

Your Guide to

REALiTY

The 12-Part Video Series

With

Dr. Michael Green

Prepared in cooperation with Christian History Institute



Presenter, Michael Green

Dr. Michael Green graduated from Cambridge University in England. He is the author of over thirty books and has lectured widely in colleges and universities around the world. He served twelve years as a minister at Oxford and then became Professor of New Testament and Evangelism at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada. In addition to his Biblical scholarship, he is also an expert in classical languages, philosophy and ancient history. He is internationally known for his great gift in being able to couch his advanced scholarship in a clear and practical communications approach.

Producer, EO Television

Evangelische Omroep is perhaps the leading Christian television company in the world today. It is a Class A station (the highest rating) within the Dutch Public Broadcasting system. This series was produced in English for worldwide release. It has been the great joy of Vision Video to represent EO and its programming in America for over fifteen years and to team up with them on many of our co-production projects, including the multiple award-winning William Carey biography *Candle in the Dark*, and the documentary curriculum series *From Christ to Constantine: The Trial and Testimony of the Early Church*.

Note: Permission is hereby granted for users of the Reality video series to copy pages from these Companion Notes for use in connection with the video programs.

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The material in this guide is drawn largely from the video series *Reality* by Michael Green and produced by EO Television, Holland.

North American distributor of the video series:

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Worcester, PA 19490
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**For additional online resources related to the *Reality* series, go to
<http://www.gospelcom.net/chi/PROOF/apollist.shtml>.**

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Welcome to Reality!

First, a frank admission. The views of *Reality* expressed in this series are often out of sync with the assumptions of our surrounding secular culture. All we can do is beg that the case be heard. We expect you will find yourself making the same plea if you intend to use these programs to invite people from your community to consider the claims of Christ.

The subjects addressed deal with the ultimate matters addressed in the Scriptures, and the Gospel of Christ makes no apology for its claim to be nothing less than Truth. That is the position advanced in this series. But it is critically important to insist that Biblical Truth be articulated in humility and gratitude. For this Truth has already exposed our own hypocrisy and self-deceptions and continues to do so.

This twelve-part video series was based on surveys to find what were the most critical questions that the Gospel must address today. Key questions that emerged included the following: Is there any purpose for our being on this earth? Can a thinking person be a Christian? What are the main reasons Christianity is rejected, and what are the responses? What are the alternatives to the Christian faith? How do we typically delude ourselves in the most important issues? What are the questions that cannot be avoided if you are serious about getting real? These and others provided the basis for this program.

We think you are in for a great experience, and we hope you can use these materials to benefit many in your community.

Getting the Most Out of This Series

Useful in *various settings*

- They can, of course, be used on an individual basis. Those who are new Christians and seeking to understand the faith will find these programs valuable in setting forth the distinctives of the Gospel and the solid basis upon which they rest.
- Christian young people headed for college will find the series a useful primer to prepare them for the issues they will in all probability confront in the present environment of multi-culturalism and political correctness.
- Small groups, Bible study and Sunday School classes will find stimulating material for group use that gets to the heart of how the Gospel relates to other views of reality competing for the hearts of seekers today.

Useful at *various levels*

- One of the great gifts of presenter Michael Green is his ability to communicate difficult concepts in a clear, easy-to-follow manner. But we also realize there will be a wide diversity of exposure to the concepts presented and the issues confronted. The role of the leader will differ based upon the educational level and experience of the group. For some it will be necessary to start at an elementary level to help students understand the importance of the issues addressed and how they affect their lives and will challenge their thinking in days ahead. Other viewers who are familiar with the subjects and thinkers addressed will be able to get right to the heart of what is at stake.
- Accordingly, the content you will find here is not presented as a step-by-step guide on how you should use the materials in your group. Rather, this is a collection of resources that you can dip into and utilize in a way that will serve your purposes best. Select what best serves the needs of your group.
- Another factor, of course, is the amount of time you have available for each session. We have sought to provide more than you will be able to use so that you can choose and modify as you see fit.

Utilization tips

- Get some inexpensive notebooks or journals from a local store for the participants to keep their own “Reality Journals” for the duration of the series. Some may not keep up with it, but for others it will be a valuable landmark in personal growth that they will treasure in days ahead.
- Substitute your own questions related to each particular program’s content that you find are better suited to your group, issues that your community or church has had to deal with, or matters that are more urgent for your group.

What You Will Find for Each Program

Optional Individual Exercises

There are questions on pages 6 and 55 for those who have ample time for each session. Page 6 offers questions that can be used as a preliminary informal survey prior to the screening of each program. Have each member ask friends the question for that session. Allow reports prior to showing the video. This will help set the context and show what others think about the general subject area that will be treated in the particular program.

The optional questions on page 55 are proposed for use after the viewing of the video and are intended to provide opportunity for personal reflection and application of the program's contents. We urge that you encourage this exercise to be done in writing and in a quiet unhurried atmosphere. You may or may not want to offer the group opportunity to share what they have written with the others. The responses can get to be very personal, and the leader will want to be sensitive as to how participants are asked to share such.

Four Pages for Each Episode

In these four pages you will find a standard format that covers the following:

- **1st page** - right column - a handy OUTLINE of the video program's contents. The main part of page 1 is a brief INTRODUCTION to the issue and the importance of the particular program. You may want to adapt this for your own preliminary comments before showing the video.
- **2nd page** - SO MANY VOICES presents a diversity of opinions and viewpoints related to the subject area. You may wish to pull out some of these and ask for reaction to them. *Utilization tip: You might want to make copies of the "So Many Voices" page and give out a rating chart with a line for each one for students to circle one of the following:*

Agree Strongly -- Agree -- Don't Know -- Disagree -- Disagree Strongly

Ask participants to pass in their pages so you can tally the results (e.g., 7 out of 10 of you agree or strongly agree with Freud's comment that ". . ."). This will be of interest to the group but also will provide a valuable shaft of insight for you into the thinking of your students.

- **3rd page** - SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES offers Bible passages related to the issues explored in the program. *Utilization tip: You might want to select one or two for extended discussion as to how they relate to the program. Or you may want to split up into smaller groups and assign a passage to each subgroup to discuss and then come back and report to the whole group.* THINK ABOUT IT is a succinct application of the thrust of the program to personal life. *Utilization tip: It might be especially helpful for those who do not have much time available. In such a case, introducing and view the video, and then use this section for application.*
- **4th page** - FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION should give ample departure points for lively discussion or for meaningful personal reflection. *Utilization tip: Consider use in addition to or as an alternative to using the "Search the Scriptures" for subgroups to take different selections.*

Optional Pre-Session Surveys

The aim for this suggested optional activity is to give each participant the question prior to the group gathering for the particular program and to survey their friends as to how they would answer the question. They should be coached as to how to approach others in a non-judgmental, relaxed way. For example: “My youth group is looking at different views of the world and reality, and we would like to bring in the opinions of others on the subject we will be discussing this week. So I would be interested in how you would answer the question, “. . . ?”

Program 1

What is God like?

Program 2

Are we on this earth for a purpose? If so, how do we find that purpose? If not, then where do you find meaning for your life?

Program 3

Do you consider yourself a “spiritual person”? What does that mean?

