

January 12-14, 2018

Savannah, TN

EU 2018

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EU 2018 Schedule

FRIDAY NIGHT

- 7:00 Registration (Aux Gym)
8:00 Keynote 1: Our Common Problem: Sin Ps. 51:1-6 - Kirk Brothers
9:30 Depart for Homes

SATURDAY

- 9:00-9:15 Singing and instructions
9:30-10:15 Elective Class 1 *
10:30-11:15 Elective Class 2*
11:30-12:20 Lunch Blocks/ Keynote 2 Our Crucial Need: Salvation
Ps. 51:7-12 - Kirk Brothers
11:30-12:20 Groups C & D to Keynote in Gym
11:30-11:55 Group A to lunch / Group B free time
11:55-12:20 Group B to lunch / Group A free time
12:30-1:20 Groups A & B Keynote in gym
12:30-12:55 Group C to Lunch / Group D free time
12:55-1:20 Group D to Lunch / Group C free time
1:30-2:15 Core Class 1**
2:30-3:15 Core Class 2**
3:30 Dismiss for youth group discussions & dinner on the town
6:30-7:00 Early Singing
7:30 Keynote 3 Our Required Response: Repentance
Ps. 51:16-17 - David Shannon

***Adult Class in the Main Gym**

****Adults will join students in Core Classes. Please be sure students have enough seats**

SUNDAY

- 9:00 Worship – Our Great Mission: Rescue The Lost
Ps. 51:13-15 - David Shannon

Our Common Problem: Sin
Ps. 51:1-6

Our Crucial Need: Salvation
Psalm 51:7-12

Our Required Response: Repentance
Psalm 51:16-17

Worship

Sunday AM
David Shannon

Our Great Mission: Rescue The Lost
Psalm 51:13-15

Elective Classes

Classes are broken down into three tracks this year:

Bible Rescues

Biblical accounts of God's rescues of His people out of difficult situations and principles we can learn from them to see how God can rescue today as well.

Home Rescues

These teachers are people who God is using every day in the lives across the US to rescue souls. You will hear how they are letting God work through them where they live and be inspired to find out how God can use you where you live!

Foreign Rescues

These teachers are all involved in either short-term or long-term mission work of some kind. God is not just the God of the USA. These classes will help you see how God is working through the world in different ways and how you can be a part of spreading his kingdom in it.

Don't just wander into the closest class or follow your friends into one without knowing what it is. Think purposefully about what classes you will attend. You will only be able to attend two of the 30 classes available. You may want to pick one class from 2 different tracks. Or you may want to focus on one key area that you need to grow in. As you look through the classes, try to evaluate which class you will go to based on this thought:

“Which class will be *most* likely to help *me* become all things to all people when I get home?”

Bible Rescues

1. **Rescuing the “Good Person”- Cornelius**
Barry Binion *Room T5*
2. **Discouraged & Distracted- Mary & Martha (Ladies Only)**
Gloria Beasley *Room T4*
3. **Rescuing a Foreigner- The Ethiopian Eunuch**
Jeff Beasley *Room T6*
4. **Rescuing the Written Off- Zaccheus**
Chris Britt *Room T3*
5. **Rescue Me From Myself- The Prodigal Son**
Joel Danley *Room E12*
6. **Rescuing a Terrorist- Saul**
Paddy Flanagan *Room T2*
7. **Rescue Me From My Excuses- Eve, Moses,**
Travis Hartle *Room T8*
8. **Rescuing the Outcast- The Demon-Possessed Man**
Bobby Rawson *Room T1*
9. **Rescuing the One in Crisis- The Philippian Jailer**
Brian Staron *Room I1*

Home Rescues

10. **God Can Rescue Me: Proof Through His Creative Power**
Jim Barr *Room T9*
11. **Rescuing the Addict**
Jaime Harper *Room I10*
12. **Rescuing the Orphans**
Clint and Lacie Haynes *Room I9*
13. **Rescuing the Taken- Human Trafficking (Ladies Only)**
Caley Newberry *Room I8*
14. **How Can We Pray For You?**

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | <i>Michael Prentice</i> | <i>Room E13</i> |
| 15. Race Reconciliation in the Church – Rescuing Unity | <i>Kevin Redd and Joshua Wyatt</i> | <i>Room E11</i> |
| 16. 13 Reasons Why Not (Rescuing from Suicidal Thoughts) | <i>Mitchell Skelton</i> | <i>Room E2</i> |
| 17. Evangelism as a Lifestyle (From a LifeFlight Rescue Worker) | <i>Stephen R. Sutton</i> | <i>Room E10</i> |
| 18. Rescuing from Doubts Caused by the Teaching of Evolution | <i>Charles Tucker</i> | <i>Room E3</i> |
| 19. Rescuing the Hurting (Guys Only) | <i>Landon Self, Colton Shannon</i> | <i>Room E9</i> |
| 20. Rescuing the Hurting (Ladies Only) | <i>Allison Clanton</i> | <i>Room E4</i> |
| 21. Take Route: An Evangelistic Bible Study | <i>Phillip Jenkins</i> | <i>Room R9</i> |

Foreign Rescues

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| 22. Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Results (Ladies Only) | <i>Sarah Dutton</i> | <i>Room E5</i> |
| 23. Partners 4 Africa | <i>Dorian Flynn</i> | <i>Room R6</i> |
| 24. Choosing Whom to Rescue- From Dad to Central America | <i>Chris Fry</i> | <i>Room R5</i> |
| 25. To Honduras with Love | <i>Tracy Love</i> | <i>Room R7</i> |
| 26. Rescuing Nicaraguan Souls One Student at a Time | <i>David McCrary</i> | <i>Room R4</i> |
| 27. Rescuing Souls in Haiti Through Medical Missions | <i>R. Scott Miskelly</i> | <i>Room R8</i> |
| 28. A Southern Man in the Middle of China | <i>Matthew Moore</i> | <i>Room R3</i> |
| 29. The French-speaking World | <i>Aaron Palmer</i> | <i>Room R2</i> |
| 30. A Nation Cannot Cleanse Itself Until It Takes Up Scriptures | <i>Richard Riehn</i> | <i>Room E8</i> |

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BIBLE RESCUES

Rescuing “A Good Person”

Barry Binion

The very definition of the word Rescue is “to free from confinement, danger, or evil: **a**: to take (someone, such as a prisoner) forcibly from custody **b**: to recover (something, such as a prize) by force **c**: to deliver” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

The idea of rescue is to lead someone from where they are to where they need to be. That’s exactly what we hope to do with all those we love and care about. To lead them from being outside of Christ to a relationship with Him.

In the beginning of Acts chapter 10 we find out about a man named Cornelius. The Bible calls him a centurion. Centurions were Roman soldiers responsible for 100 other soldiers. Most may look at Cornelius and say he was an unlikely candidate to be receptive to Jesus.

This was not the case with Cornelius. The Bible calls him a devout man (NKJV), other versions say a good man, and that he was one who feared God. David Roper said, *“This Roman officer had grown tired of the emptiness of pagan religions and had turned to faith in the true God. He was ‘a God-fearer.’ . . . A God-fearer was a Gentile who believed in Jehovah, who embraced the moral and ethical standards of the Law, but who had not been circumcised to become a Jewish proselyte.”*

Though he was a soldier and an officer in charge of 100 men and likely was in a rough environment, in which there were not many who feared God. Also, he was in an environment where they faced war, blood-shed and death. Just imagine the conditions he had to be around. He must have faced untold amounts of worldliness and pagan religions on a daily basis, yet he still had a desire to fear God and be good. To do right, give and live right.

There was still something missing in his life. Fearing God only, doesn't seem to be enough. ***What was missing?*** That's a great question.

God gives Cornelius a vision directing him to call for Peter to come and he will tell you what he must do (Acts 10:6). At the same time, he convinced Peter in a vision to go to Cornelius and tell him what he must do.

Do you know someone like Cornelius? We have all met people or had connections with people in our lives like Cornelius. You may have someone like this in your life right now and may be wondering what to do? How to help them? That's goal of this lesson.

So, what was missing in the life of Cornelius? He was what we might consider a believer. He was a believer in God. A God-fearer. James tells his readers, *"¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!"*

He had not yet believed in Christ

Cornelius hadn't been taught about Jesus. He didn't know salvation was in Christ. He had not heard Jesus say, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* (John 14:6).

Peter began and taught Cornelius and those he had gathered in his house, about Jesus. That peace only comes through Jesus. *"He is Lord of all"* and wants our surrender to Him.

Peter tells Cornelius they are witnesses to all the things he knew and had heard about what Jesus did throughout all Judea. He told him about how Jesus was killed, buried and raised from the grave just like the prophets foretold (Acts 10:34-43). ALL focus was on Christ and what He had done for all mankind, including Cornelius and his household.

Belief plus obedience to God's commands is what is important

Belief in God is important! However, God through Peter let Cornelius know that salvation was in Christ. Believe that He is God's son and was sent to be our sacrifice for sins. Do you believe it, Cornelius? Do you believe it, good person?

It was evident they did. It was also evident that they were willing to obey whatever God commanded so they could be right with Him.

Peter asked if anyone could forbid water that would keep them from being baptized. No one answered. So, Cornelius and those who had come to hear, were baptized.

But it was more than simply being baptized that Cornelius was missing. It was a belief in Christ. A faith that He was who He said He was and He came to be and do what He said He was and would do.

It is about a faith that leads to ACTION! A faith that says I want to fully follow this God who I believe. Therefore, he acted on those commands from God. We are called to share Jesus and to lead good people to follow those commands of God found in scripture.

This was the RESCUE Cornelius needed and it is the same rescue good people today outside of Christ need as well.

**Discouraged and Distracted ~
Lessons from Mary & Martha**
Gloria Beasley

Satan has specially designed, well thought out schemes to use for each of us. Two of these schemes are discouragement and distraction. As we go about our daily lives, what can Christian women do to avoid these two pitfalls? Spending time in God's Word will give us the tools we need to be strong, courageous, and busy in the Kingdom!

As Christian women, we are valuable to God! We are valuable to the Kingdom! We are valuable to our husbands and families and friends! We cannot let Satan and the world hinder us from all the good that God has planned for us. Let's discuss how to stay busy and stay focused, because we must live each day with the urgency of the times in mind!

Rescuing a Foreigner

Jeff Beasley

The book of Acts is full of faithful men and women who took the gospel to the known world. Their fearless boldness turned the world upside down in a few short years. As God through the Holy Spirit directed this great movement, the Word of God was spread to many people who were different in looks, culture, language, and religion compared the first Jewish Christians.

In our class, “Rescuing a Foreigner”, we will discuss the efforts of Philip the Evangelist to spread the gospel to those that many of his brothers and sisters would hesitate to approach. He is the first recorded to approach non-Jews with the gospel. Perhaps, this was uncomfortable for the Apostles and church leaders in Jerusalem, but they responded by sending Peter and John there so these foreign Christians might receive the Holy Spirit.

Later, Philip, motivated by the Holy Spirit, joins a high ranking official from a foreign nation and shares the Good News with him. How did Philip know what to teach this man? What did he teach him? What was the result of this teaching?

