



A GLOBAL GOSPEL IN A WORLD OF RELIGIONS

Part 3: Evangelism & Conversion

Are you ready for round two? Here we go. Some of you were complaining that we were going a little too slow in first one, so we're going to pick it up. I'm sorry.

Perhaps tonight you're believing the gospel for the first time. My brothers and sisters who have worked in persecuted areas around the world tell me the first thing they do when somebody believes in the gospel is they sit down with that person and say, "Now, make a list of everybody you know and then circle the five people who are least likely to kill you or hurt you for sharing the gospel—and start there."

What Is Evangelism?

We're about to talk about evangelism, but we're not moving into a realm of "what some Christians do." Evangelism is just the overflow. You believe this gospel, then you proclaim this gospel. "Evangel" is another word for gospel. So evangelism is the proclamation of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit with the aim of persuading other people to repent and believe in Christ—which is exactly what Jesus told His disciples to do.

Right after He died on the cross and rose from the dead and just before He ascended into heaven, Jesus said, "*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*" (Acts 1:8). In other words, they would evangelize. They would proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Evangelism Always Means Proclamation

Think about this definition of evangelism. Evangelism always means proclamation, and it always involves communicating the message of the gospel using language the lost can understand. That's important, because this is one of those areas where the church—particularly in our culture—has totally misconstrued evangelism. We say, "I witness with my life," or "I witness by being a good person. I witness by putting a smile on my face every day when I go to work or live in my neighborhood." Well, hopefully that's a given. Smile—that's great.

But Jesus wasn't saying, "You're going to have the power of the Holy Spirit so you can smile all the time." He's saying, "You're going to have the power of the Holy Spirit so you can speak." That's

what a witness does. He doesn't get on the witness stand and smile. He speaks. He says something. The word for "witness" there in Act 1:8 is *martureo*. It's the word from which we get "martyr." Those guys in Acts 1 who heard those words lost their lives—and it wasn't because they were nice. It's because they spoke. Brothers and sisters in India right now are losing their lives, and it's not because they're smiling and doing good deeds. It's because they're proclaiming the gospel. Romans 10:13-17 says,

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

Evangelism Is Proclamation of the Gospel

Evangelism involves proclaiming the full message of the holiness and love of God, the sinfulness of every human being, the atoning sacrifice and victorious resurrection of Jesus for our sins, and the necessity of repentance and faith for eternal salvation—all that we just explored.

Evangelism is not just generic "God talk" or mentioning Jesus in a sentence: "Oh, now I've shared the gospel." That's not evangelism. Jehovah's Witnesses and cults around the world talk about Jesus all the time, but they're not evangelizing. They're not telling the good news. They're telling bad news about how to earn the favor of God based on false teaching. That's not good news at all. Romans 1:16-17 says,

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

Evangelism Is the Proclamation of the Gospel in the Power of the Holy Spirit

Evangelism requires good news and all that it contains: proclamation of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. We present the gospel message, but only the Holy Spirit can turn a person's heart and mind toward Christ. I have listed in your notes many verses that show how the Holy Spirit fills people for the purpose of proclamation—of speaking. Just like I mentioned with the preaching professor earlier, when we proclaim the gospel we're doing so in dependence on God to bring people from death to life. Acts 4:31 says,

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

Evangelism Has the Aim of Persuading People to Repent and Believe in Christ

That doesn't mean we don't invite people to respond in repentance and faith. Evangelism has the aim of persuading people to repent and believe in Christ. Evangelism is more than mere presentation of the gospel—it's persuasion with the gospel. Evangelism necessarily includes a call for the hearer to repent of sin and believe in Christ. The call to repent and believe is part of the gospel. It was the "P," Personal Response, in the GOSPEL acronym. Acts 2:37-41 says,

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

Recap: What is Evangelism?

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

What is Conversion?

This leads us to the last term, which we've used already in talking about conversion patterns. So, what is conversion? Biblically, it's the divinely enabled personal response of individuals to the gospel in which they turn from their sin and themselves—they repent—and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord—they believe. I hope this makes sense in light of everything we've seen.

Conversion Is a Divinely Enabled Response to the Gospel

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

We talked about this. Dead people can't come to life on their own. God has to do this. Ezekiel 36 is a passage describing how God saves. Every other phrase begins with God saying, "I will. I will. I will." Acts 5:31, Acts 11:18, 2 Timothy 2:25 all talk about how God gives, or grants, repentance. "*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God*" (Ephesians 2:8-9). So conversion is divinely enabled.