Program 4

Do you believe in an afterlife? Why or why not? If you do, is there both a heaven *and* a hell?

Program 5

What, if anything, was most different or unusual about Jesus?

Program 6

Do you think that all religions are essentially the same and are leading to the same goal?

Program 7

What suffering in this world do you find most awful? What would you say is the main cause of that suffering?

Program 8

Can we as human beings know for sure what “truth” really is. If so, how? If not, why not?

Program 9

Have you ever been aware of the presence in your life of what the Bible refers to as “the Holy Spirit”? Explain.

Program 10

What do you consider the greatest long-term danger to our world? How did it get to be such a danger?

Program 11

Is it realistic to think that people can change significantly? If so, what is the key to making that change possible?

Program 12

Does the church have any important continuing role in our world today, or is it merely a surviving relic from a religious past?

THERE IS NO ESCAPE! IT IS THE BIG QUESTION OF THE AGES,

and you have to give an answer.

Survey after survey has shown that in our highly materialistic age, belief in God is fairly constant. Almost everyone believes in “something out there.” The reason...is that they find a world without “something out there” simply inconceivable. To them, that is the best reason for believing “it” exists. In pure logic, there is one basic tenet: nothing comes from nothing.

Everything has a reason—or a cause. And the world in which we find ourselves is not just “something” but an incredibly marvelous, awesomely wonderful construct. So inevitably, the question comes up: where could it have come from? What is outside this world that could have brought it into being? The answer to this question: “something out there” or “God.”

A telling example of this approach can be seen in the philosopher Immanuel Kant. Although he was one of the leaders of the Enlightenment, a movement that made reasoning, he still believed in God. When he was asked why he believed in God, he answered, “There are two main things that persuade me to do so: starry heavens above and the moral law within.”

1

Who Is God?

Program Outline

Introduction

- Relevance

What is God?

- Projection
- Illusion
- Force
- One or Many?
(Poly-, Monotheism)
- I am God

Who is God?

- Distant Judge
- Lover
- Divine Love

Revelation

- Jesus
- Incarnation
- Divine Claims

Conclusion

So Many Voices



FREUD

Devout believers are safeguarded in a high degree against the risk of certain neurotic illnesses; their acceptance of the universal neurosis spares them the task of constructing a personal one. ~ The psychoanalysis of individual human beings, however, teaches us with quite special insistence that the god of each of them is formed in the likeness of his father; that his personal relation to God depends on his relation to his father in the flesh and oscillates and changes along with that relation, and that at bottom God is nothing other than an exalted father. - FREUD

All the interests of my reason, speculative as well as practical, combine in the three following questions: 1. What can I know? 2. What ought I to do? 3. What may I hope? - **KANT**

If there'd be no God, we should invent one. - **VOLTAIRE**

Religion is the dream of the human mind. But even in dreams we do not find ourselves in emptiness or in heaven, but on earth, in the realm of reality; we only see real things in the entrancing splendor of imagination and caprice instead of in the simple daylight of reality and necessity. - **FEUERBACH**

Struggle is the father of all things. It is not by the principles of humanity that man lives or is able to preserve himself above the animal world but solely by means of the most brutal struggle. - **HITLER**

It matters not how strait the gate, how charged with punishments the scroll. I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul. - **W. HENLEY**

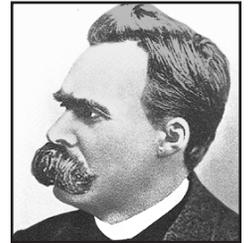
There cannot be a personal God without a pessimistic religion. As soon as there is a personal God, he is a disappointing God. - **C. CONNOLLY**

Science cannot solve the ultimate mystery of nature. And that is because in the last analysis, we ourselves are part of nature and, therefore, part of the mystery that we are trying to solve. - **M. PLANCK**

We are the products of editing, rather than of authorship. - **G. WALD**

Muhammed brought down from heaven and put in the Koran not religious doctrines only, but political maxims, criminal and civil laws, and scientific theories. The Gospels deal only with the general relations between man and God and between man and man. Beyond that, they teach nothing and do not oblige people to believe anything. That is enough to show that Islam will not be able to hold its power long in ages of enlightenment and democracy while Christianity is destined to reign in such ages as in all others. - **A. DE TOCQUEVILLE**

The word "Christianity" is already a misunderstanding. In reality, there has only been one Christian, and he died on the Cross. ~ I teach you the Superman. Man is something that should be overcome. - NIETZSCHE



NIETZSCHE

You never see animals going through the absurd and often horrible fooleries of magic and religion. . . . Dogs do not ritually urinate in the hope of persuading heaven to do the same and send down rain. Asses do not bray a liturgy to cloudless skies. Nor do cats attempt, by abstinence from cat's meat, to wheedle the feline spirits into benevolence. Only man behaves with such gratuitous folly. It is the price he has to pay for being intelligent but not, as yet, quite intelligent enough. - **HUXLEY**

If true Christianity consists in carrying out in our daily lives the teachings of Christ, who will say that we are commanded to civilize with dynamite and proselyte with the sword? Imperialism finds no warrant in the Bible.... Love, not force, was the weapon of the Nazarene; sacrificing for others, not the exploitation of them, was His method of reaching the human heart. - W. J. BRYAN



BRYAN

Search the Scriptures

- *And God said to him, "I am God Almighty." - Genesis 35:11*
- *God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." - Exodus 3:14*
- *"Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?" - Job 38:4*
- *The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." - Psalm 14:1*
- *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. - Psalm 19:1*
- *O God, you are my God, eternally I seek you, my soul thirsts for you. - Psalm 63:1*
- *"Return, faithless people," declares the Lord, "for I am your husband." - Jeremiah 3:14*
- *"...anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." - Luke 18:17*
- *"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." - John 14:21*
- *Let God be true, and every man be false. - Romans 3:4*
- *He is the True God and eternal life. - 1 John 10:20*
- *God is love. - John 5:20*

Think About It: The other day I saw a little child jump into his father's arms. And that child was safe there. He was at home. He was loved. That is what the heavenly Parent waits for us to do, to jump and say, "Dear Lord, I have been out of touch for too long. You have come to embrace me in your love. Here I am."

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- In Romans 1:19-20, Paul states that everyone can know God. What does “the things that have been made” mean? What do you think of his argument?
- Green says that most of us “have a notion of good and bad.” If that proves the presence of God, why do some people have a clearer notion regarding moral matters than others?
- Is it possible to know right from wrong without God?
- How does a person develop a conscience?
- When something has not been proven scientifically or empirically, does that mean it does not exist? Can you think of something that is impossible to prove but still exists?
- Would your attitude toward God change if it were possible to prove His existence? In what way?
- If it were easier for more people to believe in God, could He have provided us with more concrete evidence of His existence?
- In Romans 9:20, Paul says, “But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to Him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” How would you reply to this statement?
- In Exodus 34:5-7, God introduces Himself: “...The Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished....” Does this description of God compare with your own perception of Him? How did you view God?
- Huxley made it quite clear why he did not want to find any meaning in life. What made him feel this way? What motives do people have for wanting to find meaning in life?
- People often mix the way they see God with models of authority they have had throughout their lives. What characteristics did the authority figures in your life possess? Do these have anything to do with your perception of God?
- Dr. Green states that human love can show you a lot about God’s love. What are the unique differences between human love and divine love?
- I Corinthians 13 provides a beautiful description of love. Are human beings able to love in this way, or is this a concept of love that one can only find in fairy tales?
- What difference does it make to be judged by Allah (Islam) or God, who took on human form in the person of Jesus Christ?
- In our present justice system there is always one last option for a convicted person: a “general pardon.” What is the difference between this form of grace and the way the final Judge in the person of Jesus Christ sets us free from guilt and sin?
- Should the ultimate truth always have practical implications, or is it also possible to accept the truth as knowledge but not use it in practice?
- What would be the implications for you if you accepted the fact that there is one God who revealed himself in His Son Jesus Christ?