We all hope to be an effective evangelist like Philip and bring many people into the Kingdom of God. As we read about this great preacher and personal worker, we can learn many lessons about approaching strangers and foreigners with the gospel.

In our world today, how do we find those who have a heart for the gospel? We will look at examples of the great opportunities that God is giving us today. In this modern time of upheaval in the world, God is opening doors for us, with the blessing of spreading the seed of the Word of God to people of different nations, languages, cultures, and religions. Will you hear the call of the Lord to tell them the Good News about Jesus?

Rescuing the Written Off

Chris Britt

Each of us has a list. We may not know it. We haven't written it out, but there's a list. The list contains names of the people we want to have nothing to do with—the written off. We probably don't refer to them by that name, but that's how we treat them. We go out of our way to distance ourselves from them, to avoid them, and to ignore them. We think that if we leave them alone, maybe they'll leave us alone. In doing so, we disgrace the name "Christian." We disrespect the sacrifice of Christ. Jesus died for those people the same he died for us. And we're going to avoid them? We're going to ignore them? We're going to have nothing to do with the people for whom Christ loves and died? How can we, as Christians, justify that behavior? We can't. So, let's change it. Let's change how we view, love, and interact with those people we've previously written off.

Grab your Bible and read Luke 19:1-10. It's a familiar story. We were taught from a young age about Zacchaeus. As we get older, however, we should view this story differently. As kids, we heard the story and were introduced to the love of Jesus. But the older we get, we dig deeper and understand more. This story is, above all, about the love and concern of Jesus Christ for all men. From that, we have the example he set for us to love and care for all men, even those written off like Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus was a tax-collector. Tax-collectors didn't have very good reputations because so many of them cheated people. We know Zacchaeus was dishonest because of his repentance and restoration of what he'd taken from people at the end of the story. But we are also given a glimpse of how others treated Zacchaeus. Verse 7 says that when the people saw that Jesus was going to Zacchaeus' house, they said, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." They couldn't believe that this religious teacher, Jesus, was going to associate himself with such a terrible, horrible, dishonest, crook of a man. They had written Zacchaeus off. They wanted nothing to do with him. They couldn't believe that anyone with any common sense and dignity would have anything to do with Zacchaeus. But that's exactly why Jesus went to his house!

Zacchaeus wasn't well liked. No one wanted to be around him; no one wanted to spend time with him; no one wanted to be his friend. And by ignoring him, no one chose to help him. This man was a crooked, dishonest tax-collector who needed salvation. The people only saw him for his sin, and didn't see the person behind it. They couldn't see beyond the sin he'd committed to see a soul that needed saving. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus. We don't know why; the Bible doesn't explicitly tell us. It was probably because Zacchaeus had heard about this rabbi who was being followed by large groups of people, casting out demons, and healing the sick. Zacchaeus finally cared about something more than his money.

Because Zacchaeus was short and the crowd was too thick to get through, he climbed a sycamore tree. Jesus, the Son of God, Savior of mankind, looked up and saw him. Knowing the hearts of men and realizing what Zacchaeus was longing for, he said, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." The people complained about Jesus spending time with this sinner. After his time with Jesus, Zacchaeus was no longer enslaved to his sin. In verse 8, Zacchaeus said to Jesus, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." The people had written Zacchaeus off. But what did Jesus say in verse 10? "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Jesus was going to seek out the written off—the sinful, the rejected, the ignored—and save them.

Folks, we can't save people. We're not Jesus. But you can think of yourself as the sycamore tree that Zacchaeus climbed. There are people who are looking and longing for Jesus, but they've been written off by everyone else. You can be the sycamore tree that helps them see Jesus. You can be the one who lifts them up. You can be the one to encourage them. You can be the one who shows them the way. You can be the one who brings them to our Savior.

Grab your Bible and read Luke 15:11-32. This is another story that we know so well. Or at least, the first part. We read the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and we always focus on the younger, rebellious brother, don't we?

But do we realize that a lot of the time, we are the older brother? *Read Luke 15:1-2.* Who was Jesus talking to? This parable

was as much for the arrogant, self-righteous Pharisees and scribes as it was for the tax collectors and sinners. The younger brother in the parable shows God’s love, forgiveness, and redemption for those living in sin—the written off.

But the older brother? That character of the parable was for those who write people off. The older brother represents those who simply complain about the sinful people instead of doing something to help them; the person who writes the sinners off and ignores them instead of loving them and showing them Jesus. The older brother stayed at home when he should have gone and brought his little brother home. The older brother complained and insulted his younger brother when he should have welcomed him home and forgiven him as his father had done.

Jesus has done for us what that older brother should have done in the parable. Jesus left his home in glory to seek and save the lost. He gave up so much so that we might share in God’s inheritance. He was willing to do whatever it took to bring us home and to provide forgiveness for us so that we can be called God’s children.

So, what are we to do? How are we supposed to change? How are we supposed to treat the written off? The apostle Paul did a great job of putting huge concepts into practical instruction. Read the following passages:

Romans 12 – We are to be transformed in heart and mind by the Gospel, by what Christ has done for us, and then treat others the way we’ve been treated by God.

2 Corinthians 5:14-21 – We don’t write them off as a sinful person; instead we see them as a soul to be saved. As Christians, we are ambassadors for Christ, doing everything we can to reconcile (reunite, bring back) everyone to God.

Paul said in Romans 15:7, “Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” That’s what we are to do. We were the outsiders; we were the rejected; we were the hopeless sinners who were sought out and saved by our loving Savior Jesus Christ. Let’s do everything we can to rescue the written off the same way each of us was rescued.

Rescuing Me From Myself

Joel Danley

While most of us would never want to admit it, we often need to be rescued from something very, very dangerous: ourselves.

Me? Dangerous? Absolutely. Because, who is the one person who can keep you out of heaven? The answer: you. (II Corinthians 5:10)

The power lies within us to see whether we make it to heaven or live for eternity in hell. So, we must do everything within our power to ensure we are not in need of rescuing.

The human brain is a powerful thing. With our minds we are able to do math calculations in seconds, determine the speed of a baseball/softball coming from the pitcher's hand, and memorize multiple items or lists at one time.

But our minds are also very skillful at rationalization and justification. Those are just large words sometimes used by people to say this: We are very good at convincing ourselves that whatever sinful behavior we are participating in is okay with God and not really a big deal. And, I mean we are very, very good at it. We become just like the children of Israel that Isaiah describes in Isaiah 5:20.

The good news today is that we have a perfect, biblical example to help show us, not only, what not to do; but also, if we find ourselves in that place of needing rescued, exactly how to help ourselves get back to living faithfully.

The parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) is perhaps the most well known story told by Jesus in the entire New Testament. And often we focus on the ending (SPOILER ALERT: it's a good one). But the beginning of this parable can help us when we need rescuing from ourselves.

The younger son of a certain man decided that he wanted the inheritance that was his before the usual time. Now, Jewish law did not require the father to honor this request. But just as we have free

will to make our own decisions apart from God, this father divides up his livelihood between his two sons.

So the younger son decides it is time to YOLO. Call it prodigal (NKJV) living. Call it wasteful (NKJV). Call it riotous (KJV). Call it reckless (ESV). Call it what you want. But this son soon finds himself needing to be rescued. From himself. Because no one put him in this situation, but.....himself. How many times do we find ourselves in an unfortunate or even sinful situation, but when we look around, there is really no one to blame but ourselves.

The younger son is now hungry and alone. He has hit rock bottom.

And Jesus says, “But when he came to himself...” (Luke 15:17). The proverbial light bulb turns on above his head and he realizes what he must do. He recognizes the servants at his old home have it better than him and he would rather become one of them than to stay where he currently is. So, he gets up and heads home.

Now for the purpose of this lesson, we’ll stop there and you can finish this parable on your own time. But let’s ask and answer a few questions to see if we can help ourselves.

What are some times when we need rescuing?

1. When we decide to go hang out with our friends who we know will be participating in sinful behavior
2. When we continue to watch or listen to things that we know drag our mind into the gutter
3. When we feel a bit of guilt about something we’ve done but we say, “It’s not really a big deal...”
4. When we choose to be disrespectful to our parents in every interaction at home, even when it is unprovoked.

How can I rescue myself?

1. **Tell the truth.**
 - a) This is the first step and may be the most difficult step to take. We have to admit we have a problem.
 - b) In our parable, the younger son recognizes his CURRENT standing as opposed to his POSSIBLE standing at his house.

- c) James says it this way, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:22)
 - d) Don’t deceive yourself, but look into the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25) and admit you have a problem.
2. **Make a good resolution.**
- a) This younger son does not “hope for the best”. He doesn’t even pray real hard about it. He makes a plan.
 - b) He decides to return home and talk to his father.
 - c) He also counts the cost (Luke 14:28) and makes sure he understands what he must do to be made whole again.
3. **Follow through**
- a) The prodigal son does not stay where he is. He arises and goes to his father.
 - b) We can make all the plans in the world, but if we do not follow through and finish the plan, then we may find that we do not get out of danger but stay in our troubles.
 - c) The apostle Paul said that he did not stop short or fail to follow through. Instead he “finished the race” (II Timothy 4:6-8).

The prodigal son recognized that RETURN and REPENTANCE were needed in his life. He needed to be rescued but the only person who could get him out of the mire and back to his rightful place as a member of the family was.....himself. SPOILER ALERT: We know his father was willing to welcome him with open arms. But, it was going to take a change on his part to get there.

You see, everyone likes to think of themselves as a good person. But the truth of the matter is that we are all capable of convincing ourselves that we don’t have a problem; that everything is okay as long as I live how I want to live. However, sometimes we must look inwardly and realize that we may need rescued from ourselves.

Perhaps you’ve heard the phrase “I’m my own worst enemy”. Well, when we allow sin and selfish desires to control our life, that statement can be very true. We must be resolved to “make our calling and election sure” (II Peter 1:10).

May we always look to the prodigal son’s pattern of telling ourselves the truth, making a good resolution or plan, and following through to be sure we make it out of sin and into a life of faithfulness.

Rescuing a Terrorist Paddy Flanagan

How many of you have been mistaken as a terrorist? It happens to me more than I'd like to admit.

Okay, how many of you know a terrorist? Probably—hopefully—no one. But how many of you know someone who is sincere in their faith, but has very different views than you? Probably every one of us. We interact with people who may believe in the Bible but have very different view than us. That's what we are going to talk about today, people who are very sincere in their faith, but are sincerely wrong. These are the people who are all around you. At my congregation we often refer to these people as our “sincere Bible believing friends.” You have friends who love God, go to church, and even go to youth conferences just like you. They are just as dedicated to their faith as you, but something is wrong with their beliefs and you want to know how to talk to them. You might also have friends who believe in a different sacred text like the Book of Mormon or the Quran. You may even have friends who sincerely do not believe the Bible. All of these people are sincere, heartfelt, and genuine in their belief and that is the first thing you have to realize.

Be Loving

Approach people with a spirit of love. Chances are good that you are familiar with the “love chapter” in the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13. But chances are you are more familiar with reading it in a mushy, lovey dovey way more than when you think about evangelizing.

1 Corinthians 13.1-3

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away

all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Be Understanding

Chances are the person you are reaching out to is just following their family's traditions. Their beliefs are all they have ever known. Just like you would be, they are not going to throw everything they have ever known and been taught away in an instant. Remember, their beliefs are not only sincere, they are personal.

