I think we use the same approach when God brings them into our lives; asking questions, challenging, and instructing because they’re all Biblically ignorant. This is what you can expect when you lay aside the Standard of Truth.

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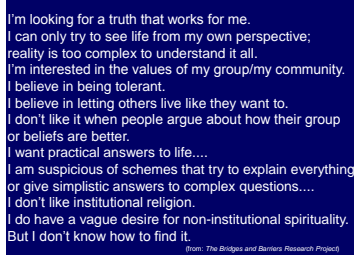
What do the thought forms look like in the postmodern person?
(Man telling man about reality)



Every religion has some truth
Everyone's truth is right
No one has all the answers
The Bible is just a book of stories
Evolution is a fact
Psychology and Psychiatry help us understand life
"Tolerance" is equivalent to acceptance

Truth is found in the “majority” of thought

Here is a profile of what is called the “postmodern” person:



I'm looking for a truth that works for me.
I can only try to see life from my own perspective;
reality is too complex to understand it all.
I'm interested in the values of my group/my community.
I believe in being tolerant.
I believe in letting others live like they want to.
I don't like it when people argue about how their group
or beliefs are better.
I want practical answers to life....
I am suspicious of schemes that try to explain everything
or give simplistic answers to complex questions....
I don't like institutional religion.
I do have a vague desire for non-institutional spirituality.
But I don't know how to find it.
(from: The Bridges and Barriers Research Project)

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Jim Leffel (Xenos Christian Fellowship) summarized the main tenants of postmodernism with these five points:

- Reality is in the mind of the beholder. Reality is what's real to me, and I construct my own reality in my mind.
- People are not able to think independently because they are defined—“scripted,” molded—by their culture.
- We cannot judge things in another culture or in another person's life, because our reality may be different from theirs. There is no possibility of “transculture objectivity.”
- We are moving in the direction of progress, but are arrogantly dominating nature and threatening our future.
- Nothing is ever proven, either by science, history, or any other discipline.

(from *Christianity on the Offense* by Dan Story)

Without absolutes, no overriding objective truth, then Friedrich Nietzsche could rightly declare, “There is no truth, only interpretations.”.....

Where does this culture take us?

From Biblical content to cultural content
From orthodoxy to cultural accommodation
From sermons to sound bites
From teaching to performance
From learning to feeling
From doctrine to "spirituality"
From education to self esteem
From congregation to audience
From authority to experimentation
From understanding to Attention Deficit Disorder
From theology to trivia
From "what God says" to "what people want to hear"
From "building up" to "dumbing down"

Where does this kind of culture take us?

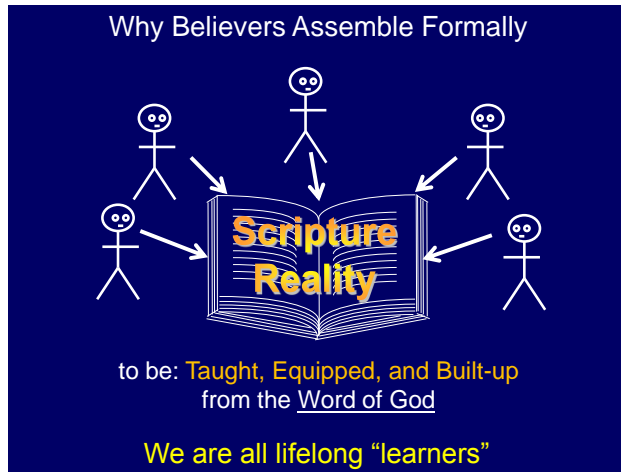
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This is what has been happening to us since the 1960s.

The world isn't the same anymore. Biblical thinking is a thing of the past. Liberal thinkers have infiltrated and taken over education, politics, entertainment, and have pushed their way to power and control of the media that influence the majority – making people think that to believe in the Bible and its principles is "backward", "primitive", or to use a politically correct term, "non progressive". This is what is labeled as Postmodernism.