IS THIS TOO MUCH TO HOPE FOR:

*that you are unique and that you
are on this earth for a purpose?*

For 250 years, since the Enlightenment (the Age of Reason), people in the West have tried to live without God. But we must admit that we do not live in a reasonable, rational way. It is not possible to establish a good life just by what you and I think is good.

We have seen much collapse of society in this century and much destruction of innocent people. There is a tremendous increase of crime. Everywhere people are asking, “What is life all about? What is the purpose?” This is a very good question to ask. The answer is a disturbing one, at least for our Western culture: If you rub God out of life, as we have done for two and a half centuries, then there really is no purpose. Then ultimately we’ve come from plankton-soup; when we die, we will go out like a candle, and we are just playing around in the meantime. “Meaning” is one of the most important issues human beings are looking for in the world today.

Everyone is looking for fulfillment and a purpose in life. People who say that life has no meaning find their own way to live with that presupposition.

We dare not face too much truth. People cannot face the logical consequence of godlessness. So often they hide in the cocoon of their job, throwing themselves into their work so that they don’t have to think of serious things. And they hide in their home, those little boxes in which they retreat and watch the small box of the television for three or four hours a day. Cocooning—it happens!

2

Does My Life Have Meaning?

Program Outline

Introduction

- **Relevance**

No Meaning

- **Cocooning**
- **Randomness**
- **Nihilism**

Meaning

- **The East**
- **New Age**
- **The Occult**

The Problem of Pain

- **Unemployment**
- **Loss and Suffering**

Following Jesus

Conclusions

So Many Voices



CAMUS

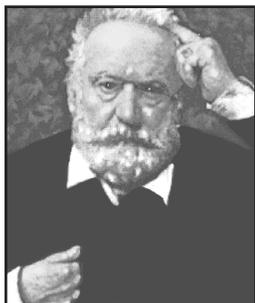
You will never be happy if you continue to search for what happiness consists of. You will never live if you are looking for the meaning of life.... The modern mind is in complete disarray. Knowledge has stretched itself to the point where neither the world nor our intelligence can find any foothold. It is a fact that we are suffering from nihilism....

Nihilism is not only despair and negation, but above all the desire to despair and negate. - **CAMUS**

We need God, not in order to understand the why but in order to feel and sustain the ultimate wherefore, to give a meaning to the universe. - **DEUNAMUNO**

The original questions of meaning have, ever since the year 1000, been slowly pushed away by the modern, Western view of life; now once again we are on the verge of a new transformation. - **REDFIELD**

All roads are blocked to a philosophy which reduces everything to the word "no." To "no" there is only one answer, and that is "yes." Nihilism has no substance. There is no such thing as nothingness, and zero does not exist. Everything is something. Nothing is nothing. Man lives more by affirmation than by bread. - **HUGO**



HUGO

In the consciousness of the truth he has perceived, man now sees everywhere only the awfulness or the absurdity of existence...and loathing seizes him. **NIETZSCHE**

The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the "disenchantment of the world." Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life either into the transcendental realm of mystic life or into the brotherliness of direct and personal human relations. It is not accidental that our greatest art is intimate and not monumental. - **WEBER**

An "unemployed" existence is a worse negation of life than death itself. - **ORTEGA Y GASSET**

The deeper the experience of an absence of meaning—in other words, of absurdity—the more energetically meaning is sought. - **HAVEL**

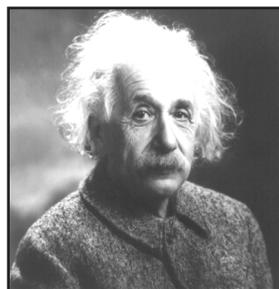
The time comes when each one of us has to give up as illusions the expectations which, in his youth, he pinned upon his fellowmen, and when he may learn how much difficulty and pain has been added to his life by their ill-will. - **FREUD**

Suffering must be suffered, so it will pass. It either falls on the world and the world will be crushed by it, or it falls on Christ and will be overcome in Him. - **BONHOEFFER**

To choose one's victims, to prepare one's plan minutely, to slake an implacable vengeance, and then to go to bed—there is nothing sweeter in the world. - **STALIN**

Cocooning is no longer a matter of one place, our house, but a mindset, a matter of self-protection. Cocooning is a way to survive. - **POPCORN**

Apart from their other characteristics, the outstanding thing about China's 600 million people is that they are "poor and blank." This may seem a bad thing, but in reality it is a good thing. Poverty gives rise to the desire for change, the desire for action and the desire for revolution. On a blank sheet of paper free from any mark, the freshest and most beautiful pictures can be painted. - **MAO**



EINSTEIN

The process of scientific discovery is, in effect, a continual flight from wonder. - **EINSTEIN**

Men expect that religion should cost them no pains, that happiness should drop into their laps without any design and endeavor on their part, and that, after they have done what they please while they live, God should snatch them up to heaven when they die. But though "the commandments of God be not grievous," yet it is fit to let men know that they are not thus easy. - **TILLOTSON**

To me, the sole hope of human salvation lies in teaching Man to regard himself as an experiment in the realization of God, to regard his hands as God's hand, his brain as God's brain, his purpose as God's purpose. He must regard God as a helpless longing, which longed him into existence by its desperate need for an executive organ. - **SHAW**

Search the Scriptures

- *He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God. - Ecclesiastes 3:11-13*
- *Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said, “If any one would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” - Mark 8:34*
- *“. . .whoever loses his life for me and the gospel will save it.” - Mark 8:35*
- *“Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. - Luke 12:7*
- *“I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.” - John 6:35*
- *Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. - Romans 8:2*
- *For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. - 1 Corinthians 15:22*
- *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. - Galatians 5:1*
- *They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. - Revelation 22:4*