Acts 17.22-23

So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

Be Prepared

Maybe it is just the old Boy Scout in me, but let me explain. I don't just mean to be prepared for the sake of being prepared, but prepare yourself. You should be preparing your heart and mind before you ever meet that person you want to study with. Prepare yourself by praying that God will help you see those people you need to reach out to. Prepare yourself by reading the Bible yourself and not just relying on what someone tells you. Prepare yourself by taking your faith seriously.

Romans 10.14-15

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

Rescue Me from My Excuses

Travis Hartle

I recently read a story about a woman who had been driving around her home town for twenty-five years without a driver's license. Over the course of her twenty-five years without a license this woman managed to never get pulled over or drive through an area where she had to show her license.

Her luck finally ran out one day and she got pulled over by a police officer. After the officer found out she did not have a driver's license he asked the woman why she had never driven herself to a license branch and applied for one. The woman then proceeded to tell the officer, "*I only drive on roads with very little traffic and none of those roads lead to an office where I could apply for one.*"

Wow, what an excuse! Readers Digest, along with Careerbuilder.com, published an article entitled, *The 34 Most Ridiculous Excuses People Actually Used to Get Out of Work*. Here were some of my favorites...

- 1) One employee called in sick because he ate cat food instead of tuna fish and was deathly ill.
- 2) One employee could not come to work because he had attended the funeral of his wife's cousin's pet, because he was an uncle and a pallbearer.
- 3) Another employee said that someone glued her doors and windows shut so she couldn't leave the house to come to work.
- 4) An employee's false teeth flew out the window while driving down the highway.
- 5) One employee caught their uniform on fire by putting it in the microwave to dry.
- 6) Another employee was feeling too upset after watching "The Hunger Games."
- 7) An employee said a cow broke into her house and she had to wait for the insurance man.
- 8) Another employee was blocked in by police raiding her home.

My all time favorite one was that one employee said they had woken up in a good mood and didn't want to ruin it by coming in to work. Can you blame him?

Excuses CAN be a funny thing, but in my twelve years of youth ministry I have found that they are NOT very funny at all. I've heard

excuses about why parents were forty five minutes late to picking up their teen after a youth event. I've had people tell me they cannot help because what I am asking them to do is not their "talent" or "gift." Likewise, I've heard people say, "*that is the preacher's or elder's job.*" Sometimes people even give a bragging excuse like, "*I've served for ten years, and now I'm going to allow someone else to help.*" I have to try really hard so my eyes don't roll all the way up into my head.

We are very good at making excuses when we don't want to do something. We can get out of PE, work, and even ministry. Excuses go all the way back to the Garden of Eden and we can see them crop up time and time again throughout the Bible.

- The "It's Someone Else's Fault" Excuse – Gen 3:12-13
- The "I'm Not Good at That" Excuse – Ex 3:11; 4:10
- The "It Just Happened" Excuse – Ex 32:24
- The "I'm Weak and Unpopular" Excuse – Jud 6:15
- The "But My Family" Excuse – Luke 9:59-62
- The "I Was Scared" Excuse – Matt 25:24-25
- The "I'm too Busy" Excuse – Luke 14:16-24

Just like these individuals we make up our own excuses today. Excuses that keep us from spreading God's word. Excuses that keep us from doing God's Will. Excuses that help us feel better about willfully sinning.

What is your excuse? What excuses are holding you back from doing all you can for God? What excuses are keeping you from becoming the person God wants you to be?

1 Thessalonians 5:2 informs us that the end will come like a thief during the middle of the night when no one is watching for him, and James 4:14 compares our life to a vapor which is only here for a short time before it vanishes away. Our life is short and one day we won't have any time left to make excuses. Don't let an excuse keep you from living for God, salvation, or keep you from making corrections in your life.

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Rescuing the Outcast (Demon Possessed man) Bobby Rawson

How many times in your life have you jumped to a conclusion? Only to find out later that when the whole story is revealed, you came to the wrong one. I believe that many of us jump to conclusions about who God wants to follow Him. It is true...NO ONE CAN REACH EVERYONE, BUT EVERYONE CAN REACH SOMEONE! The problem is most of us do not see the “Outcast” as someone that God wants. We are all flawed, and yet “God demonstrates His love for us, while we were sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). All of us!! The Bible is full of stories about people who were rejects and outcasts from society. You see, Jesus can “write” anyone into His story, so we do not need to “write” anyone out.

In Mark 5:1-20, we find the story of **A Demon Possessed Man**. The story picks up at a time when Jesus was at the top of His ministry. There were a lot of people who were following Him and believing what He was teaching and doing. So what did Jesus do? The obvious - He left those behind. He got in a boat, went on a trip on the sea, and put the winds and the sea in their place (Mark 4:35-41). The boat arrived on the other side where there were pigs, graves, and demons. The Jews were not comfortable around any of the three. At first, the only one to get off the boat was Jesus. There He met a man living in the graveyard that had no friends. He was demon possessed. He was not the type of man that the apostles (or any of us) would have written into the Jesus story. We would not have been comfortable with him in our church building or seating with us during our worship service. Many of us would have viewed him as “hopeless.” However, to Jesus, **NO ONE IS HOPELESS!**

We tend to give up on those who are trapped by the world. Those who are a lot like the demon possessed man. The man’s bondage is no different from ours. Jesus goes a long way to meet the man that everyone else avoids. When the man and his demons met

Jesus, the man tried to worship Jesus (v. 6) and the demons were cast out (v. 13). Jesus wants to release ANYONE from bondage. “Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom. 7:24-25). Baptism is the game changer. It is the place where the old man is put to death (Romans 6:3-4) and where one puts on Christ (Gal. 3:27). Remember, the One who is in us is more powerful than the one on us. **JESUS WANTS TO RELEASE EVERYONE TO WORSHIP!** Satan wants our worship too. It was one of the temptations of Jesus (Matt. 4:9) where Satan offered Him the world for His worship. The same idea is found in Revelation where the beast of the land and sea wanted all the people to worship him. Jesus came to release us from our demons so we could worship Him.

Why did Jesus cross the sea? He was seeking worshippers! In John 4:23-24, Jesus told the woman at the well that God is seeking true worshippers (in spirit and truth). What did this man do? He tried to worship Jesus (v.6), but the demons got in the way. The same is true for “outcasts” today. What advice should we offer? 1) “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” (James 4:7-8). Help the outcast to realize they can overcome with Jesus. 2) We must help this outcast to find their place. We have to realize that this person is as important to God as you are.

I find the end of the story is almost un-Jesus like. This man begs Jesus to let him go with them (v.18), but Jesus said “No” (v.19). Why? Because Jesus knew, this man had an amazing story to tell. He told the man to go home and tell his friends what great things the Lord has done for you. The man did what Jesus said to do and all marveled (v.19-20). This man had a story to tell. Everyone who follows Jesus has a story to tell. Someone needs your story!

If you met this man today, would you “write” him into the Jesus story? Or, would you jump to the conclusion that the “outcast” wouldn’t want Jesus? Are you willing to look for that one? Even that one?

Rescuing the One in Crisis

Brian Staron

HOME RESCUES

God Can Rescue Me: Proof through His creative power

Jim Barr

The night air blows through David's hair as he finishes getting the sheep corralled. It's been a long day, David is sore and tired, and his wounds need attention. The herd was attacked by a mountain lion today, a surprising but not unexpected event, and David was able to kill it before harm came upon the sheep. The sheep are finally safe, and David is laying at the mouth of a cave, the protector of his herd, waiting for them to settle and drift off to sleep. Laying on his back, looking at the stars above, he thanks God for keeping him safe, for rescuing him from the mouth of the lion and for blessing him so richly. As he lays there, in the darkness, he begins to count the stars to help him fall asleep. As he does, he remembers the promises God made to Abraham, about his descendants being more numerous than the stars, that He would be their God, and that they would be His people. Peace from that thought washes over him...as he closes his eyes and finds rest in God's care for him.

David is frequently in the wilderness in need of protection and rescue by God. Whether it is while shepherding, or when fighting off wild animals, striking down giants, running from evil rulers, or even during times of temptation, David is a man of God, a man after God's own heart, that frequently looked to the heavens for reassurance of God's infinite and perpetual power. Imagine, David, on one of those clear nights, penning these words: *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge."* (Ps 19:1-2) Consider him, broken hearted from his sins, writing these words: *"I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping."* (Ps 6:6) The time David spends contemplating God, and His protection, is exceedingly frequent and

with tremendous depth: *“My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.”* (Ps 63:5-8)

If we were to take the life of David, and review his faith, we would see a young man who understands God’s protection through His displayed power in the natural world. He knows of the Genesis account, he holds fast the faithful promises of God, and is witness to God’s protection of God’s people through Scripture and oral tradition. David surely walks by faith, and not by sight, but for all of mankind (from Adam and Eve to you and me today) there can be an element of our faith that is spurred on by what we witness in His creation around us.

Consider these passages: 1 Chronicles 29:10-13; Jeremiah 10:1-16; Job 29-30; 38-42. Read of God’s people, and even God Himself, elaborating on His power. Dwell on God’s might, and His unfathomable works that sustain the universe. Notice the simplicity of various statements of faith in connection with God’s power. Do we have similar faith today, where we go through life confident in God’s power to save, or does our faith rest on a more corruptible foundation?

It seems, because of “man’s wisdom,” that faith is frequently established on sand instead of rock, that we let new principles and theories supplant the undeniable reality of God. Our faith no longer comes from the Word of God, but is often derived (or destroyed) from the simple minds of men that disbelieve truth - minds that cannot begin to grasp the mind of God. This needs to change, but we also need to appreciate that this is nothing new connected to our age, or

our society - mankind has always sought to supplant God. Read the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans and see in it the description of our world today. See the propensity of mankind to deviate from truth; there is nothing new under the sun.

But also consider this: Adam, Noah, Moses, David, etc., looked to the heavens to see the power of God displayed by point light sources that they never really appreciated. They never saw the rings of Saturn, or understood the powerful nuclear reactions of stars. They never saw the dramatic design of a spiral galaxy or the birth of star from a nebula. They never understood the gravitational forces that allow for the delicate balance and interplay between every heavenly body nor did they even begin to fathom how amazingly intricate the universe is designed. Instead, they walked in faith: *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation. By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.” (Heb 11:1-3)* And, *“For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.” (Rom 1:19-20)*

If David, a faithful man, could trust in God to rescue him from every peril, from every evil, from every sin, because of His understanding of God's endless power - not only can we do the same, but we can have even greater understanding...because His nature is clearly seen, thus, we, too, are without excuse to trust that He can rescue us!

“To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.” (Ps 22:5)

Rescuing the Addict

Jaime Harper

Rescuing the Orphans

Clint and Lacie Haynes

- On any given day, there are nearly 428,000 children in foster care in the United States.
- There are 107,918 foster children eligible for and waiting to be adopted.
- Roughly 40% of adoptions are from the U.S. foster care system.
- Every year, about 23,000 children age out of foster care without finding a permanent family. Imagine being 18 and not having a family to go home to at Holidays.
- There are slightly less than 8,000 children in foster care in TN
- There are less than 4,000 foster families willing to provide homes for foster children.