Postmodernism claims to leave behind modernist (or Enlightenment) commitments to the objectivity of truth, the universality of reason, and the inevitability of progress. It incorporates fancy names like contextualism, syncretism, multiculturalism, pluralism, relativism, etc., which makes it sound pretty sophisticated, but the bottom line remains the same. Postmodernism is just another way of man trying to hide from God and suppress the truth in unrighteousness. The biggest problem is that the current culture is Biblically bankrupt. This means that apologetics and evangelism must work together. These persons have to be instructed slowly and carefully, from the beginning event: Creation; understanding the doctrine of God, the doctrine of man, the doctrine of nature (the Creator-creature distinction). Then the Fall; the doctrine of Sin, Doctrine of Evil and suffering, etc.. Unfortunately, I don't see any way around it if you want to get the Gospel presentation understood.

What is the purpose of the Church leadership in evangelism?



Eph 4: 11-12 tells us, “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors-teachers, for the **equipping** of the saints for the work of service, to the **building up** of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”

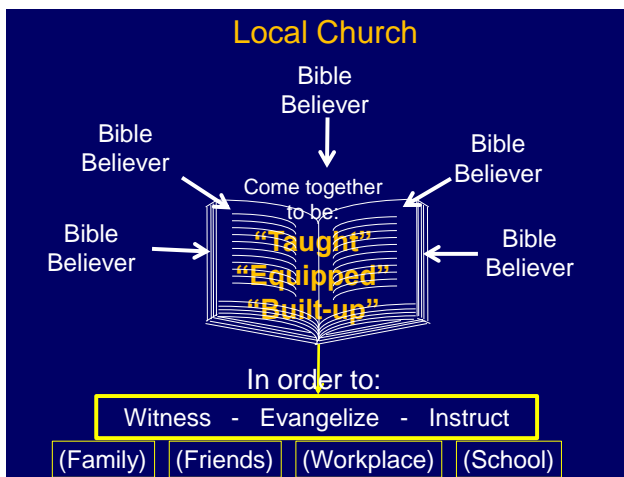
(I’m going to make a slight detour here)

Many large international, interdenominational Christian organizations are like American corporations. They start out small, work hard, grow, and after 5 - 7 years become self-perpetuating organizations. Campus Crusade, The Navigators, World Vision, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and the Billy Graham Association are examples. These organizations began in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s with a vision of evangelism and discipleship; how can we get the greatest number of people saved and trained, and that was all well and good. I’m not knocking them. There are a lot of good things being done. But, in fact, these organizations are evidence of the neglect of the church dealing with the fundamental problem of “generational loyalty” to God through the family. I think we can trace much of the reason for their existence back to Robert Raikes, considered by many to be the father of the Sunday School Movement. Whether it is a Sunday School program, an ongoing Youth Ministry, or an ongoing Children’s Church, the result is the same, namely that the family generational loyalty to God has broken down! Raikes circumvented the proper authority structure of the parents over their children, and it became a “tradition” among Protestant congregations who incorporated it as part of a “children’s training program”. God’s institution of the family places the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the father to oversee and involve himself in the spiritual growth of his wife and children. The church has taken over the training of the children, but who is better to teach the children than their own parents, who know them and love them? This is serious business, and the church needs to rethink these things and focus more on how they can help the fathers in the training of their families and support them in their efforts. *That’s the end of my detour.*

The apostles and prophets are no longer here, but God has gifted certain men with the gift of Pastor-teacher – like Pastor Jeremy Thomas. And, together with the Council of Elders, the direction and care of this local body is overseen. And as we continue

toward Age Integration and family training, generational loyalty to God will start to be established and God will be glorified, because that is the Divine order of things! But the responsibility of each of us is to continually study and learn in order to think our thoughts after God's thoughts, by bringing our minds in line with our Creator's Viewpoint through Scripture.

What does Roman 12:2 tell us? "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,"



So, we see why we assemble at the "local church" – to be taught, equipped, and built up in Biblical truth through which we appreciate God (worship) and strengthen our understanding and confidence in order to witness, evangelize and instruct those with whom we come into contact - from our family, friends, in the workplace or at school. And we have the answers through the Scriptures. In this "local church" we have been taught, equipped, and built up, as I have seen it, through the teaching of basic doctrines, being equipped with the study of the Biblical Framework Series for 5 years, through the steady line by line, precept upon precept teaching that has been and is being taught to us. So, whether it's an unsaved person or a saved person untaught, we should be able to discern, through questioning, who we are addressing. The whole idea behind all this is that, by studying, learning, applying ourselves, asking questions, talking about these spiritual matters i.e. taking our spiritual life (sanctification) seriously, we will be, de facto, ready for anyone asking us a question about the hope that is within us.