Think About It: When I entrust my life to a love like that of Jesus, there is no way in which my person is going to be abused or in which my choices are going to become narrowed. The wonderful thing about a Christian—one of the many wonderful things—is that your whole freedom to choose is livened. When I enter into a personal relationship with Jesus, I am not just pressurized by my heredity and my environment. I am delivered from some of the pressures of those things, and my whole range of choices is enhanced. But I want to use that freedom of choice in relationship with the One who loves me very much, and I don’t want to hurt Him.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- Dr. Green states that there is no meaning or purpose in life when there is no God. What is your opinion? Do you agree?
- Dr. Green also states that in this century more than ever before there has been a significant moral decline. Is this the impression of every generation? In what ways do you feel that the moral decline rate directly relates to turning away from God?
- It seems that “cocooning” is a typical Western trend. Shouldn’t we be happy with all the things we’ve accomplished instead of turning away from them or wanting more? What exactly are we fleeing from?
- “Cocooning and Nihilism are in the end ultimately focused on ourselves, and that will result in egoism.” Do you agree with this statement?
- Fellini said, “We are more lonely than ever before.” Your response?
- *God doesn’t exist, there is no divine reason for our existence, the only purpose in life is our own happiness and everyone should try to accomplish this in his or her own way.* This is the tolerance of Nihilism. But what is the difference between tolerance and indifference?
- What role does coincidence play in your life and in this world?
- What happens to personal responsibility if all is coincidence?
- Are Nihilistic opinions specifically from our time or from all ages? Could you name a few opinions?
- Green says that New Age doesn’t have general moral opinions about what is right and what is wrong, and its followers generally make up their own ethical concept as they go along. That implies that Nihilism and New Age believers do have something basic in common. What are the similarities between those two outlooks?
- Green states that New Age believers think that the difference between what is right or wrong is just an illusion. Why do you believe they feel this way?
- If God is an illusion, then the whole concept of a spirit world is an illusion. Do you agree?
- Would you agree when this statement is reversed: “If God exists then there is also a world of spirits”?
- In our Western world, the existence of spirits has not been taken very seriously. Why?
- God is almighty, so He is responsible for all the pain and sorrow in this world. Do you agree? What does this say about your own responsibility?
- If God is in charge of everything, does that mean that there is a specific purpose or reason for everything that happens? What significance does fate have in our lives? Does God pre-determine our day-to-day existence?
- To what extent can a person have insight into the purpose of the things that happen in life?
- In his book *The Problem of Pain*, C. S. Lewis says, “Suffering is God’s megaphone.” How does that compare to your experience?
- Romans 8:28 says that “God works in all things for the good....” What does that mean?
- The second part of Romans 8:28 says, “For those who love Him.” What does that tell us about the pain and suffering of people who do not believe in God?
- Suffering is not always an experience that refines or purifies. Can you exert any influence on whether suffering and pain make you better or bitter? (Also see Romans 5:1-11, James 1:2-4 and Peter 1:6-7.)
- Is it correct to state that “if God is good, it is not possible that evil comes from Him”? (See also John 1:5 and 1 Samuel 16:14.)
- Green states that when you become a Christian, you’ll get more options in life to choose from. Do you agree? Are many things forbidden to Christians? Do the Ten Commandments limit our options in life? Is that the same with any law?

WHAT WELL DO YOU DRINK FROM?

Does its water quench your thirst?

One of the remarkable features of our society today is that although we're so technological and skilled, there has been a massive revival of interest in the occult—the hidden things, tarot cards, witchcraft and the like. The occult is not only very interesting and fascinating to people; it also can be very dangerous.

There are a number of reasons the occult is flowering today. One is the emptiness of materialism; another is the religious instinct of mankind. And if God is out of fashion, then these other gods are going to come up for consideration. What's more, it brings power over people. If I am an unemployed person or somebody in the low ranges of a business, it's wonderful to have power over my managers by this means. Then there is also the whole notion of group coherence. You can hang together as a group if you have some secret, maybe some guilty secret, or some occult, hidden secret that you share among yourselves.

Part of the reason for the fascination today with the occult is that we've been using the left brain all the time: analytical, hard, coping with facts. And that has squeezed out the right side of the brain, which has much more to do with intuition, emotion and romance. I believe that this interest in the occult is only part of a whole shift in our thinking that says, "Come on, be a bit bigger. Look at the whole picture." And so we've got a movement called the New Age, which is growing everywhere. We have an ill-defined, but very clear, coherence of people saying, "Let's expand; let's go into crystals and channeling, the ancient gnosticism, and nature worship." It is all part of this rebellion against the materialism in which we have been cocooned for too long.

3

Who's Who in the Spirit World?

Program Outline

Introduction

- **Definitions**
- **Why So Popular?**

History

- **Antique, Strange Cultures**
- **Old & New Testament**
- **Middle Ages & Renaissance**
- **Enlightenment & Modernity**

Present Darkness

- **Astrology**
- **Spiritism**
- **New Age**
- **Satanism**

Satan's Downfall

What if You Are...

- **A Christian**
- **Not a Christian**

Conclusion

So Many Voices



LUTHER

We are surrounded by the kind of enemies who will not stop until they have knocked us down, and as individual poor men we are much too weak to withstand so many enemies. For this reason God says in the prophet Zechariah (12:10) that He will give to those who are His own the Spirit of grace and supplication to preserve them while they

are on the field of battle and to guard and protect them against that wicked and pernicious spirit. Therefore it is the particular work of Christians, who have the Spirit of God, not to be lax and lazy but incessant and constant in their praying. - **LUTHER**

Not necessity, not desire, no—the love of power is the demon of men. Let them have everything—health, food, a place to live, entertainment. They are and remain unhappy and low-spirited: for the demon waits and waits and will be satisfied. - **NIETZSCHE**

Instead of being at the mercy of wild beasts, earthquakes, landslides, and inundations, modern man is battered by the elemental forces of his own psyche. This is the World Power that vastly exceeds all other powers on earth. The Age of Enlightenment, which stripped nature and human institutions of gods, overlooked the God of Terror who dwells in the human soul. - **JUNG**

When men looked up at the stars, they shuddered to see there powers whose mysterious influence held them in a mechanism of iron necessity. They were the World Rulers who fixed men's destiny without any regard to human will and human tears. Effort, shrewdness, long-laid design could bring no liberation for the predestined class. It became an obsession. This earth, the sphere of their tyranny, took a sinister and dreadful aspect. - **BEVAN**

No longer, then, follow after false and deceitful gods; abjure them rather, and despise them, bursting forth into true liberty. Gods they are not, but malignant spirits to whom your eternal happiness will be a sore punishment.... The demons have not the power they are supposed to have. -

ST. AUGUSTINE



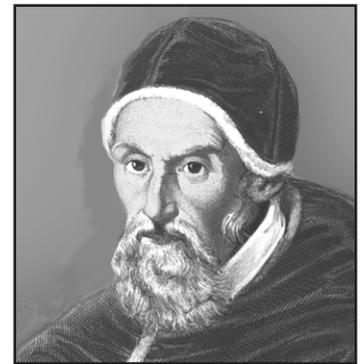
ST. AUGUSTINE

We are attacked by Satan that we might increase our dependence on God and develop spiritual muscle. God is calling us to stop being victims and become mighty warriors in all of life's realities. - **SHERMAN**

I have never grown out of the infantile belief that the universe was made for me to suck. - **CROWLEY**

It may be that there are demonic forces within us, and outside, set to destroy us; it may be that we will finish in darkness and despair and suicide. And it is of the eminent dignity of a man and a woman to look this possibility in the face: to know at least this may be. The greatest Greek tragedies are a constant education in that nightmare possibility. - **STEINER**

The human mind is prone to pride even when not supported by power; how much more, then, does it exalt itself when it has that support. - **GREGORY I**



GREGORY I

Let Jesus Christ be central in your mind. See Satan as small and Jesus as large. Let your conversation be Christ- uplifting, not devil- uplifting. Major on the realm of light, not the realm of darkness. Jesus is our wisdom, our discernment, our power, our victory, and even our life itself. We are to be caught up with Him. - **POWELL**