How these facts have affected our lives:

We heard the information one night at church and knew we lived in a home where there was more than enough space and love. We have been foster parents for 1.5 years, and have fostered 9 children during that time period. At this time, we have 4 children in our home.

People ask:

1. Why do you foster?
2. Have you really accomplished anything when they are sent back to a bad situation?
3. How can you stand to fall in love with children then let them go?
4. Aren't you afraid?

We have had to really think through these questions and ask ourselves the same things:

1. Easiest answer- We are commanded to take care of orphans. Psalms 82:3-4 says, "Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."
2. We tell these children about God, and God's word never returns void. Isaiah 51:11 says, "So shall my word be that goes out from my

mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” Even if every single child goes back into a bad situation, and does not grow up to be a good upstanding citizen we will not regret our decision to foster. Our success does not come from the children it comes from the Lord. Our happiness or success should never hinge on another individual. God does not promise us an easy life with lots of roses and happy things. He does not promise us that if we live for Him on earth everything will work out okay; remember Job? He promises us an eternity in Heaven in His presence.

3. It hurts to hurt, but it’s not bad to hurt.
4. We have faith that God will see us through and make a good work in us and them. Also, we could be the only people to have ever prayed for them and their parents in their whole life. Powerful things happen when your name is brought before the Lord.

An example that gives us hope and peace –

Gideon in Judges 7 Fear vs. Faith

God called Gideon to lead the Israelites to safety. Gideon was a very fearful warrior who “tested God”, but he also believed in God. He obeyed.

Lessons from this story:

1. God knows that we cannot be perfect.
2. God knows we have problems trusting.
3. God blessed Gideon even though he was fearful.
4. Where your standing matters in terms of how you face the enemy and how you fight him. When we are facing an innumerable amount of people we want to be standing with the Lord.

Why should this matter to you?

- 1) “Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”- Ps. 82:3-4
- 2) “Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.” Pro. 31:8-9

- 3) “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” James 1:27
- 4) Matthew 25:31-46

5 things you/your congregation can do right now to help Foster Children:

1. Inform the congregation of the facts and needs of foster care, and help them walk through how the process works.
2. Gather a group of people who will support foster parents. Most kids come into foster care with nothing, and for the family it is like having a newborn baby except you didn't have the nine months to prepare. Take the family food, clothes, high chairs, beds, whatever the age of the child would need.
3. Pray! God cares about these children and He is faithful to hear and answer.
4. Provide respite care, babysitting, running errands, etc. Foster parents need the most help the first few weeks.
5. Be there as emotional support. We all want to know we have a team of people behind us helping us get through.

Closing:

- How do you view your life? Is it just for you? To follow your dreams and be happy?
- “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.” 1 Corinthians 19-20

“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.” 1 Peter 2:21

Rescuing the Taken Caley King Newberry

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
***to comfort all who mourn:
to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the toil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit:
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planning of the Lord, that He may be glorified.***”

Isaiah 61:1-3

There is no easy way to summarize this class because there’s no easy way to share the story of human exploitation. There is no single answer to protection, no simple narrative attached to modern-day slavery. It’s painful and uncomfortable to hear and share without feeling like you’re exploiting young girls further by not doing justice to their story.

In a time where it’s easy to believe slavery is abolished — that we love and respect human life — there are still up to 30 million young women and children being trafficked throughout the world.

Among the worst offenders are between the Thailand and Laos border, where over half a million girls are bought, sold and traded for sex. A communist country making little effort to fight the technically-illegal brothels, Lao girls are not identified, not assisted and — too often — not remembered.

Woven International is a three-part resource working largely undetected in Laos to bring holistic healing and rescue to a

community of girls with no escape. An outreach team of a few bold women have made contacts in brothels throughout the city, spending time in them and teaching the owners that there is a way to run a profitable business without exploiting the underserved. Then, God has done and will continue to do what only He can — He moves and stirs, and an entire brothel, including the mamasans, find Him. He brings rescue.

But, without other safe working options, exploited young girls have nowhere else to turn, and the second part of the plan comes in providing safe work with fair pay through language tutoring, education, and job training. Woven provides all of these things though a safe house, bringing beauty from ashes through a community committed to their safety, while still providing safe jobs that honor their families. But Laos is 8,000 miles away, and not everyone is called to work in a third-world country to support the locals there in rescuing their young girls.

Unfortunately, we have the same problem right here at home. Every two minutes, a child is bought and sold for sex in the United States. The second-fastest growing criminal industry, the average age of a girl bought and sold is 13 years old. Traffickers prey on teens who are loners, insecure, desperate for attention, or those are who already in an abusive situation. This is where you — teenagers — have a unique opportunity to keep an eye out for friends and classmates who don't even know they're in danger.

You can find more information on this in Tennessee by visiting www.endslaverytn.com and www.hopeforjustice.org.

Spending time investing in this work can be dark and heavy, but there is such redemption witnessing the transformation. Such light in rescue. He has a story to tell and trusts us not to turn a blind eye, “to open our mouths for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute.”

“For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons and daughters by which we cry out, ‘Abba, Father!’”

Romans 8:15

How Can We Pray For You?

Michael Prentice

Race Reconciliation in The Church

Kevin Redd, MHA

The Problem

God's commandments often take a backseat to the traditions of men. Jesus called the Pharisees "hypocrites" in Mark 7 because they forsook the commandments of GOD to honor the traditions of men. America's history and influence of slavery and segregation has crept its way into the Church of Christ because we have historically chosen to honor the traditions of men rather than keep the commandments of GOD. On April 17, 1960 in a Meet the Press interview, Martin Luther King, Jr. said "it's a shame that 11 o'clock on Sunday morning is one of the most segregated hours in Christian America." Unfortunately that statement still rings true nearly 60 years later. American Christians have allowed the influence of the past to remain constant in the present to the extent that the majority of Churches of Christ are still mostly segregated – and segregated by choice. What have the traditions of men taught us about how we should worship and with whom we should worship?

The Solution

Christianity is much more than theoretical human teaching. Christianity is more than "that's how we've always done it" or "that's just how I was raised". Jesus calls out the religious leaders for honoring human teaching above GOD's law. Christians need to be called out! Sunday mornings should not be segregated but we're not going to just wake up one morning and have integrated Churches of Christ if we haven't planned to do so. The March on Selma and many other civil rights protests were planned efforts with a defined goal in mind. Shouldn't Christians plan to overcome the most segregated hour in America? Churches of Christ must first realize that the Word of GOD is calling us out for our racial division in The Church! Second, we should make specific plans to take action to release ourselves from racial hypocrisy. Finally, it's imperative that we intentionally pursue the unity that Jesus prayed for in John 17 – regardless of racial differences. Now is the time for Churches of Christ to be ONE CHURCH so let's plan it!

13 Reasons Why Not (Suicide)

Mitchell Skelton

Know the Warning Signs of Suicide

Here's an easy-to-remember mnemonic:

IS PATH WARM?

- I** Ideation
- S** Substance Abuse

- P** Purposelessness
- A** Anxiety
- T** Trapped
- H** Hopelessness

- W** Withdrawal
- A** Anger
- R** Recklessness
- M** Mood Changes

Warning Signs of Acute Risk:

Threatening to hurt or kill him or herself, or talking of wanting to hurt or kill him/herself; and or, Looking for ways to kill him/herself by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means; and/or, Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide, when these actions are out of the ordinary.

Expanded Warning Signs:

Substance (alcohol or drug) abuse or increase in
No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life
Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all of the time
Feeling trapped - like there's no way out
Hopelessness, Withdrawal from friends, family and society
Rage, uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge
Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking, Dramatic mood changes

Credit: American Association of Suicidology (www.suicidology.org)

If someone you know is at risk or if you have these feelings yourself immediately seek help! Talk to your parents, youth minister, minister, elders, school counselor or drive yourself to the ER!

What can I do if my friend is suicidal or at risk?

If you noticed you noticed your friend walking down the street perhaps texting or just in a daze and they went to step off the sidewalk into oncoming traffic, what would you do? No question, you would intervene and stop them from a mistake that would quite possibly kill them. If you recognize the warning signs of acute risk in someone or they've told you (in one way or another) that they want to end their life you must act! Forget about any stigma you might think is attached to suicide, put behind you thoughts that this person might feel betrayed, your only thought at this point is saving their life. So here's a few tips that may help until you can get them professional help:

- Do take any suicide threat very seriously.
- Do say that you are there to help.
- Don't let the individual be alone or go off alone.
- Do remove potential means (pills, knives, guns, etc.) from the area.
- Don't be confrontational in speech or body language.
- Do move slowly and make normal eye contact.
- Do be caring and don't be judgmental.
- Don't minimize her/his reason for wanting to die.
- Do let her/him have some space.
- Do say that help is available.
- Don't forget to call 9-1-1.
- Don't believe "I'm okay now."
- Don't tell them to 'snap out of it' or 'you have so much to live for.'

Suicide is an epidemic! Consider this, 78 Americans die from Opioid overdose every day; 117 Americans die by suicide every day. Homicide is the third leading cause of death among people aged 15 – 24; Suicide is SECOND. So why aren't we talking about it?

What should you do if you are considering suicide?

“I want to die.” “I can’t go on living with this pain anymore.” “If I died my pain would be over and I would no longer be a burden to anyone else.” These are just a few thoughts that might be running through your mind as you consider taking your own life. If these thoughts seem rational to you or perhaps appear to be your only way forward PLEASE follow the following steps:

1. Make a deal with yourself to DO NOTHING for 48 hours. You have endured the pain this long, you can give yourself 2 more days to consider the next few steps.
2. Are you under the care of a healthcare professional? Go to your doctor or psychiatrist’s office immediately. If the person at the desk says they are unavailable, tell them that this is a mental health emergency. If your doctor is unavailable go to the ER. (See #3)
3. Talk to your parents, youth minister, minister, elder, school counselor, friend, anyone you trust and can talk to openly. You may want to make this step before taking step 2. Having your parents or a trusted friend with you to help you work the plan can help tremendously.
4. Get rid of all the ways you have thought of to carry out your plan. Ask your parent or friend to take away all pills, knives, guns, etc.
5. Write a Safety Plan – This should include a list of things you love (personal traits, things you are looking forward to, family members, etc), A list of good distractions (going for a walk, exercising, video games, etc.), A list of people you can call (ministers, counselors, doctors, suicide hotline.). Preferably you would have this list already made out and ready to enact however the process of making this list is helpful.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Evangelism As A Lifestyle

Stephen R. Sutton

I have the opportunity preach full-time and to work as a critical care flight paramedic. God has used my life to take the Gospel to the communities in which we have served and He can use yours too! Hope you'll come learn with us as we discover how to carry the Gospel across the living room, across the classroom, across the street, across the aisle, across the break room, across the county, across the state, and across the world!

Everyone wants to be part of a growing, thriving, and Living church! It has been said that evangelism in a growing church is not a program, but rather it is a way of life. If this is true, then how do we incorporate the gospel of Christ into our lives so that others may see Him more clearly?

The answer is simple but the solution is not easy. We must become more like Christ. If we want to reach others with our lifestyle, then we must mirror the Gospel, Mind, and Life of Christ!