We see Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14 preaching the Gospel in Lystra and Paul healing a lame man. Having witnessed this miracle, the crowd thought that Paul and Barnabas were gods come to visit men. Paul had to correct their thinking and point them to the "living" God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. He had to take them back to the doctrine of "living" God (origins). He didn't talk about Jesus right away. These people were buried in idolatry and needed to understand the Creator-creature distinction to know that there was a living and

independent Creator God first. Paul had to do much the same thing when approaching the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on Mars Hill in Acts 17.

Pastor Jeremy writes: “....you can’t expect to defend the Scriptures in just pieces, they have to work together in a framework. So in apologetics and in evangelism, in presenting the Christian faith the same strategy has to be used..... Take for example the Fall of man, Gen 3 in the Biblical text, most Christians think it’s just an allegory. So when you go to defend the cross of Christ as a literal historical event you can’t because you’ve already denied the literally historical reason for the cross. The truths are interrelated and depend one upon the other so if you deny one, logically you deny the other. All the truths of Scripture hang together and have to be defended together. And therefore it’s terribly important that when Christianity is laid out before a hostile world that it be laid out as a coherent whole and not just pieces.” (A0904 – January 25, 2009 – Acts 13:13-41 – *Paul’s Historical Framework Methodology*)

In this day and age, where there is such Biblical illiteracy, and the Bible is “just another ancient book that contains a lot of stories”, the good news of Jesus Christ needs to be explained starting from Gen 1:1. Gone are the days when a few memorized verses would convict or convince a person to a place of salvation. People stumble over or have no understanding of God’s holiness, man’s depravity, imputed sin, hypostatic union, virgin birth, redemption, propitiation, substitutionary blood atonement..... Are these not important to understand? They are preparatory for the correct understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I think that at this point in time with all the knowledge we have acquired by biblically loyal scholars since the Reformation, we are responsible for and under obligation to teach, clarify, and explain the Gospel as best we can. This may include many meetings with a person or persons. First, you’re going to have to untangle their confused minds and focus them on why God spoke into history and the authority the scriptures have.

What is the local church’s responsibility in evangelizing?

To teach, and equip the members in Biblical truth, so that they are in the best possible position to listen to people, analyze the thoughts and speech of these people in order to best help them understand that the Bible is not just another ancient book; Jesus was not just another “good guy”; and “God loves you and has a plan for you” isn’t enough to penetrate the barriers of blindness and confusion in the mind of these people.

The world thinks differently than 40-50 years ago. As I was growing up, you were either Catholic or Protestant. Some of you may remember a time when most everyone had God awareness and some elementary Biblical truth like creation, sin, right and wrong, Jesus, heaven and hell. Most people seemed to have a Judeo-Christian worldview. So an “abbreviated” Gospel message could be given and, through the drawing ministry of the Father, many would come to salvation. But, since the 1960s,

the world has taken a quantum leap toward global citizenship, multi-cultural understanding, global economy, religious pluralism (accepting everyone's religious belief systems), God-less educational systems, the ubiquitous theory of evolution, and the permeation of psychological thinking, and it has confused the mind of man even more about the possibility of knowing God's Viewpoint. Couple that with the Internet's speed of light and its capability for misinformation and television's complete distraction with trivia and trash, and you begin to see the Postmodern environment.

Truly, we live in a world that is Biblically illiterate! How you "feel" is more important than what you "think"; "unity" is more important than "doctrine"; music and rhetoric are more important than teaching. It is only by the grace of God, that in this Bible believing assembly we have the opportunity to believe and understand the Bible - that God spoke into human history and revealed who He is, who we are, the true meaning of life and what true reality is.

Where do you go if you deny absolute truth? You're set adrift and discern good and bad by means of how it makes you feel. And church leaders are either caving in or exploiting this.