Conversion Is a Divinely Enabled Response of Repentance and Faith

But that doesn't mean people don't do anything in this. It doesn't mean we don't have a responsibility in this picture. We definitely have a responsibility as we depend on God's grace. So follow this. Conversion is a divinely enabled response of repentance and faith. The gracious work of God in conversion in no way minimizes or eliminates the necessity and responsibility of sinners to respond to the gospel call.

Repentance involves turning away from sin and self. It marks a radical break from a life of rebellion against God. Faith involves not only believing that what the Bible teaches about Jesus is true, but also trusting in Him alone for salvation while entrusting one's life to Him. Repentance and faith are not separate or disconnected actions, but rather are two sides of the same response: turning away from a life of rebellion against God in repentance, and in the same act turning toward God through faith in Christ. Neither is complete or adequate without the other.

So this is what I hope and pray people were doing in our last session—repenting and believing, turning from themselves and trusting in Jesus, turning from sin and trusting in Jesus. This is exactly what we talked about in the “P” part of the GOSPEL acronym. It's what people must do in order to be saved. “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).

Conversion Is a Divinely Enabled Response to the Gospel

Indeed, the gospel must be proclaimed for anyone to be converted. This is huge. No one can be saved apart from receiving, understanding and believing the gospel, which makes the task of evangelism critically urgent. Romans 10:13-15 makes it clear that people can't be saved from their sin apart from understanding and then believing the gospel.

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!”

This is so critical. Think about this especially in the light of what we've already talked about when it comes to the unreached. There are about 2.8 billion people in the world who have not been reached by the gospel. If you are born and live and die and never hear the gospel, then what happens to you when you die? What happens to people who have never heard the gospel and they die? Will they go to heaven? Will they go to hell, even if they've never had a chance to hear the gospel?

That is a huge question. We need to see—right here, right now—the Bible tells us the answer to that question. The only way they can go to heaven is if they believe the gospel. And the only way they can believe it is if they hear it. And the only way they can hear it is if we tell it to them. So if we don't tell

it to them, they won't hear. If they don't hear it, they can't believe it. If they don't believe it, they won't be saved. They'll die in their sin apart from faith in the only Savior.

I know some will immediately object, saying, "Well surely, because they haven't heard God will let them into heaven. We're talking about 2.8 billion people. Just think about it. Maybe because they haven't heard God lets them into heaven." I think that's what a lot of Christians think. But just keep thinking: if God let them into heaven precisely because they've never heard the gospel, then what's the worst thing we could do? Go tell them the gospel, right? "Before we got there, 100% of them would be going to heaven. Now that we came and preached the gospel, there's a chance they're going to hell. Thanks a lot, Secret Church. Keep it a better secret, right?" It makes no sense.

They can't be saved apart from hearing the gospel. You ask, "Doesn't God love them?" Absolutely He does. He loves them so much that He's called us to take the gospel to them. That's the point! That's the whole point of why we're gathered tonight. See it. Feel it. Get it. In a world of religions, no one can be saved apart from receiving, understanding and believing the gospel, which makes the task of proclaiming the gospel critically urgent.

The Content of the Gospel Message Matters

We don't just go with any message, or a message we make up. We go with the gospel God has revealed in His Word. It's why we're spending time here tonight, because this is especially important in light of the distortions of the gospel that are popular around the world. Any gospel message that denies or dilutes the full deity and humanity of Jesus, identifies the human problem as anything else or anything less than our sinful rebellion against God, does not major on the substitutionary death of Jesus and the reality of His bodily resurrection, or does not teach that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone is an unbiblical gospel that does not lead to biblical conversion. Galatians 1:6-7 says,

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

Conversion Is Radical

See how all of this is coming together. A biblical understanding of the gospel leads to biblical evangelism and biblical conversion. This is radical conversion and is no casual thing. The Bible uses extreme language to describe it. Someone who has been converted has died to everything they used to be and received new life in Christ. They have, in fact, been crucified with Christ. They have been created all over again. They have been born again. Conversion to Christ is neither casual nor superficial.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Paul describes himself in Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with

Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” It’s an entirely new identity, a transformation into an entirely new way of life. It’s radical conversion.

Conversion Is Noticeable

While no believer attains perfection in this life, a converted person is a changed person. This is particularly evident in a Christian’s belief in the gospel, love for God’s people, and growth in holiness. The Bible is clear on this. This is one way to let you know whether or not someone is actually a Christian. Regardless of whether they call themselves Christians, do they believe in the gospel? Are they trusting in Jesus alone for their salvation—not their works? And do their lives show the fruit of trust in Jesus, made evident in Christ-like character with Christ-like love.