As Jesus encountered people, He challenged them to make a decision to become a disciple. The theme of His ministry could be summed up into two words: People Matter. Today, people still matter. And because they matter, Christians should be committed to pointing others to Christ. Come along with us as we become "pointers" and develop this idea of a lifestyle filled with evangelism!

The Gospel of Christ

The promises

The commands

The Mind of Christ

His attitude

His disposition

The Life of Christ

His behavior

His speech

Rescuing from Doubts Caused by the Teaching of Evolution

Charles Tucker

Genesis 1 tells us God created the heavens and the earth and **everything** in them, including man, who is made in His Image. Yet many in the world today believe everything we see and observe “just happened” as the result of some big explosion. They believe somehow life came to exist from that explosion. They also believe that initial life form has somehow managed to evolve over time into the amazing array of plants and animals we see today.

What does it matter? What difference does it make if you believe in the Biblical account of Creation or in evolution? There is no question more important than whether or not God exists. The answer to that question guides your answer to all other questions. Whether or not you believe in evolution influences how you read and interpret scripture, including Genesis 1.

Today, evolution is being taught as fact in our schools and universities. The so-called intellectually elite belittle those who believe in Creation, so much so that many who take a stand for intelligent design are often called “idiots” or even fired from their jobs.

What does it matter? It matters because atheist and evolutionists are doing their best to discount the validity of God’s word. God’s word is the foundation upon which our faith is built. If the foundation is undermined, it won’t be long until the building collapses. As a structural engineer, I can tell you the foundation is the most critical component to a solid building; but you don’t need to be an engineer to understand this. Jesus told us about the importance of foundations in Matthew 7 when he describes how the wise and foolish built their houses.

Sir Authur Kent, a prominent evolutionist, once said, “Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We believe it because the only alternative is special creation, and that is unthinkable.” Many would rather believe the bad science of evolution because a belief in

Creation would require a belief in God; and a belief in God would require a change in lifestyle. Evolution is bad science because it cannot explain three fundamental questions: How did life come from non-life? What is the origin of the Universe? How do you explain the design found in nature? However, John 1:3 answers all three of these questions... **“All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made.”**

What does it matter? Many people never stop to consider the real implications of believing evolution. It matters because a belief in evolution leads to the devaluation of human life. One science textbook says, “You are an animal and share a common heritage with earthworms.” Another states, “By 7 months, the fetus looks from the outside like a tiny normal baby, but it is not.” Dr. James Watson and Dr. Francis Crick won the Nobel Prize in 1962 for their discovery of the double helix arrangement of DNA; however, their belief in evolution led to some rather appalling statements. Dr. Watson once said, “No one should be thought of as alive until about three days after birth,” adding that parents could then “be allowed the choice” to keep their baby or “allow” their baby to die.

In spite of the prominence of the teaching of evolution, you can be assured of its error and fallacy! Consider for example the concept of irreducible complexity. In his book, Darwin’s Black Box, The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution, Michael Behe describes irreducible complexity this way: a single system composed of several well-matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, wherein the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning. Take, for instance, a mousetrap. It has five components - catch, hammer, spring, holding bar, and a platform. If one of these is removed, you won’t catch any mice. No scientist would argue this simple machine is irreducibly complex.

What does it matter? Darwin himself wrote, “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organism existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive slight modifications, **my theory would absolutely break down.**” (Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, emp. added) So, what about the

simple bacteria flagella? Bacteria flagella have been labeled the most efficient machines in the universe. Some run at over 100,000 rpm. Essentially, it functions as an outboard motor for the bacteria to move from one point to another. **Forty (40)** different proteins are necessary to produce and then operate the bacteria flagella. If even one is missing, then the flagella will not function or it simply will not be built. This seems to be just a little more complicated than our five-component mousetrap! Life is irreducibly complex and thus evolution is false!!

What does it matter if I believe in theistic evolution? This idea is a particularly slick scheme of the devil. It allows someone to profess they believe in God, yet believe in evolution. That is exactly what Satan wants because the person feels good about believing in God, yet they totally disregard the first words of Genesis, “In the beginning God created...” By discounting the Genesis creation account, they have, at least, unknowingly discounted the rest of scripture.

But couldn't a day in Genesis be a million or billion years? Logical thinking tells us this could have never happened. On Day 3 God made “grass, flowers, and trees.” The flying insects required for pollination weren't created until Day 5. If each day in the Genesis account were actually a million years, the plants requiring pollination for reproducing would have died. So a long time period for each day in Genesis 1 is simply not consistent with the order, or even the survival of creation. A textual study shows that the words “evening” and “morning” are used together in the Old Testament with the word “day” over 100 times in non-prophetic literature. Each time “day” refers to a literal, 24-hour day.

What does it matter? It matters because our belief in Creation is not a “blind leap of faith.” You can and should have confidence in your belief! Despite what the world says... “In the beginning God Created...”

Rescuing the Hurting (Guys Only)
Landon Self, Colton Shannon

Rescuing the Hurting (Ladies Only)
Allison Clanton

Take Route: An Evangelistic Bible Study
Philip Jenkins

FOREIGN RESCUES

self-esteem, and trying to show God's love through my care and concern for their well-being. After forming a relationship with these fragile beings, they can begin to understand what it means to have a Father who loves them, who will never abandon them, and who is worthy of their respect, obedience, and love.

Last year, 24-year-old *Meylin lived on her own for the first time far from the Children's Home, which had been her home for more than eight years. It was November 19th, a Sunday morning and her birthday, and we were voice messaging. She was getting ready to go and worship God-Almighty with the church. The night before, she had allowed a Christian young lady who was struggling financially stay with her. In the background I could hear hymns playing as they got ready. She is *not* the same person she was when she came to the Children's Home. Now, she's a faithful child of God! This is what God has accomplished in her life to this point. A young lady who willingly gets up to gather with the saints, who helps those in need, who prepares her mind for worship. I am honored that God allowed me to play a small role in her life and development.

God has not limited my ministry to children and teens. He has opened doors and guided my steps to other opportunities for reaching the lost.

In August 2016, we had a visitor, *Elvira, one Sunday morning in the congregation in Panama City. In September, I purposed to do all I could to teach her and bring her to Christ. (I had recently read "The Lunch Ladies" by Philip Jenkins and was working with a small group focused on evangelism and encouragement.) My friendship with Elvira grew and developed as we spent many hours together sharing and studying the Word. She understood her need for salvation; but, she had a problem. She was living with a man she wasn't married to, and he had no desire to get married. He also had no desire to know God and His plan for the forgiveness of sins. On May 2, 2017, she had enough money and courage to find another place for her and her two children to live. She understood her condition and had lived in fear of death or Jesus' return for months. Saturday morning, May 6th, two Christian brothers who helped teach and encourage her over the months accompanied me to help her move. After moving her things, she told me she would finally be baptized for the forgiveness of her

sins after worship the following day. Following Bible study and worship Sunday morning on May 7th she was baptized and her sins were washed away! It was one of the best days of both of our lives!!

Before I began working with the Children's Home in Panama, I heard and learned a Spanish hymn that spoke to my heart, "**You Have Come to the Seashore**" (Tú, has Venido a la Orilla). Following is my translation.

You, (Jesus) have come to the seashore,
neither searching for the rich nor the wise,
desiring only that I should follow You.

Chorus:

Lord, You have looked me in the eyes,
And smiling, You have spoken my name;
I have left my boat in the sand,
By Your side, I will seek another sea.
You, know well what I have;
In my boat there's no gold or swords,
Only nets and my work.
You, fisherman of other lakes,
The eternal desire of those who hope,
You call me, "good friend".

This song reminds me that I am simply an ordinary person, not rich or wise, who God lovingly called by name (*Christian*) to leave my life and go where He leads me. I am extremely privileged to work in foreign rescues in the Lord's kingdom.

The opportunity for you to do extraordinary work in the Lord in foreign rescues is awaiting!

Will you add *your* name to the previous list?

***indicates name has been changed**

PARTNERS 4 AFRICA is a non-profit organization seeking to provide physical and spiritual relief for communities in southern Africa.

We strive to alleviate the grim realities of many Africans by providing food, water and clothing in the countries of Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and South Africa. Through good works, we bear the good news of Jesus Christ and the spiritual food, water, and clothing that he offers.

Amazon Christian Academy

This is a major step forward for God's kingdom in southern Africa. The Zimbabwean government has deeded seventy acres of land for the churches of Christ to build a Christian High School. This will be a place where hundreds of children daily will be taught and shown the power of God transforming their lives. We have a functioning board , faculty preparing to lead and teach. Construction has begun on staff residences and in October we plan to begin the freshman classroom wing.

The M.O.M. Project

The M.O.M. Project targets impoverished children in communities of Swaziland and Zimbabwe. The meals we provide include corn meal, beans, two to three vegetables, and a meat. Because we purchase this food locally, it only costs 50 US cents for one meal.

One of the grim realities of southern Africa is the existence of orphans and other vulnerable children in every community. This phenomenon is partly due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic sweeping the sub-continent. Other contributing factors are poverty, unemployment, and other socio-economic problems.

Currently we have been privileged to:

- Feed tens of thousands in rural areas of southern Africa
- Feed 700 children on a weekly basis
- Assist with feeding programs in various inner cities

- Accompany meals with Bible lessons

The D.A.D. Project

The D.A.D. Project began in 2005 and is funded by a variety of individuals, churches, and Healing Hands International. Partners 4 Africa drills wells in locations where water had previously been diluted or absent. Water provides vegetation, sanitation, and growth. Water gives life. Through this wonderful effort, brevity of life is reversed and opportunities to share Jesus are multiplied.

- Life expectancy in Zimbabwe is 37 years because of the absence of clean drinking water
- More than half of Africa's people lack access to safe drinking water (UN)
- Women walk up to three miles daily to retrieve water for their families
- Of all the renewable water available in Africa, each year only 4% can be used
- Most Africans lack wells, canals, pumps, reservoirs, and other irrigation systems

Currently we have been privileged to:

- Drill 50 wells in the past 8.5 years
- Provide a water system for a clinic in Matabeleland

The A.C.T. Project

The A.C.T. Project (African Container Transport) focuses on sending gently used clothing and math and science textbooks to schools and churches across Southern Africa. Each year, Partners ships two 40-foot containers filled with clothes and books. One container supplies 30 congregations, who in turn, distribute to needy families and schools in their community.

Currently:

- Shipped 25 containers in the last 8 years to Zimbabwe and Swaziland
- Partnered with over 50 congregations in 7 states who contribute to these containers
- Collected over 4,000 boxes of clothing annually
- Leadership Seminars
 - 25 annually in 5 countries working with over 300 Ministers and Elders
 - Attendees include preachers from: Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa Zimbabwe and Swaziland
- Marriage Seminars
 - 4 annually in 3 countries
 - Working with 80 couples
- Youth Outreach and Spiritual Growth
 - 2 Regional Bible Camps
 - 2 Youth lectureships
 - Over 1200 in attendance
- Weekly Bible Studies in 5 countries
- WBS
 - Over 17,000 students in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Swaziland
- Campaigns
 - 4 in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Swaziland in 2017

S.H.I.N.E Project

Spiritually Helping in Nurturing and Equipping through leadership seminars, marriage seminars, youth outreach and spiritual growth, WBS and lectureships.

HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

1. School Drives: Shoes fro Africa, pencils, crayons, notebooks etc.
2. Bible Class Projects: Sponsor a well, clothes for containers, collect change for feeding orphans, bibles for Africa.
3. Y.E.S. (Youth Exalting the Sun): Uniting wuth youth in Africa for joint evangelism and outreach campaigns to Africa.

Choosing Whom to Rescue: God's Rescue of Peter & James, Acts 12:1-19

Chris Fry

1. Personal story

- a)** Childhood lawn business with dad
 - 1. Go to FHU
 - 2. Personal evangelism course – study with Dad
 - 3. Dad converted – FHU made flier
- b)** Formed mission team at FHU
- c)** Trained to be missionaries at Great Cities Missions
- d)** Started church in Paraguay in 2004
 - 1. Baptisms, ministries, community service
 - 2. Church has planted 2 more churches
- e)** Move to Dyersburg in 2011
- f)** Began work at Great Cities Missions in 2014
 - 1. Church plants in Mexico and Colombia
 - 2. Aid Efforts in Colombia
 - 3. Future teams and churches in Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, and Paraguay

2. God sees our trials (1-4)

- a)** Herod harasses the church.
 - 1. This is Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, who ruled in the days of Jesus' birth and ordered the Bethlehem children to be murdered (Matthew 2:1-16). He comes from a family of evil doers.
 - 2. He stretched out his hand to harass the church. No doubt, this was done because it made him politically popular.
- b)** Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. This is a new development in the history of the church. James is the first of the twelve who followed Jesus to be martyred.
 - 1. James, the brother of John, in particular, might have thought to have been "protected." He was one of the special intimates of Jesus, often mentioned with his brother John and with Peter (Matthew 17:1, 26:37, Mark 5:37, 9:2, 14:33; Luke 5:37, 9:2, and 14:33).

2. Jesus promised no special protection for even His closest followers; He warned them to be ready for persecution (Matthew 10:16-26).
3. Eusebius relates a story from Clement of Alexandria, who says that the soldier who guarded James before the judge was so affected by his witness that he declared himself a Christian also and was willingly executed for Jesus alongside of James (Eusebius, Church History 2.9.2-3).

c) Herod imprisons Peter.

1. Sixteen soldiers, four for each watch, kept guard over the apostle, with two soldiers chained to the prisoner and two watching the doors. This was extra special security.
2. He waited till after Passover to bring him before the people.

3. God hears our prayers (5-17)

a) The church prays for Peter constantly (12:5).

1. The word constant also has the idea of earnest; literally, the word pictures someone stretching out all they can for something. "The verb ektenos is related to ektenes, a medical term describing the stretching of a muscle to its limits." (MacArthur)
2. Luke uses this same word ektenos for the agonizing prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44).
3. Earnest prayer demonstrates that our heart cares passionately about the things God cares about. We fulfill Jesus' promise, "If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7).

b) Amazingly, Peter sleeps. Could it be that he took seriously what Jesus told him in John 21:18-19? Peter laid hold of that promise and committed the entire situation to God.

c) Peter awakens to an angel and he obeys (12:7). For Peter to be rescued, he had to obey the angel—even if he didn't understand what was going on.

d) The angel leads Peter pass the guards and through the gate to the city (12:9). Peter then realizes he is alone.

e) "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and *rescued* me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen." (Acts 12:11)

4. **God wants to rescue everyone.**

- a) Peter would later write in 2 Peter 3:9b, “He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”
- b) Love + Truth = Mission
- c) God’s desire to rescue others involves you. He has chosen to use us to be His instruments to rescue others.

5. **Why does Peter live and James die?**

- a) The only true answer is the sovereign will of God.
 - 1. God allowed Herod to kill James, but He kept him from harming Peter. It was the throne in heaven that was in control, not the throne on earth.
 - 2. It is comforting to know that, no matter how difficult the trials or disappointing the news, God is still on the throne and has everything under control.
 - 3. We may not understand His ways, but we know His will is best.
- b) Did God refuse to rescue James? No, ultimately he was rescued by Jesus’ death on the cross. He enjoyed his reward a few years before Peter.

6. **What can you do to be a part of God’s rescue plan?**

- a) Begin in earnest prayer (Acts 12:5).
- b) Discover what God has gifted you to do and be (1 Cor. 12:12-27).
- c) Begin now. Don’t wait to start (Gal 6:9-10).

Obey when the opportunity arises—even if you do not understand (Isa. 6:8).

To Honduras With Love

Tracy Love

In June of 2005, I had the opportunity to go with the North Jackson Church of Christ to Tegucigalpa, Honduras to be a part of a group of men that would construct a “house” for a chosen family. Once arriving in the large city, we traveled out to the building site to begin the construction.

Although the area around Tegucigalpa is very beautiful, it is evident upon closer observation; there is an ever-present atmosphere of hopelessness. Among the many families devastated by a lack of resources the family of twelve that we would be building a house for had succumbed to a life of little. The family had literally dug out of the earth large amounts of dirt, creating a large room that they covered with a few pieces of tin to make their dwelling place.

Immediately we began to build a 16 x 20 structure for the family. The small shack was a simple construction with a concrete floor, four wood sided walls and a tin roof.

In observing the gratitude and the raw emotions of the family members, you would of thought that they had been chosen as the recipients of an HGTV Dream Home.

It was at that specific moment in time that I knew that among the many other blessings in my Christian life, I would be making an annual trip to Tegucigalpa Honduras to be involved in missions.

The following year in 2006, the elders from the North Jackson Church of Christ approached me with the challenge to begin leading the mission effort of Honduras. Although such a a challenge seemed overwhelming at first, I knew with the help of God, great things could be accomplished for his Glory!

For the last eleven years God has blessed me with the opportunity to lead the Wayne County Mission Team to Honduras. We have worked hand in hand with the De Le Vega Church of Christ a congregation that has seen amazing growth and outreach within the grand city of Tegucigalpa. In our twelve years of working with our brothers and sisters in this congregation we have seen the church grow from a small group of approximately sixty faithful Christians to a committed membership of Five Hundred. In addition we have witnessed this church family plant four additional congregations in the city and countryside. One such congregation is the Guanabano Church of Christ that was established due to our direct work with the annual food distribution at the Tegucigalpa City Dump. Annually we go to the city dump to deliver family food bags, shoes, etc. for the many citizens of Honduras who work and even live in the dump. This place is like none other I have ever been to in my life and yet it is a field “white unto harvest “ and ready for the laborers. Brother Giovanni Moreno, the minister of the De le Vega Church of Christ, recognized the possibilities of this work and began to make visits to the city dump establishing relationships that led to baptisms and to eventually establishing a congregation of the Lord’s Church just a few yards from the entry to the dump.

In addition to house construction, feeding the poor, orphan home visits and support; we have also work closely with the Baxter Institute, a preacher training school in the heart of the city. Baxter Institute presently has eighty students enrolled, most of which are bible majors who come to the institute from several countries of Central and South America. These students will likely go into the missions fields of their country and either help to enrich a present established congregation or begin to plant a new congregation of the Lord’s Church. It is our intent while visiting Tegucigalpa to provide support and encouragement to the Baxter Institute Students and help them reach their long-term goals of working in the Lord’s Church.

Adjacent to the Baxter Institute is a medical clinic. It is in this location that we have established a optometrist clinic. Presently we see approximately 80 patients a day, with eye exams, fitting them with prescription eye glasses, treating them for mild eye diseases, and or referring them for additional eye surgery. We also work in the medical and dental clinics when needed. Great doors of opportunity have been opened at this clinic to share the good news of Jesus with the patients. Many have been added to the Lord's Church as a direct result of this work.

As Christ ministered to both the body and soul of those whom He met daily, it is our goal to do likewise. God has blessed those of us of the Wayne County Mission Team with the opportunity to see first hand what can be accomplished when you "give a cup of water" in the name of Jesus. (Matthew 10:42)

Once while reporting the work of Honduras to a congregation of the Lord's church I was approached by a well-meaning brother who said "You know Tracy, what you all do down there in that country is just a drop in the bucket." I was startled at first but then I replied, "Yes sir you are correct but every drop counts." Our Lord assures us that if we "give a cup or water in His name we will in nor wise lose our reward." Every cup of water is made up of many single drops of water. We need you to help fill the cup! What can You Do?

Pray - Pray for the work. Pray that God may expand our opportunities to tell others about the Hope in Jesus Christ.

Support - Support the effort financially

Go – We welcome you to travel with us to Honduras and participate first hand in the great work.

Rescuing Nicaraguan Souls One Student at Time

David McCrary

In 1996 David McCrary and his wife Brenda began going to Nicaragua yearly on medical campaigns. In 2002 they began organizing campaigns there and on their first campaign in the city of Leon saw the great need for educating the very poor children who were not in school. This led to Nicaragua Christian School, Inc., which this year has 586 students enrolled and will experience its very first High School Graduation.

Rescuing Souls in Haiti Through Medical Missions

R. Scott Miskelly

Personal experiences from our work in Haiti that have motivated our family to continue medical missions, evangelism, and even adoption from Haiti.

Why do we even try to evangelize in Haiti?

Ephesians 1:1-23

Why did God create us? It pleased God to make us.

What is our purpose here on earth? To bring glory to God.

Christians are adopted into God's family through Jesus's redemptive sacrifice and then become sealed with the Holy Spirit awaiting our future inheritance.

Our job is to teach every man about God's will for them.

How we organize and operate a week long medical mission in Santo, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Our class period will consist of discussions about organizing and running medical clinics in the country of Haiti.

Earthquakes could not stop us.

Dealing with the death of Roberta Edwards, our missionary in Santo.

What can you do?

The last part of our class will consist of discussions on how young Christians can prepare for short term mission work, medical mission work, or vocational mission work whether it is in the medical field or some other profession.

Southern Man in the Middle of China

Matthew Moore

Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would do Mission Work. I grew up wanting to live out in the country with my truck. I never imagined that I would go to China, in a city of 11 million people to do Mission Work.

If you ever want to really see who you are or see how much you can grow spiritually, change the environment you are comfortable in and see how God can change you for the better!

When we only look at the Church in America we only see a small portion of God's Church. As followers of Christ, we have family living all over the world. There are so many people that are looking and searching for a better life.

They are looking for God, even if they don't know it. They just need to be rescued from the World. There are millions of people that are lost and searching and needing direction.

In China, there is no official religion, most of them only care about getting an education so that they can get a job in order to make more money, have a family and the process starts over again. There are so many who are wanting and willing to search for a deeper reason for this life. To have and find the joy that God's salvation brings to their lives.

Of course all of this starts with you though. You have to be willing to say "Here am I, Send ME!" We have to be willing to go out and rescue those who are lost. Even when we think we are not qualified or able. I have a degree in computer science, yet because of my faith in God I have been in church work and missions ever since I graduated.

Growing up, I only preached one Wednesday night lesson when I was in high school and now I preach and teach every week. If you are willing to allow God to help change you, He can change every aspect of your life!

When you are willing to step outside of your comfort zone and go to a foreign country, a lot of different living situations happen.