This, then is the mindset of the audience that Bible believers have to consider when evangelizing. We must start earnestly learning Scripture and in the context of a Biblical "framework" in order to help these people understand the truth about God, creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Call of Abraham, the birth, life, death, resurrection of Christ (who Jesus really is) and help them get through the "smoke and mirrors" they've been handed.

So, what should we do?

Let's start by recalling a few things the person(s) before us even before they speak.

- That they are made in the image of God (Gen 1:27)
- That they know there is a God (Rom. 1:19-20)
- That God has set eternity in their hearts (Eccl 11:3)
- That they are blinded to the truth (2 Cor 4:4)
- That they "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (hiding from God) Rom 1:18.

And yet:

We know that they are searching for answers to the essential questions of:

Who am I?

Where did I come from?

Why am I here?

What's after death?

And we know that not everyone will be saved.

We must remember that the sin of Adam condemned us (mankind) to be eternally separated from God. So, our will is controlled by our nature, we are children of wrath, at enmity with God, and cannot choose righteousness.

Jesus said in John 6:44, “No one can come to Me unless the Father **draws** him” and He says in John 6:37, “All that the Father **gives** Me will come to Me.”

So then just because the offer of the gospel is universal it does not imply that ability to believe it is universal (God’s Sovereignty and man’s responsibility).

It’s what Pastor Jeremy was teaching at the beginning of 1 Corinthians, under the title of ***The Gospel Is NOT Sought Out By Humans***. He writes “if anyone is ever going to come to God, God has to come to them first. He has to take the initiative.”

Yet, we know from 1 Tim 2:3-4 that, “*This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*” And we know from 1 Peter 3:9 that, “*The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*” So, what is our part?

Do we search people out? Do we go door to door evangelizing? I think, rather, we prepare ourselves through a better understanding of Biblical knowledge and let God bring those to us He wants us to deal with. Even in the course of conversation, we can pick up “presuppositions” that the other person has which can be an opening to Biblical instruction (apologetics) and/or evangelism.

Let’s say a few words about the Gospel (the good news).

The good news isn’t that you “accept Jesus and He will change your life”. I’m reminded of a story told about a group in South or Central America where a group of “Christians” were asked what the “Gospel” was. Their answers were of what Christ had done for them – “I don’t drink alcohol anymore”, “I don’t curse anymore”, “I don’t dance anymore”, “I don’t smoke anymore”, “I’ve cleaned up my life”, etc.. Not one of them said anything about the Gospel being Christ’s Substitutionary Blood Atonement for their sins, that He died, rose again, and that they now have eternal life by trusting in Him alone. There was something terribly wrong with how the presentation of the “good news” of Jesus Christ had been delivered.

What are the components of the Gospel?

- 1) Jesus Christ
- 2) The Son of God who died and rose again
- 3) to pay one’s personal penalty for sin
- 4) gives eternal life to all who trust Him and
- 5) Him alone for it (from *Getting the Gospel wrong* by J.B.Hixson)

Remember what Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”

Who is Jesus Christ?

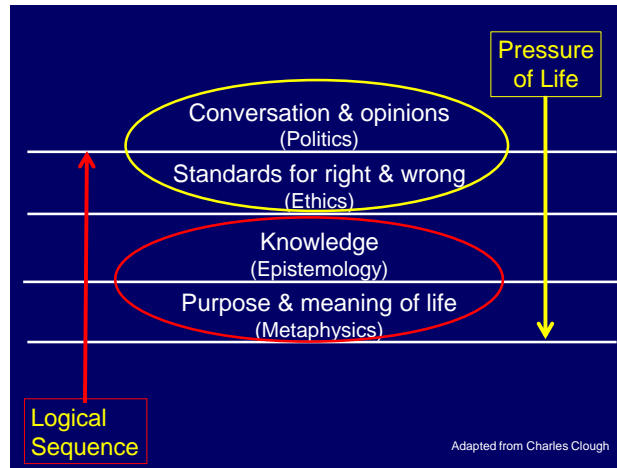
Why did He have to come?

What did He do?

Though we try to identify the components or “essentials” of the Gospel, it’s the expansion, the unpacking and explaining of the “essentials”, and surrounding doctrines, that produce the ground work for the presentation of the Good News of Jesus Christ and His substitutionary blood atonement, death and resurrection.