I have never been able to conceive how any rational being could propose happiness to himself from the exercise of power over others. - **JEFFERSON**

The Pentecostal churches in Brazil go to the heart of the matter and recognize spiritism for what it is—supernatural, demonic activity. They believe that the miracles worked by spirits are real, but that they can be traced to Satan. Consequently their evangelistic approach to Spiritism stresses the power encounter, and they are not afraid to pit the power of God against the power of Satan any more than Elijah was when he faced the priest of Baal on Mount Carmel. This is the kind of message spiritists understand and respond to. - **WAGNER**

Search the Scriptures

- *Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the LORD your God. The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. But as for you, the LORD your God has not permitted you to do so. - Deuteronomy 18:10-14*
- *How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. - Isaiah 14:9-15*
- *"If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand?" - Matthew 12:26*
- *"But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." - Matthew 12:28*
- *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. - Galatians 5:19-21*

Think About It: If we are not in the kingdom of God, if we have not surrendered to His kingly rule, we are actually under the power of what Jesus called the god of this age. Now the god of this age, the anti-God force, does not want necessarily to get us involved in the occult. He doesn't want to get us involved in Satan worship and stuff like that. He is much more sophisticated than that. He doesn't mind how nice, how charming, how educated we are, so long as we stay within the boundaries of his allegiance, and do not cross the boundary into the boundary of God and His family.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- The presence of a spiritual realm has been excluded from our perception of reality in the Western world for a long time. Why?
- What is the balance between empiric and esoteric? Would it be at all possible to approach the spiritual world in a rational and logical sort of way?
- Looking at different phenomena connected to the spiritual world, what do you believe is real and what isn't?
- In the Western world people have for a long time taken the right portion of their brain for granted. Does that mean they have not been using that part? If you think people have used it, can you explain in what way they did?
- Do you find the exclusive left-side-of-the-brain approach we so often cling to in the West a healthy one?
- Concerning astrology, if a prediction comes to pass, how can it be explained? Is it coincidence or is coincidence out of the question?
- The Bible talks about "hidden things," yet clairvoyants say they have a gift that enables them to see what's hidden. Could this gift be from God?
- The Bible tells us to stay away from the occult because we could fall into the hands of a power opposed to God. How could tampering with the occult lead us into the hands of evil powers?
- Green states, "The craving for knowledge of the hidden part of reality comes from the same motive that led Adam and Eve to their sinful choice to eat the apple." What motive would that be?
- Green: "Dabbling with the occult always means manipulation of powers in order to be able to control the future." If we could control the future, what would it look like?
- Green: "The difference between magic and prayer comes from the fact that prayer is never an attempt to bend things your way. Rather you seek God's way." How true is this for your prayer?
- When astrology tells us our fate is anchored in the stars, what remains of personal responsibility?
- What is left of freedom of choice if there is a supernatural realm that in all sorts of ways is trying to influence our fate?
- The Bible speaks of prophets (e.g., Isaiah, Elijah). At a number of occasions these people spoke of things to come. How can we distinguish a true prophet from a false one?
- Are you aware of the battle of the forces of evil against the kingdom of God in this world and in your own life? Can you influence this battle in any way? (Read Daniel 10:12-14.)
- The Bible indicates we need to choose. Either we serve in God's Kingdom or "the kingdom of this world." Do you see any difference? What is attractive in each of these? What would a choice for either one mean?
- Is a Christian safe from the influence of the other kingdom?
- Looking at your own life, do you see any signs that might indicate how the devil has a hold on you or your life?
- Green says that in such cases we need to (1) get rid of the evil practice and (2) confess what we have done to God. Why do you think this last part is so important?
- What does Jesus' suffering, His death on the cross and His resurrection mean concerning the power of evil?
- When you look around you, it seems "the god of this age" (Satan) has tremendous influence in this world. How can it be so strong, and how did he gain such influence?
- God could so easily step in and end all the misery. Why doesn't He?
- If God would step in right now and put away all evil and those who practice it, where would that leave you? Would you be all right?
- Yet in 2 Peter 3:3-9, Peter explains that God is going to step in one day. Why is He waiting?

WHAT IF, JUST WHAT IF,

you were meant to live forever?

The most important question we shall ever face is whether there is life after death. Every one of us will have to face it, so it is necessary to make up our minds. There was a saying in a doctor's office, "The first few moments in life are the most significant." Someone had written underneath, "The last few are pretty interesting as well." Does anything happen after those last few moments?

This question is not new. It is perhaps as old as humankind. Throughout the ages people have asked whether there is any life after death and what such an afterlife would be like. Indeed, in all known civilizations, there has never been one that has not believed in life after death. However, it's been a very uncertain hope, without clear evidence...until the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If you believe in God, you have an assurance that there is a source for this world. You have a sense of meaning in life. You can rest assured that there is a goal for this world and for the individual people within it. I am a Christian, which means that the source of my life is the living God. I have a personal relationship with Him, which means that I know Him and enjoy Him. This relationship will be continued after this life, which has been a Christian belief down the centuries.

On the other hand, if you rub God out, then you don't just lose God but also your whole sense of origin and purpose. You are then saying, "We come from nowhere and no one, and we go nowhere to no one." There is no originator of this universe, and you lack any personal destiny. In this construct we are just a bit of flotsam and jetsam upon the waters of the world.

4

It Is Not Safe to Die

Program Outline

Introduction

- **Relevance**

Nothing After Death

Something After Death

- **Near-Death Experiences**
- **Spiritism**
- **Reincarnation**

Circle or Line

Christian View

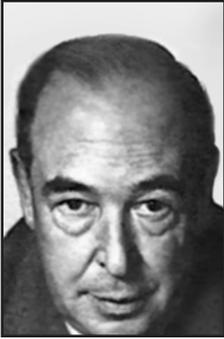
- **Judaism**
- **Jesus**

Eternal Life

- **The Choice**
- **Hell**

Conclusion

So Many Voices



It's hard to have patience with people who say "There is no death" or "Death doesn't matter." There is death. And whatever is matters. And whatever happens has consequences, and it and they are irrevocable and irreversible. You might as well say birth doesn't matter. - **LEWIS**

LEWIS

I do not want to die—no; I neither want to die nor do I want to want to die; I want to live forever and ever and ever. I want this "I" to live—this poor "I" that I am and that I feel myself to be here and now. - **DEUNEAMUNO**

There will be no lasting peace either in the heart of individuals or in social customs until death is outlawed. - **CAMUS**

What man is capable of the insane self-conceit of believing that an eternity of himself would not be intolerable even to himself? - **SHAW**

I have wrestled with death. It is the most unexciting contest you can imagine. It takes place in an impalpable grayness, with nothing underfoot, with nothing around, without spectators, without clamor, without glory, without the great desire of victory, without the great fear of defeat. - **CONRAD**

Fear not that thy life shall come to an end, but rather fear that it shall never have a beginning. - **CARDINAL NEWMAN**

Hell is oneself, Hell is alone, the other figures in it merely projections. There is nothing to escape from and nothing to escape to. One is always alone. - **ELIOTT**