Some are easy to deal with, others are just interesting, and others you just have to push through. One of the main differences with the work in China is that you are not allowed to openly worship God in China. You meet in house churches, in secret, where you cannot put any signs that say Church of Christ. It means you are in smaller groups, so you are closer with the whole church that meets there.

For the first month or so that we were in China, there was only the five of us who had come (me and four girls). In our house church I was leading all five parts of worship. This experience has helped me appreciate all that goes into a worship service and having other Christians to fellowship with. This did not last long though.

You learn how to get people interested and find ways to share the good news with them. One of the issues we faced at the beginning was how to find God's Word both in English and Chinese, but we were able to find bilingual Bibles after learning more about our city. That's when things started to change for us.

Once the word spread that there were people willing to teach the Bible, we started meeting all sorts of people. We had young kids, we had college students, we had young families, and even grandparents wanting to come and hear the good news.

We grew so much that after the first year we had to move into a bigger apartment to hold all the people. By the third year we were working with our group and another group across town.

If you are willing to go and rescue, there are so many that need to hear the good news. God will give the increase.

We went from just five of us to working with two very active full groups every Sunday. We were having Bible studies lasting over three hours multiple nights a week. God will show you people who are willing to be rescued from Satan.

One of the many lessons we learned in China is that people need to see what it means to be a Christian in our everyday living. We spent real time with them. We cooked with them, served with them, taught them, prayed with them, and worshiped with them.

We were able to focus on the mission of Christ and study with them. We didn't have tradition to worry about. I never wore a suit in China. We just lived out the Bible.

So what Talents are you going to use for God. God is willing to transform your life if you will allow Him to. Even when you aren't 100% sure of what you can do for God, He can use you to rescue lost souls. He will transform one talent and make it two. He will give you new experiences that help you to grow for His Glory!

The French-speaking world

Aaron Palmer

Did You Know?!

- 750 million people will speak French by the year 2050!
- The number of French speakers in the world has tripled over the last fifty years.
- There are over 100 million students in the world learning French right now.
- French is the official language of 37 countries and territories and is widely spoken in at least 10 more.
- French and English are the only two languages used as official languages on 5 continents.
- French is the second most frequently taught foreign language in the United States.
- In the United States, there is 1 member of the Lord's church for every 240 people in the general population. In the French-speaking world (roughly 40 countries), there is only 1 member of the Lord's church for every 44,000 people in the general population!
- Number of missionaries for the Lord's church currently in French-speaking fields: 5 (4 in Europe)
- Average age of French missionaries: 60 years
- Will you consider rising up, learning French, and going into one of these nations starving to hear the Gospel of Christ?

There are six realizations from Isaiah 6 that can inspire us to rise up for this work. Will you too be touched by the awesome nature of God, just as Isaiah and go into these fields?

1. God is holy (Isa. 6:1-4)
2. I am not... (Isa. 6:5)
3. I'm redeemed! Shouldn't this make me want to tell others? (Isa. 6:6-7)
4. God only needs those who are **willing** (Isa. 6:8-9)
5. God is focused on faithfulness, not numbers (Isa. 6:9-10)
6. God will **always** need workers! (Isa. 6:11-13)

What steps can I take to get involved in French missions?

- 1) Enroll in a French class (send a message to aaron.palmer06@gmail.com to find out how...)
- 2) Come visit an actual French-speaking worship service in Middle Tennessee at...
Crieve Hall Church of Christ
4806 Trousdale Drive, Nashville, TN
Every Sunday night in Room 313
- 3) Have you already taken 2-3 years of high school French? You might know enough to be a French World Bible School Teacher! Contact Garrett McGilvray for more information at garrett@ecolemondialedelabible.net

If you want to find out more about French missions or possibly get involved in a campaign, please send messages to the following people:

Barry Baggott: fwo.ceb@gmail.com

Doyle Kee: Thekees@bluewin.ch

Bren White: ofwmissions@gmail.com

“A NATION CANNOT CLEANSE ITSELF UNTIL IT TAKES UP THE SCRIPTURES”

RICHARD RIEHN

Since 1961 Eastern European Mission has been providing Bibles and study materials to people that were denied God’s Word for more than 70 years. Just in the last 5 years we have seen an increase of books grow from just over 200k to nearly 1.2 million in 2017.

Why the increase? It is because the people in Eastern Europe understand what it is like to live without God’s Word and the hope of His RESCUING POWER.

Join me as we take a look at how God’s Word can transform nations. Learn how nation’s leaders in Eastern Europe are opening their doors and promoting Jesus within their countries because they see how the scriptures are their best hope for a brighter future.

One education leader in Ukraine said it best when she said, “A nation cannot cleanse itself until it takes up the SCRIPTURES.”

**** Come learn how Youth Groups in America are making it possible for children in Eastern Europe to have Bibles to study in public schools.**

**** This class is a visual (PowerPoint) journey with supporting stories of God’s productive power.**

**** A short 3-minute video will also be shown to demonstrate how Jesus is the source of RESCUE for the Muslim world.**

EU 2018 Core Curriculum

Rescuing the Lost

It is hard to deny that a basic theme of scripture is rescue. It is God's desire to rescue the world from sin and restore it to the way he intended it to be. It is about restoring relationships. God is not a God of destruction, but of rescue *from* destruction and restoration to perfection. The Flood was more about restoration than destruction. The crucifixion was more about life than death. It is God's will for all to be restored, and it should be our will too.

Jesus' life was about restoration: healing sick, removing demons, raising dead—restoring what once was. Jesus' command was to go and make disciples (Matt. 28). Restore them. They belong this way, because they are just like you. His life was lived to restore our lives.

Evangelism is a process of restoration. It is the process of restoring the lost in the world back to the unity with God they were made for.

Seem overwhelming?

Do you realize what we are called to do?

Do you know what you're doing?

Do you even know where to start?

EU is focusing on the idea of Rescue this year. David's prayer in Psalm 51 is a beautiful expression of the journey that a sinner takes when they are restored to God. He acknowledges his sin. He admits that he can only be saved by God's grace. And once he is assured of that grace, the only reasonable response is to want to turn others who are lost to the same salvation that he had found.

One of the first things we must do as evangelists is to let our hearers know we, like David, are all in need of God. We are all sinners! Read the following quote:

“The church is nothing but the world under the sign of Baptism.”

Robert Farrar Capon—

The Romance of the Word

It is our privilege to share with the lost the forgiveness God has given us. The lost don't need Jesus any more than we do, just as we don't need Jesus any less than they do. We are all in need of forgiveness and restoration.

It is with that mindset that we must begin our evangelistic conversations. It isn't about proving a point, but leading a soul to the only one who saves. This class focuses on an evangelistic method that uses *one verse* to show how all humanity is in need of God and the great lengths God has gone to in order to save us.

The simple evangelistic technique described here has been borrowed from Going Public with Your Faith by William Carr Peel and Walt Larimore. (Zondervan, 2003). Much of the information comes straight from *Chapter 10: The Whole Truth*.

***Don't forget—the following evangelistic conversation will not and should not be the first conversation you have with someone. You need to be prayerful and attentive to God and his timing and the heart of your friend. Make sure they are ready and open to spiritual things. And please know this isn't the only 'method' for evangelism. This is a simple conversation that allows you to share the gospel if you only know one verse!

The purpose of this simple conversation is to give the listener an overall understanding of what God has done for us through Jesus in a succinct, easy to understand way. It should give the one who is sharing greater confidence because of its simplicity and should give the listener more willingness to listen since it is only one verse.

The Message in a Verse

Getting Started

Ask your friend, “If I could show you one verse from the Bible that explains the basic message of all sixty-six books of the Bible at one time, would you be interested in hearing about it?”

If they respond negatively, don’t push things, but don’t just walk away. What matters is the person and the relationship, not the technique.

If they respond positively, find some paper and a pencil, write out **Romans 6:23** and draw **Diagram 1**.

(Tip: Remember to involve the person throughout this conversation. This isn’t a monologue.)

The Bad News

- 9) Draw a box around the word ‘**wages**’ and then write ‘**wages**’ in the diagram. (see Diagram 2)

***Ask questions such as:

What concept comes to mind when I use the word *wages*?

What does it mean to you to receive *wages*?

What happens if you don’t get paid for what you do? Is that just or right?

(Tip: From their answers, you will learn more about their belief system.)

Draw a box around the word **‘sin’** and write it below ‘wages’ in the diagram. (see diagram 3)

***Ask questions like, ‘What does the word *sin* mean to you?’

(Tip: LISTEN. Don’t argue definitions or appropriateness.)

- a. When they finish, explain how sin is more than breaking a rule, but it is a failure to follow God. Sin literally means “to fall short, miss the mark.”
- b. Share your own failure. Don’t have to be specific, but let them know you are no different than them! This makes your listener less likely to feel judged.
***Ask questions like, ‘What do you think God thinks when we sin?’
- c. Before going further, get some agreement that *everyone* sins.

Put a box around the word **‘death’** and write it in the diagram. (see diagram 4)

***Say something like, “If we sin, we’ve got a wage coming, and the Bible says

the wages of sin is death.”

5. Ask questions to see how they feel about death.
What comes to mind when you hear the word *death*?
Is death a scary thing to think about for you?
How do you feel when God says that the wages of sin is separation from Him? That’s pretty bad news, isn’t it?

6. Briefly explain how the Bible talks about more than physical death. Explain spiritual death (separation from God, the source of life).

The Good News

Now you begin to explain more about your personal gospel tract you are creating for your friend. You will share with them that the separate boxes you've drawn represents the gulf between the first three words (wages, sin, death) and the words you are going to write on the other side. You can recap how sin separates us from God and puts a big gulf between us. Draw a box around the word '**God**' and write it in on the right side of the diagram. Draw a box around the word '**but**' and put in the middle of the drawings (diagram 5). Say something like, "This small word '*but*' tells us there is good news ahead!"

- Draw a box around the word '**gift**' and write it in diagram above the word 'God.' (diagram 6)

***Ask questions about gifts.

- i. What's a gift? If you buy something, is it a gift?
- ii. Can you earn a gift? If you earn a gift, is it really a gift?

(Tip: Make sure the listener understands what a gift is. "The motivation of the gift is internal in the giver, not external in the receiver. If something is given with a price or a condition, it is not a gift." GPWYF, p. 159).

- iii. When does a gift become a gift? (object lesson with a pen—"When did the gift become yours? When I gave it or when you took it?")
- iv. What will this gift from God cost us?

(Tip: This might be a good time to spend some time talking about the listener’s concept of God. You can do this by asking questions: “Who is God to you? What’s your feeling about God? Where did you get those feelings?”)

- 10) If your listener is still with you, draw a box around the words ‘**eternal life**’ and write it in the box below the word ‘God.’(diagram 7)
***Spend a few moments getting their thoughts on eternal life.

The Bridge

Before you continue, try and briefly summarize what you have discussed thus far. Make sure they understand the gap that exists between what we deserve and what God is offering. Try to get them to understand that we can do nothing to bridge that gap. We, as the sinful, separated people cannot come close to a holy, just God. That is why it was up to God to build the bridge.