There was a time when people had more concise biblical training, when there were strong leaders in theological and Biblical training; when universities like Harvard, Yale, Princeton, etc. were solid Biblical training grounds. But that was a century ago. The liberal theologians took over theology departments and forced the conservative theologians out and now we have great universities of secular humanism. The point is that the great men of Biblical faith didn’t see it coming and were unprepared. We need to be “prepared” for evangelism. We must be immersed in Biblical truth through study, being taught (and paying attention), understanding Biblical doctrine through a Biblical framework so we can “connect the doctrinal dots”; for example understanding what a person believes about the Fall will affect the way they see the Cross-work of Christ; how a person views God and man will have an effect of their understanding of the Creator-creature distinction and the authority of the Bible. Most people try to live a “moral” life. By doing this they have a balancing scale to weigh the good and the bad and they try to have the good things outweigh the bad things. Pretty simple, but it is what they have been taught somewhere along the way. I think we’ve raised a lot of religiously moral people, but they have no idea of “imputed sin” of Adam, or the sinful condition we find ourselves at birth, or the imputation of all sin to Christ on the Cross, or the Righteousness of Christ imputed to our account through grace by faith. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:17-19 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.”

In the end, people have to come to the point where they understand who they are in the sight of an all holy God; ugly, trapped, separated from their Creator, utterly sinful, prideful, arrogant, deceitful little creatures (Creator-creature distinction).



The logical sequence of the basis for living our lives is understanding the purpose and meaning of life, knowing truth, that is, how do you know what you know?, standards for ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, and finally, everyday conversation and opinions. Normally, we meet people in the top two areas. Where we can introduce Biblical truth is when the pressures of life drive a person to question if what they “know” is true, and re-think the purpose and meaning of their life. This may be the “God conscious” event that has been brought into their lives to make them realize that they need something beyond themselves; a lost job, a sudden death of a loved one, divorce, illness, marriage or family problems, or the myriad other areas that God can bring into life to “nudge” them closer to the truth of Scripture and/or salvation. If the person is having problems with their marriage, remember that marriage comes out of the Divine “institutions” found in Genesis 1 and 2 and are not social “conventions”. You can help them understand this. You will be involved with these people through Biblical instruction (apologetics) and/or evangelism.

But, you say, I can’t keep all this stuff in my mind when I’m talking to someone. Maybe not at first, but as you study and review the Biblical Framework Series, you will learn to connect what they are trying to say with an event in the Bible and then you will recall the doctrine(s) associated with that event, which will help you in dealing with their problem or question. For example, can you recall the eleven possible reasons for evil and suffering that we studied in the Biblical Framework Series? Find that again – it’s on-line at website fbgbible.org under **Lesson Library**. Click on **Creation to Babel Part 1**, then go down the list looking for “**Patterns Of Suffering**”. You can either print the **text** or listen to the **audio** of that lesson. Let the website be a resource for you. It can be a great apologetic tool in helping a person to understand humanity’s position as “fallen creatures” and the Divine solution of Jesus Christ. Biblical Christianity is the only answer. As Dr. Van Til, in his booklet called *The Defense of Christianity & My Credo* proposes: “**That we no longer make an appeal to “common notions” which Christian and non-Christian agree on, but to the “common ground” which they actually have because man and his world are what Scripture says they are**”. And remember, you don’t have to have all the answers. The Holy Spirit is at work too. He will bring to mind the things that you have studied and learned.

The words of Romans 1:21-23 ring true once again, “For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.”

That’s exactly what this multi media, image driven culture has done and will continue to do. So, how do we evangelize these people? Only by showing them the futility of their ways by challenging them to “think biblically”, and introduce them to the Bible through a logical framework flow, from Genesis on, which is the flow of God’s story of His faithfulness and integrity; engage them by asking them questions, when you see an opportunity - about “God”, “man”, “sin”, “redemption”, “atonement”, etc.. Listen to what they say. The general idea is to shake their tree of “sound bite” theology and inclusiveness.