Let us beware of saying that death is the opposite of life. The living being is only a species of the dead, and a very rare species. - **NIETZSCHE**

Do not go gentle into that good night, Old age should burn and rave at close of day; rage, rage, against the dying of the light! - **THOMAS**

Death is the veil which those who live call life: They sleep, and it is lifted. - **SHELLEY**

The will is that which has all power; it makes heaven and it makes hell: for there is no hell but where the will of the creature is turned from God, nor any heaven but where the will of the creature worketh with God. - **LAW**

The call of death is a call of love. Death can be sweet if we answer it in the affirmative, if we accept it as one of the great eternal forms of life and transformation. - **HESSE**

Ignore death up to the last moment; then, when it can't be ignored any longer, have yourself squirted full of morphia and shuffle off in a coma. Thoroughly sensible, humane and scientific, eh? - **HUXLEY**

God hath work to do in this world; and to desert it because of its difficulties and entanglements is to cast off His authority. It is not enough that we be just, that we be righteous, and walk with God in holiness; but we must also serve our generation, as David did before he fell asleep. God hath a work to do, and not to help Him is to oppose Him. - **OWEN**

Love is as strong as death; but nothing else is as strong as either; and both, love and death, met in Christ. How strong and powerful upon you, then, should that instruction be, that comes to you from both these, the love and death of Jesus Christ! - **DONNE**



DONNE

Our medically clever era has achieved many practical resurrections, and the testimony of these returnees from the beyond, their reports of a radiant tunnel and a suffusing love, have a kitschy triviality, a funhouse air. ~ The idea that we sleep for centuries without a flicker of a dream, while our bodies rot and turn to dust and the very stone marking our graves crumbles to nothing, is virtually as terrifying as annihilation. ~ The yearning for an afterlife is the opposite of self-ish: it is love and praise for the world that we are privileged, in this complex interval of light, to witness and experience. - **UPDIKE**

Search the Scriptures

- *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. - Psalm 23:4*
- *As water disappears from the sea or a riverbed becomes parched and dry, so man lies down and does not rise; till the heavens are no more, men will not awake or be roused from their sleep. - Job 14:11-12*
- *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. - Romans 6:23*
- *Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. - 1 Corinthians 15:24-26)*
- *When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” - 1 Corinthians 15:54-55*
- *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. - 1 John 3:14*
- *And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. - Revelation 20:12-15*

Think About It: It is all a matter of relationship. You can just approach the Lord, right where you are, and speak to Him, “Lord, I don’t really know You, I know a certain amount about You, but I don’t know You. Please come and make Yourself known to me. Please, make Yourself known as the One who really does bring God into focus. . . And please put Your unseen presence, Your Holy Spirit, into my life. There’s room in my life for You, Lord; I want to start that relationship with You now.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- If you believe there is nothing after this life, would that influence the way you live your life today? What arguments can you think of that support the idea that there is nothing after this earthly life? Do you know any arguments that support the opposite view?
- What is life's purpose, if there is no reward or judgment waiting for us in the hereafter?
- Read Luke 16:19-31. Which two facts about the hereafter are given in these verses?
- 1 Cor. 15:14 says, "...without the resurrection of Christ your faith has no meaning." Why is that?
- Read Matthew 25:31-46. On what basis will judgment take place?
- How would you explain that most near-death experiences (NDE's) tell about a tunnel to the light? Such a majority is not in proportion to the number of "good" and "bad" people around us, is it?
- If these "NDE" accounts are accurate, what do they tell us about the hereafter?
- Why do "NDE" accounts prove nothing about the hereafter? Surely they are not all products of people's imagination?
- Is it possible to be involved in the occult in a good or safe manner?
- Why would God have put such strong emphasis on His command that we not be involved in spiritism (as found in Leviticus 19:31 and 1 Samuel 28)?
- Green states that the spiritist contact with the deceased, in reality, is communication with demons. What does this mean for the content of the messages that are often received in these seances?
- Jesus expelled demons; they were afraid of Him and knew Him. (Read Luke 4:31-41, 8:26-39, 9:37-43, 9:49-50, 11:14-28). Where did Jesus' power over the world of spirits originate?
- Can every Christian expel demons in the name of Jesus, or does one need a special gifting? (Mark 6:7)
- An increasing number of people believe in reincarnation. What do you think makes this concept attractive?
- The original Eastern doctrine of reincarnation teaches a lifelong exercise of penitence in order to improve on your "karma," so in the end you will be released from suffering and be dissolved into the nothingness. To what end does the Western form of the doctrine of reincarnation lead?
- What are the differences between the Christian view on life after death and the doctrine of reincarnation?
- What influence could your (a) views on life and death and (b) history and its end, have on your attitude toward life?
- Green says, "You will have to choose between the circular view of life from the East and the linear view of Christianity." What are some pros and cons for each of these?
- If the linear view of Christianity is true, what role does natural life play in that view? Why are so many people afraid of death? Are you? Why (not)?
- Could you consider death a peaceful falling asleep?
- Some Christians believe there is a place called purgatory, a place of purification one passes through on the way to heaven. How does such a place relate to the atonement Christ made on the cross?
- How about the idea that you have eternal life right now, when you believe in Christ? Is this too easy? How does that influence your lifestyle?
- What is faith in Christ, besides just to accept that He was a relevant person in history?
- James 2:10 says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all the commandments." What does that mean to you? What kind of place do you imagine hell to be? Can you say that hell is a choice? Not choosing is also choosing. Why?

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THE AUDACITY OF JESUS' CLAIM *that he holds the key to your life?*

Jesus of Nazareth is the most famous person the world has ever known. Jesus is so important because He is such a wonderful person. We have lost this idea in Western culture and see Him as a stained-glass, window figure.

The Roman centurion that crucified Jesus was convinced: "Truly this man was a Son of God." But many people are not sure of Jesus' divinity. To judge that, we have to look at some characteristics of Jesus we find in the four Gospels.

The New Testament shows very clearly that Jesus is a Healer. Time and time again He heals people from a wide variety of illnesses. And in the majority of those cases He asks them to put their case in His hands—to trust Him. In that sense there is a real link between the healing that they receive and the faith that they exercise.

The great thing about His healing is not so much that it is the faith of human beings that causes the healing, but rather the fact of the divine law that He is ministering to them. I would rather call it "divine healing." Not "faith healing." Faith healing puts too much emphasis on us and our response; it's as if it's entirely due to our belief. However, that's not what it's about at all. There was a woman who for twenty years had been bowed down with back trouble, and He healed her immediately, without any faith being involved on her part (Luke 13:11-12). Therefore Jesus stands out from the so-called faith healers, who put too much emphasis on the customers' faith and their own ability.

When Jesus healed people, it wasn't just a physical healing; it was a whole healing of their personality. There are all sorts of interesting things like blind Bartimeus, sitting by the wayside and begging, and Jesus heals him. Then quite significantly, the evangelists say, "He got up and followed Jesus in the way." Now that could just mean along the road, but I'm pretty sure they mean...in the Jesus-way.

5

Who Is This Jesus?

Program Outline

Introduction

Is Jesus Divine?

- **He is the Healer**
- **He is the Prophet**
- **He is a Mystic**

Is Jesus Human?