1. Draw a box around the words ‘**Christ Jesus our Lord**’ and write it in the gap, drawing a cross as the bridge. (diagram 8)
2. Take a few moments and talk about who Jesus is.
 1. Jesus—the man. Underline ‘Jesus’ on the diagram. He was completely human, just like us. God became like us!
 2. Jesus—the Lord. Underline ‘Lord’ on the diagram. He was divine and he demonstrated his power. Death has no power over him because he is God.
 3. Jesus—his mission. Underline ‘Christ’ on the diagram. Christ means “anointed one.” Jesus was anointed by God the Father to come to earth and Jesus’ mission was to redeem the world!

Wrapping Up

Ask your listener questions like, “What do you think about all this? Do you need some time to think about it? Can you think of anything that would keep you from making a decision to trust Jesus and become his follower?” Don’t pressure. Allow them to take their time, even if it means they don’t make a decision that day. Allow them to keep the drawing.

What next?

Hopefully your listener now has a greater understanding of the message of the Gospel. But even if this conversation is over for now, don’t let the relationship end. Ask your friend if there is another time you could get together to talk more about the gospel and the message of Jesus. Here are some suggested verses, also from the book of Romans, that would be great stepping stones as you help your friend inch closer to making a decision for Jesus Christ.

Romans 2:13—Obedience, Repentance

“For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.”

Ask questions like:

5. What does *obedience* mean to you? Why does God expect more of us than just hearing his message?
6. Are there consequences to disobedience? What do you think those are?
7. What keeps most people from being obedient?
8. What should motivate you to be obedient?

Romans 10:5-13—Belief, Confession

(Verse 9) *“If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”*

Ask questions like:

4. Do you really *believe* something if you don't act on it? What does it say about belief if it is not followed by action?
5. What do you think is the purpose of *confession*? Why is it important that our faith be both *vocal* and *public*?
6. What does it mean when you say ‘Jesus is Lord’? What are you claiming him as? What does that demand of you? What is he to you?
7. Is there anything that stands in the way of you publicly proclaiming that ‘Jesus is Lord’?

Romans 6:1-14—Repentance, Baptism

(Verse 4) *“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”*

Ask questions like:

5. According to these verses, what does baptism symbolize? Why do you think God wants us to participate in that?
6. How does *freedom* come from *death*?(verse 7)
7. Why is it so important that we get rid of the *old self*? (verse 6)

What stands in the way of you dying to yourself and living to God through baptism?

Diagram 1

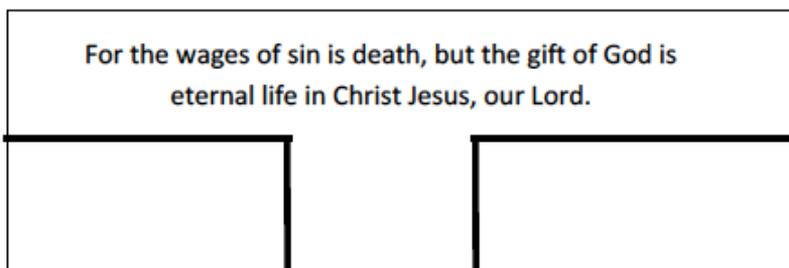


Diagram 2

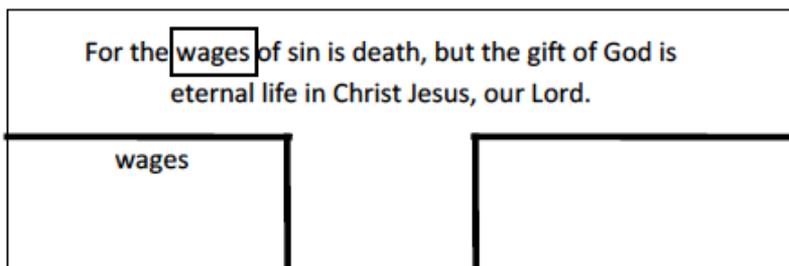


Diagram 3

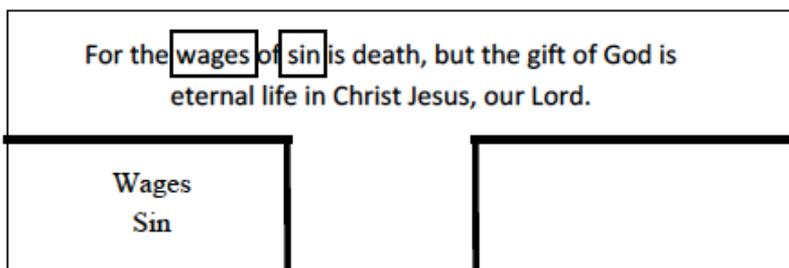


Diagram 4

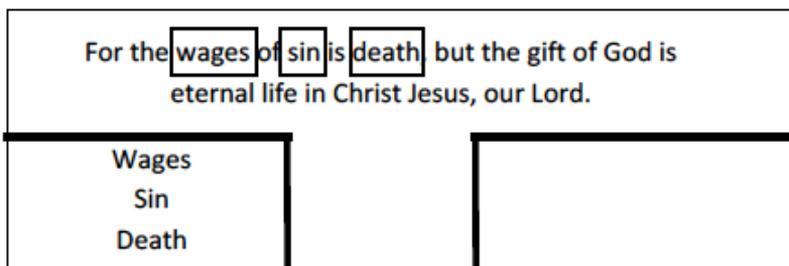


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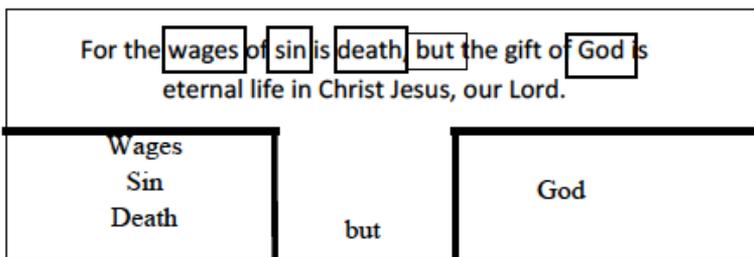


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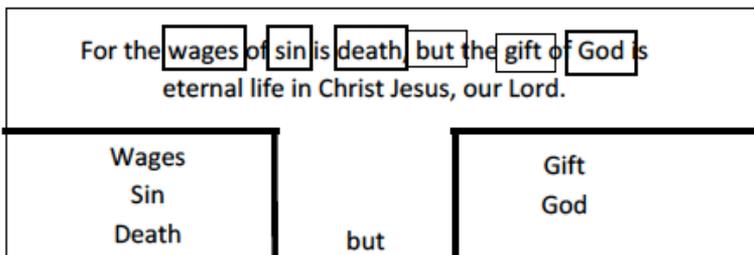


Diagram 7

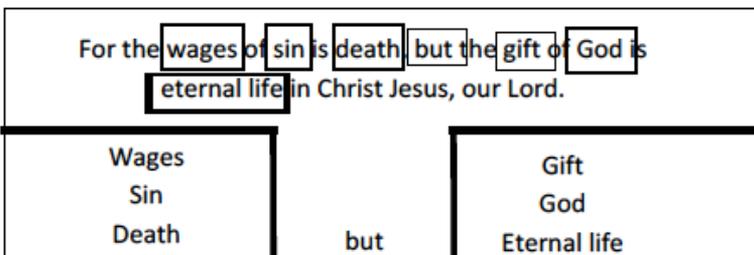
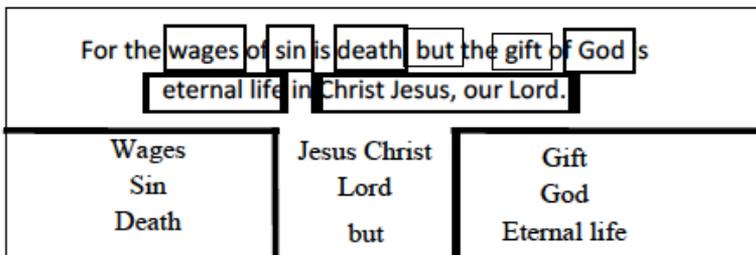


Diagram 8



2018 EU Core Curriculum

Rescuing The Fallen

Introduction

This class is about reaching out to Christian brothers and sisters who once were strong spiritually and in fellowship with the church but have fallen away. We will learn what it takes to become “spiritual therapists” and rescue those who have been injured or have become weak spiritually.

Attitudes and Attributes Needed by Spiritual Therapists

Please list below the attitudes and attributes that you think would be helpful to one who is reaching out to those who have fallen away from the Lord and from the church.

Reasons People Fall Away Please list below the reasons that people fall away from the Lord and from the church.

Spiritual Therapy

Take notes on the strategies for spiritual therapy given in the scriptures below.

Sin: What is needed most for restoration when sin causes spiritual injury?

Luke 13:3: _____.

Colossians 1:13-14: _____.

Ephesians 6:10-11: _____

_____.

Feelings Hurt By Fellow Christians: How can we help a brother or sister recover from this spiritual injury?

Matthew 5:23-26 _____.

Romans 12:18 _____

_____.

Colossians 3:2 _____.

Gradual Drifting Away From God and/or The Church: What is needed most for rescue when one drifts away gradually from God or the church?

James 4:7: _____.

Matthew 18:12-14: _____

_____.

Conclusion

Think of someone in your life who has drifted away and become weak spiritually. Write this person's name

_____.

Make this person a priority in your prayer life. Ask God to help you reach out to this friend and restore him to spiritual health.

Identify what may have caused your friend to fall away.

Firmly establish your friendship and care for this person.

Prove yourself to be trustworthy.

Don't be afraid to give spiritual encouragement – this is the highest form of love.

Write down what steps are necessary for your friend to be restored to spiritual health.

Go to God in prayer and commit to be a spiritual therapist to others.

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EVANGELISM UNIVERSITY is a program designed to provide training in evangelism for the future of the Lord's church. It is overseen by the eldership of the Savannah Church of Christ and it is directed by a board of men from varying congregations.

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EU2 COLLEGE
SATURDAY SCHEDULE

(Savannah Church Building)

9:00-9:15 Welcome and Singing

9:15-10:00 Kirk Brothers

10:15 Core 1

11:05 Core 2

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Elective 1

1:50 Elective 2

2:40 Elective 3

3:30 Dismiss

EU2 – COLLEGE CLASSES

ELECTIVE TOPICS

(these classes will be held in the Savannah Church of Christ building)

1. Rescuing the One in Crisis (Acts 16:16-34)

Will Sharp

2. Rescue Me From My Excuses (Moses/Gideon)

Jared Bailey

3. Rescuing a Foreigner (The Ethiopian Treasurer)

Seth Ferguson

4. Rescuing the Written Off (Zacchaeus)

Ryan Gallagher

5. Rescue me from Worldliness (Rich Young Ruler)

Colt Mahana

6. Rescuing a Terrorist (Saul)

Mark Ray

7. Rescuing Me from Myself (The Prodigal Son)

Rick Brumback

8. Rescuing the Outcast (demon possessed Man)

Josh James

EVANGELISM UNIVERSITY TWO is a program designed to encourage college students to share their faith on campus. It's a weekend that provides not only material for personal Bible studies but also practical application lessons to help further their faith and those they study with throughout the year. It is

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