Evangelism/Apologetics takes time. What you’re doing is explaining Biblical Christianity bit by bit; calming fears, challenging presuppositions, and presenting and defending the Biblical position as clearly as possible.

Col 4:6 tells us, “Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

From Van Til’s list of a
consistent Christian Methodology of Apologetics

“That we present the message and evidence for the Christian position as clearly as possible, knowing that because man is what the Christian says he is, the non-Christian will be able to understand in an intellectual sense the issues involved. In so doing, we shall, to a large extent, be telling him what he “already knows” but seeks to suppress. This “reminding” process provides a fertile ground for the Holy Spirit, who in sovereign grace may grant the non-Christian repentance so that he may know Him who is life eternal.”

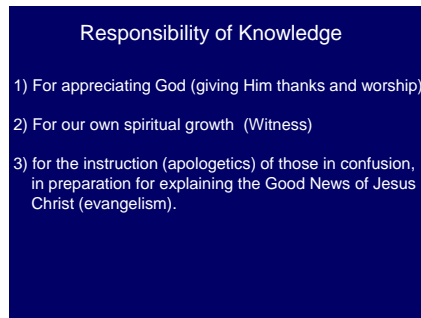
The Defense of Christianity & My Credo by Cornelius Van Til

Dr. Van Til makes another proposal, **“That we present the message and evidence for the Christian position as clearly as possible, knowing that because man is what the Christian says he is, the non-Christian will be able to understand in an intellectual sense the issues involved. In so doing, we shall, to a large extent, be telling him what he “already knows” but seeks to suppress. This “reminding” process provides a fertile ground for the Holy Spirit, who in sovereign grace may grant the non-Christian repentance so that he may know Him who is life eternal.”** (*The Defense of Christianity & My Credo*)

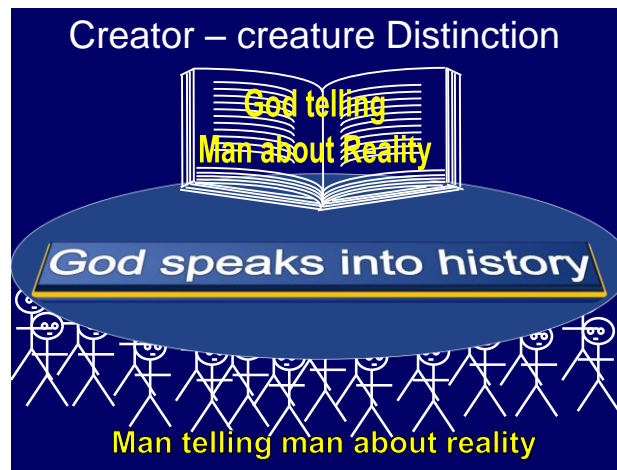
The best way for us to “evangelize” is to pay attention to our own spiritual growth; by being faithful and attentive as Pastor Jeremy teaches us. Go out on the website, under **Add’l Resources**, and find a recommended book and buy it or see if it’s in the church library. Look through the many lessons Jeremy has out there and re-read or listen to certain teachings that impressed you. Study on our own, learn doctrine, ask questions, understand and apply the Biblical Framework approach. I can’t tell you how much the

Biblical Framework Series has meant to me. It has helped me to see the major events and the doctrines associated with them. I see them laid out in history in chronological order, and see progressive revelation taking place, but, most of all I can see the faithfulness and integrity of God to His Covenants and the cohesiveness of the Bible.

At this point in history we have more Biblical knowledge than man has ever had, and we are responsible for that knowledge –



1) for appreciating God (giving Him thanks and worship); 2) for our own spiritual growth and 3) for Biblical instruction (apologetics) of those in confusion, in preparation for explaining the Good News of Jesus Christ (evangelism).



The more we grow in our spiritual growth, the more prepared we are to help the unbeliever or untaught believer understand the Creator-creature distinction, that Biblical Christianity is the ONLY rational position to hold. As Dr. Van Til says, “Christianity alone does not slay reason on the altar of ‘chance’”.

As the time draws near for Christ to come for His church, my prayer is that we appreciate the truth that God has preserved for us and be diligent to present ourselves approved to God as workmen who do not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (paraphrased 2 Tim 2:15)

Let’s pray.