- **He is a Teacher**
- **He is a Leader**
- **He is a Good Man**

Jesus Christ

Conclusion

So Many Voices

Without suffering, our work would just be social work, very good and helpful, but it would not be the work of Jesus Christ, not part of the Redemption.... All the desolation of the poor people, not only their material poverty, but their spiritual destitution, must be redeemed. And we must share it, for only by being one with them can we redeem them by bringing God into their lives and bringing them to God.



MOTHER TERESA

There is but one love of Jesus, as there is but one person in the poor—Jesus. We take vows of chastity to love Christ with undivided love; to be able to love him with undivided love we take a vow of poverty which frees us from all material possessions, and with that freedom we can love him with undivided love, and from this vow of undivided love we surrender ourselves totally to him in the person who takes his place.

*When Christ said: “I was hungry and you fed me,” he didn’t mean only the hunger for bread and for food; he also meant the hunger to be loved. Jesus himself experienced this loneliness. He came amongst his own and his own received him not, and it hurt him then and it has kept on hurting him. The same hunger, the same loneliness, the same having no one to be accepted by and to be loved and wanted by. Every human being in that case resembles Christ in his loneliness; and that is the hardest part—that’s real hunger. - **MOTHER TERESA***

There is no question that if Jesus Christ, or a great prophet from another religion, were to come back today, he would find it virtually impossible to convince anyone of his credentials...despite the fact that the vast evangelical machine on American television is predicated on His imminent return among us sinners. - **USTINOV**

The doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven, which was the main teaching of Jesus, is certainly one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought. - **WELLS**

This was the fullness of time, when Christ Jesus did come, that the Messiah should come. It was so to the Jews, and it was so to the Gentiles too.... Christ hath excommunicated no nation, no shire, no house, no man; He gives none of His ministers leave to say to any man, thou art not redeemed; He gives no wounded or afflicted conscience leave to say to itself, I am not redeemed. - **DONNE**

Jesus lived His life in complete dependence upon God, as we all ought to live our lives. But such dependence does not destroy human personality. Man is never so fully and so truly personal as when he is living in complete dependence upon God. This is how personality comes into its own. This is humanity at its most personal. - **BALLIE**

Jesus was the first socialist, the first to seek a better life for mankind. - **GORBACHEV**

Jesus, like all other religious leaders, taught men to pray, that is, He taught them to look away from the world of ordinary sense impressions and to open the heart and spirit to God; yet He is always insistent that religion must be related to life. It is only by contact with God that a better quality of living can be achieved. Yet that new quality of life has to be both demonstrated and tested in the ordinary rough and tumble of plain living. It is in ordinary human relationships that the validity of a man’s communion with God is to be proved. - **PHILLIPS**

Sad, indeed, would the whole matter be if the Bible had told us everything God wants us to believe. But herein is the Bible greatly wronged. It nowhere lays claim to be regarded as the Word, the Way, the Truth. The Bible leads us to Jesus. - **MACDONALD**

The Kingdom is to be in the midst of your enemies. And he who will not suffer this does not want to be of the Kingdom of Christ; he wants to be among friends, to sit among roses and lilies, not with the bad people but the devout people. O, you blasphemers and betrayers of Christ! If Christ had done what you are doing, who would have been spared? - **LUTHER**

Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean. - **SWINBURNE**

The word “Christianity” is already a misunderstanding—in reality there has been only one Christian, and he died on the cross. - **NIETZSCHE**

Search the Scriptures

- *“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” - Matthew 16:15*
- *They said, “If you are the Christ, tell us.” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.” - Luke 22:66-69*
- *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. - John 1:1*
- *Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” - John 8:58*
- *Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to him; and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. - Luke 4:40*
- *Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” - John 1:45-46*
- *On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.” Others said, “He is the Christ.” Still others asked, “How can the Christ come out from Galilee?” - John 7:40-41*
- *As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!” But Pilate answered, “You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him.” - John 19:6*

Think About It: Jesus is a great Teacher. Jesus is a great Healer. Jesus is the supreme Person who had the deepest relationship with God. He combines these categories in a way nobody has ever done, but He is more than that. He is the beyond that has come into our midst. He is the Lord that has come into the earth He made. There is no parallel to that anywhere in history, anywhere in thought; it is utterly and completely unique. You have either to accept it or to reject it. There is plenty of evidence, but you can always spit at the evidence. You’ve got to decide. Jesus is the One Who says, “Come, follow Me.” You have to decide whether to do that or not.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- Green states that Jesus has more influence today than ever before. Where can you see that influence at work today?
- The key issue is Jesus' claim to be God. If that statement is false, He would just be a historic figure, and we could discard Him as a lunatic. What are the consequences if the statement is true?
- What, in your opinion, is healing? Read Mark 2:1-12.
- How does Jesus bring recovery?
- Where does forgiveness fit in?
- When somebody is ill, should he pray for healing or find a doctor?
- Why would Jesus have focused on healing the sick—to catch people's attention or did He have another reason?
- What is the difference between calling Jesus a healer and calling Him God?
- The prophets of the Bible also received messages from God. And Elijah, for example, even brought someone back from the dead, healed a leper (2 Kings 4 and 5) and the Bible tells us he never died (2 Kings 2). Do you see any difference between these prophets and Jesus?
- Do you think there are prophets around today as well? Why or why not?
- What is the difference between calling Jesus a prophet or calling Him God?
- When you look up to the sky and try to count the stars, the Creator seems greater but also becomes more distant.
- How should God reveal Himself so He would seem easy to get in touch with?
- What could God do to convince you of Himself and His love for you?
- Does Jesus fit that picture? In what way does or doesn't He?
- Nobody could blame Jesus for anything bad. What does that prove to you?
- His purity convinced people through the ages that He is the Son of God. Why does it not have that effect on people today?
- Jesus was human like we are, and He dealt with the same problems, temptations and trials as we do. What does that mean to you (Heb. 4:15)?
- Is it difficult for you to imagine that Jesus was like us and yet entirely without sin?
- Jesus is a remarkable Teacher, yet there are many people who do not understand Him because He speaks in parables (Matt. 13:10-17; Luke 8:9-10). Why did He do this?
- Can you imagine a modern subject that you would like to discuss with Jesus? Name a few topics and what you'd like to ask Him. Can you imagine what He would say?
- If Jesus was a political leader, what then was His political goal?
- Read Luke 16:31. Why is it so hard to believe that Jesus is God in a human form?
- Is Jesus a human being with divine thoughts and ideas or God in a human body?
- What difference does it make?
- If Jesus is the Son of God, what do you think He meant by this statement: "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father but by Me"?

WHY IS IT HOGWASH TO SAY:

“it matters not what you believe”?

People often say that all religions lead to God and that they are like different roads leading up the same mountain. This is a profoundly stupid thing to say. It is said by people who have never really looked into any faith at all. This outlook does not do justice to people’s deepest conviction, for no adherent of any religion would accept that his faith is just a variant of all other religions. Moreover, we never apply that sort of thing to any other walk of life. If I was to say to you that all political parties in our country are saying the same thing or that all roads lead from here to Dallas, I would be self-evidently crazy.

Why then do we make claims like that about religion and about God? The main reason perhaps is that modern Western societies are marked by religious diversity.