First John 2:4-6 says:

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

Conversion Is Permanent

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

Recap: What Is Conversion?

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

Two Key Conclusions

This leads us to two key conclusions.

All Who Believe this Gospel will be Saved from their Sin

“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). That is great news. All who have believe the gospel even here tonight for the first time—you can know you are saved from your sin, now and forever. All who put your faith in Jesus in the past—you can know you are saved from your sin, now and forever. You will be saved from your sin.

All Who Believe this Gospel have been Sent into the World

But then take it a step further. All who believe this gospel have been sent into the world. This good news is not just for you. Luke 24:45-49 makes it clear that Jesus didn't die on the cross just for you or me. He died so repentance and forgiveness of sin would be proclaimed to all people everywhere, and He has called all of us to be witnesses to that reality.

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” (Luke 24:45-49)

So get this. Put together everything we've talked about tonight. In a world of religions, we who are followers of Jesus—who have faith in Jesus—have been authorized to speak for God. The Bible says we're ambassadors for Christ. God is making His appeal through us. We have been authorized by God Himself to persuade people to be reconciled to God through Christ. We are told to urge others to repent and believe, to plead for people to be reconciled to God through Christ. Persuade, plead—these are the right words here.

This gospel is true. If all people are sinners before a holy God, if God has made a way for all people to be saved through Jesus' life and death and resurrection, and if all people's eternity is dependent on hearing and understanding and believing that good news, we can't stay silent. Not when God—the God of the universe Himself—has authorized you and me to proclaim it so that people can be saved, and not when their lives are dependent for eternity on hearing it from us.

So we relinquish all our rights, and we rearrange all our lives for the spread of the gospel. This is what Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 9. See the example of Paul. He talks in this chapter about how he had a right to financial support from the church at Corinth, and he surrendered that right and rearranged his life for the spread of the gospel in Corinth.

Hear the exhortation to us, to you and me in this gathering. We have rights where we live and in the world around us. Most of us tonight in this gathering are Americans. We talk about our rights all the

time. We cling to our rights: life, friends, marriage, family, safety, security, health and happiness. We have a right to eat, drink, watch, wear, read, study, listen to and say whatever we want. We have a right to organize our schedule, spend our time, choose our career, make our money, use our money, take our vacation and plan our retirement. We have a right to do what we want to do, go where we want to go and live how we want to live.

But once you believe the gospel, and Jesus changes your heart and lives in you, then Christ compels us to surrender our rights and rearrange our lives for the spread of the gospel. We are to surrender our rights, to say on a daily basis, “I have a right to do all kinds of things today. It’s my life, my money, my family. But I’m going to surrender all, and I’m going to spread the gospel with my time, my money, my family and my life.” This is what we do as followers of Jesus. We put everything on the table—all of it. Our schedule, our time, our career, our money. Everything we have, everything we are. Safety, security, our family and our lives. We say, “God, here I am. Use me however You want, wherever You want, to do whatever You want for the sake of the gospel.”

If that means I pack my bags and move to the Middle East, move to India, then I go. If that means I stay here and reorganize or readjust every part of my life for the spread of the gospel, that I do it. My life is no longer about my rights that I have to this or that. I surrender my rights, including my right to life itself, for the spread of the gospel. This is what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Christians in America, it makes no sense for any one of us to stand beside the cross of Christ while we insist on having and holding on to our rights. We stand before the cross, gladly surrendering all of our rights for the spread of the gospel where we live and to the ends of the earth.

As followers of Christ, saved from our sin, we become servants of others so that they might be saved by our God. Listen to Paul’s words:

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

Hear this. Paul knows there are all kinds of people around him: Jews and non-Jews alike, people with different ethnicities and backgrounds and situations. What unites them all is they all need the love of God in Christ. Paul knows all of these people are on a road that leads to eternity apart from God. So he says, “I do whatever it takes. I flex my lifestyle. I make adjustments. I rearrange my life, in order that others might be saved.”

So Christian, is this your heart? Is this your outlook on life? I want to rearrange my life to so love and serve others that they might know the gospel—in our culture, right where you and I live—and then across other cultures. Just as Paul talked about with Jews and Greeks, we go to people who are different from us in different ways. And this is so key for all we’re talking about tonight. As we go across cultures, we work to contextualize the gospel. In other words, we work to help them understand the gospel in their context. We do different things in different contexts to make the gospel clear in that context.

Just some simple ideas. If you go to share the gospel, say, in the Middle East, then you need to know the Middle Eastern context. What do they wear there? What do they eat? How do they greet one another? What are their customs you need to adopt in order to communicate best? I’ve gone to some parts of the Middle East and had to learn quickly how to greet men with a kiss on the cheek. Sometimes the kiss is on one cheek. Sometimes the kiss is on two opposite cheeks. Sometimes it’s back and forth for a few kisses. That’s going to be important for building friendships in the Middle East for the spread of the gospel.

Back here in this context, if I go everywhere and start kissing men on the cheeks in the streets of Charlotte, North Carolina, it’s not going to be good for the spread of the gospel. In whatever culture we’re in, we’re constantly contextualizing the gospel. We begin where people are with what they believe. We learn their history. We learn their culture. In some cases we learn their language, which could actually mean learning a different language other than English, or it could mean learning a different way to talk about things. We learn their language. We also learn their worldview—how they view the world around them.

We begin with where they are, what they believe, and then we build bridges to Who Christ is and what He’s done. We want to help them understand the gospel in their context, which means we remove every obstacle to the gospel. We think, “What are the things that are keeping the people from understanding the gospel?” That’s why Paul didn’t take money in Corinth. He thought if he did, he’d be putting an unnecessary obstacle in the way of the gospel. He said, “*We endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ*” (1 Corinthians 9:12).

In the same way, we minimize cultural barriers. Take something as simple as pork, for example. We’ll talk about that in the session on Islam. Muslims don’t eat pork. If you’re sharing the gospel with a Muslim at your home, it’s not wise to have them over for a barbecue. Which sounds silly, even simple, but it’s a significant cultural barrier that’s going to offend and create an obstacle to the reception of the gospel.

So we minimize cultural barriers as we emphasize biblical truth. We try to cross cultural bridges, but we never compromise biblical truth. We remove obstacles to the gospel, but we never remove the offense of the gospel. The gospel will always be offensive to people in the fact that it confronts us in our

sin. It tells us there's only one Savior, Jesus, Who is fully God and fully Man, Who died on a cross and beckons us to put our trust in Him. There is so much in that message that's offensive, and if we're not careful, even when we try to share the gospel we'll soften this or that part of the gospel to try to make it more palatable to people. But we don't have that option. We proclaim the gospel—the full gospel—confident that when it's fully proclaimed, it has power to save people from their sins.

So we're faithful to communicate the gospel. We weave individual gospel threads into the fabric of our conversations. We're always talking about God's character, the offense of sin, the sufficiency of Christ, personal response, eternal urgency and life transformation. We look for opportunities to bring all those truths together in complete gospel truth, inviting people to turn from their sin and trust in Jesus.

Christian brother or sister, tonight you and I have been authorized by God to speak this gospel. We relinquish our rights and rearrange our lives for the spread of the gospel, and ultimately we give our lives to the Great Commission in a world of religions for the glory of our God. Paul describes this at the end of 1 Corinthians 9 as a foot race. He talks about how this is a race that requires sacrificial self-denial, stringent self-discipline and single-minded devotion. In Acts 28:24 he says, *“But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”*

Let me pause for a minute and say that if you're not a follower of Jesus in this gathering, and you're listening to this, but you still don't believe the gospel, I realize you may be thinking at this point that what we're talking about now is pretty creepy. Christians going out and doing everything around here or around the world so that people can be saved and can believe in Jesus, I realize that may weird you out a little bit, or maybe even offend you. But I want to ask you just to hang with me a little bit. Think about it this way: assume for a minute that this gospel actually is true. And I know that may be far-fetched for some, but just try to assume for a minute that it's true—that apart from Jesus, you're guilty before God and deserving eternal judgment. And the only way you can be saved from that judgment is to hear and believe the gospel—the good news of God's love for you. If that's true—which I realize for some might be a huge step—but just assume for a minute that it's true. If that's true, then wouldn't you want people who care enough about you to rearrange their lives and commit themselves—no matter what it costs them—to share this gospel with you? Wouldn't it actually be the most hateful, unloving thing in the world—if this is true—for people who know it's true to keep it to themselves?

God forbid that followers of Jesus would do anything less than commit our lives and families and churches to running this race, to spreading this gospel here or around the world, knowing the rewards of this race, that when we do this others will experience the eternal joy of salvation. Our neighbors and the nations will be glad and sing for joy (Psalm 67:4), and at the same time, we will fulfill the earthly purpose

of salvation. So think about it, followers of Jesus: this is the purpose of your life and my life on this earth. We've been saved by this gospel to spread this gospel.

I remember in church one day we were filling out an outline, and the last blank in the last sentence asked, "Will the gospel stop with you or spread through you?" I remember getting to that point and challenging the church. A week later, a 19-year-old kid came up to me after the service and said, "Pastor, I just want you to know how much that question meant to me last week. It just stuck with me." He rolled up his sleeve and showed me a tattoo on his arm that read, "Will the gospel stop with you or spread through you?" Now, that will change your sermon preparation, when your words could end up on people's skin. So I'm not saying you need to tattoo... In fact, I'm saying you don't need to tattoo this on you. But may it be imprinted on your heart.

Is this gospel stopping with you or is it spreading through you? You've got this gospel. If the ultimate purpose of your salvation was just your reconciliation to God, then as soon as God saved you He'd take you out of this world of sin and suffering, pain and death, and bring you to be with Him. But He's left you here for a reason. You've got a little bit of time. I've got a little bit of time. We're surrounded by people who either don't believe this or have never even heard this good news. And so many of us are so tempted, aren't we, just to coast through our Christian life and not share this good news with anybody else. We'll get to the end of our lives, and some of us have been Christians for a year, two, five, 10, 15, 20, 50 years and have hardly led anybody to Jesus. We're not on this earth—just to coast through until we get to heaven. We're here to proclaim this gospel and to lead other people to Jesus in a world where all kinds of people don't believe in Jesus. That's why He left us here.

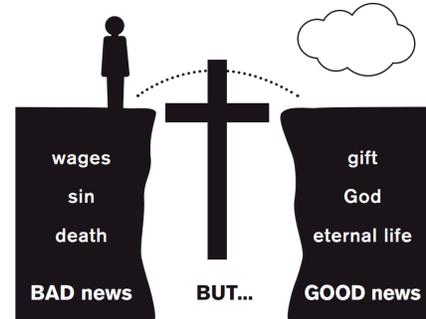
Five World Religions—Three Primary Questions

So how do we do this, especially when it comes to neighbors or nations who represent the five largest world religions: Animism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Atheism? Here's what we're going to do. This sets the stage for three primary questions we're going to ask with each one of these religions. Who are they? Just a basic overview. What do they believe?

I want to give a caveat here. In one night, we've got a relatively short amount of time to cover five major religions. So I don't want for a second to presume that this study is going to be exhaustive. I want to be clear from the start that this is introductory. The picture I'm going to paint tonight of these religions is going to have a pretty broad brush, to the point where people from these religions may be completely dissatisfied with the way they're depicted. But by necessity I can't include everything about every one of these religions.

What I've done is try to hit the big-picture truths that accompany each of these religions in the hope that we might have a general overview of them in such a way that you and I might be able to share the gospel with people from those religions.

Which leads to the third question we'll ask with each one: how do we share the gospel with them? The whole goal—much like we talked about with contextualization—is to build bridges to the gospel so they might know and enjoy the glory of God in Christ for all of eternity. So think of a bridge. Here is a classic graphic bridge illustration of the gospel, which is essentially what evangelism and sharing the gospel is about. It's about crossing a bridge to somebody else, stepping into their shoes, understanding what they believe, and then from there helping them walk across the bridge to the truth of the gospel.



Because when you think about it, that's exactly what God has done for us. In Jesus, He has come to us, where we are. He's made a way for us to be reconciled to Him. When I share the gospel with anyone, one of the easiest ways to do it is just to draw this picture out. Us on the left, God on the right, chasm in the middle. To use Romans 6:23, *"The wages of sin is death,"* that's bad news. There's the problem. *"The free gift of God is eternal life"* is the good news. How? Through *"Christ Jesus our Lord."* So repent and believe and be reconciled to Him forever.

In a sense, my hope in the rest of this night is to help people to be able to walk across that bridge, so to speak, understanding at least in a small part where an atheist or agnostic or Muslim or Hindu or Buddhist or Animist is coming from, and to be able to walk with them toward the gospel from their shoes. I'm not claiming to be an expert in sharing the gospel with all these people—or anybody, for that matter. I'm on the journey with you, just wanting to spend my life for the spread of the gospel right where I live, wherever God leads.

Permissions: You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material provided that you do not alter it in any way, use the material in its entirety, and do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction. For web posting, a link to the media on our website is preferred. Any exceptions to the above must be approved by Radical.

Please include the following statement on any distributed copy: By David Platt. © David Platt. Website: Radical.net