We have certainly become a plural society. As you walk the streets of almost any Western city, you will bump into Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims. You see people from all over the world. You meet cultures and hear languages that were almost unknown only one generation ago. The world has shrunk to a global village. Of course, that very much enriches our culture. It leads to a plurality in our culture, and that’s a very healthy thing. How boring it would be if it were all the same.

Plurality as such is not a problem. It widens our horizon. It makes us more aware of the colorful diversity of peoples and cultures. But *pluralism* is a very different story. Pluralism is also the name of the modern worldview that everybody’s view is equally valuable in matters of value although not in matters of fact. It is part of the relativistic worldview that is so dominant nowadays. It is very widely held by unthinking people and even by some intelligent people. If pluralism were true, it would rub out Christianity completely.

6

One World, One Religion?

Program Outline

Introduction

- **Pluralism**

All the Same

- **Syncretism**
- **Mysticism**

Not the Same

- **Tolerance**
- **Mission**

Way to God

- **Revelation**

Conclusion

So Many Voices



MORE

For this is one of the ancientest laws among them: that no man shall be blamed for reasoning in the maintenance of his own religion. - MORE

The highest goodness is like water. Water benefits all things and does not compete. It stays in the lowly places which others despise. Therefore, it is near the Eternal. - **TZE**

After coming into contact with a religious man, I always feel I must wash my hands. - **NIETZSCHE**

A religion, that is, a true religion, must consist of ideas and facts both: not of ideas alone without facts, for then it would be mere Philosophy, nor of facts alone without ideas, of which those facts are symbols, or out of which they arise, or upon which they are grounded, for then it would be mere history. - **COLERIDGE**



CHESTERTON

Buddhism is not a creed, it is a doubt. - CHESTERTON

Faith is a stick to lean on, not to hit others with. - **LAURILLARD**

Christianity has operated with an unmitigated arrogance and cruelty—necessarily, since a religion ordinarily imposes on those who have discovered the true faith

the spiritual duty of liberating the infidels. - **BALDWIN**

I don't regard tolerance as a great eternally established divine principle. It is just a makeshift, suitable for an overcrowded and overheated planet. It's dull. And yet it entails imagination. - **FORSTER**

To know a person's religion we need not listen to his profession of faith but must find his brand of intolerance. - **BONHOEFFER**

Toleration is the greatest gift of the mind; it requires the same effort of the brain that it takes to balance oneself on a bicycle. - **KELLER**

There is not a Musselman alive who would not imagine that he was performing an action pleasing to God and his Holy Prophet by exterminating every Christian on earth, while the Christians are scarcely more tolerant on their side. - DIDEROT



DIDEROT

There is nothing in our book, the Koran, that teaches us to suffer peacefully. Our religion teaches us to be intelligent. Be peaceful, be courteous, obey the law, respect everyone; but if someone puts his hand on you, send him to the cemetery. That's a good religion. - **MALCOLM X**

Zen...does not confuse spirituality with thinking about God while one is peeling potatoes. Zen spirituality is just to peel the potatoes. - **WATTS**

Institutions have a poor safety record. The guillotines of orthodoxy keep a clean blade that is always honed for heresy. And somewhere near the place where witches die an unseen sign is posted whose invisible letters cleanly read: WE ARE PROUD TO REPORT 0 WORKING DAYS LOST TO INJURY OR ACCIDENT. - **THE MANAGEMENT**. Let us pray.... ~ Decision is the key to destiny. "God, can you be merciful and send me off to hell and lock me in forever?" "No, Pilgrim, I will not send you there, but if you chose to go there, I could never lock you out." - **MILLER**

Tolerance is only another name for indifference. - **SOMERSET MAUGHAM**

Here is the Truth in a little creed, Enough for all the roads we go: In Love is all the law we need; in Christ is all the God we know. - **MARKHAM**

Our knowledge of the historical worth of certain religious doctrines increases our respect for them, but does not invalidate our proposal that they should cease to be put forward as the reasons for the precepts of civilization. On the contrary! Those historical residues have helped us to view religious teachings, as it were, as neurotic relics, and we may now argue that the time has probably come, as it does in any analytic treatment, for replacing the effects of repression by the results of the rational operation of the intellect. - **FREUD**

Search the Scriptures

- *The words of the wise are like goads, their collected sayings, like firmly embedded nails—given by one Shepherd. - Ecclesiastes 12:11*
- *...you have one Teacher, the Christ. - Matthew 23:10*
- *“At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time.” - Matthew 24:23-25*
- *Jesus answered him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me. If you really knew me, you would have known my Father as well. From now on you know him and have seen him.” - John 14:6-7*
- *“... by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead, that this man is standing before you healed.... Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” - Acts 4:10-12*
- *But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! - Galatians.1:8-9*
- *Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel. - Philippians 1:27*
- *If anyone thinks to be religious among you, [yet] does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion [is] vain. - James 1:26-27*

Think About It: All religions do not come down to the same thing. That is an utterly untenable position. It is a view that is held only by people who have never really looked deeply into the subject. And I beg you, do not buy this shallow-minded deceit that all religions are saying the same thing.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- In the West we separate values and facts. What are the consequences of this separation? Is this separation reasonable? Aren't truth and love facts as well?
- Green mentioned values like God and truth. Is God a value or a fact?
- Do you think everyone is entitled to his own opinion in this area?
- What is the difference between pluralism, relativism and the Christian faith?
- What is your opinion of the rituals in the religions Dr. Green spoke of?
- Are people completely free to believe and practice whatever form of religion they like?
- Is everything allowed if done because of a religious conviction?
- Is tolerance our highest value, or should there be limits to tolerance?
- How should we judge mystical experiences?
- To believe in syncretism, you need to have one final goal or one common source. How is this thought related to Christianity, that believes in one God, the Creator of all reality? Is there a difference?
- Green: "What you believe determines your behavior." Does "believe" only refer to ideas or also to supernatural powers or gods, who determine the behavior of their followers?
- If supernatural powers can influence the behavior of their followers, would you agree that religion can be dangerous?
- Is it possible to explain all religious conduct in a psychological way?
- Green pleads in favor of a dialogue with other religions. What's the use, if there is only one truth?
- Would you agree that the most important standard to measure a religious point of view by is its attitude towards human dignity?
- Christian beliefs deal with absolutes. Does that mean a Christian is an intolerant person?
- If you are a Christian, have you ever been afraid to share your testimony because people considered your faith to be intolerant? How do you solve this problem?
- The more you are convinced of the Christian faith, the more you will speak about it. Is this true? Why?
- Why is it impossible for a human being to get in touch with God?
- What does "God is holy" mean?
- Read Isaiah 59:1-2. If God did not hide His face, what would happen to us? (Read also Romans 1:18.)
- Green mentions 4 arguments that plead in favor of Jesus: (1) No one else has ever said that he was the embodiment of God. (2) No one has ever said that he would completely deal with evil. (3) No one has ever returned from the dead. (4) No other leader comes alive in his followers. How do these statements affect you?
- Jesus states, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by Me." What does the second part of His statement mean?
- Anybody who is reading this chapter can make a sort of scientific experiment. You can say, "Jesus Christ, if You are there, please come with Your life into my life. Please bring Your truth into my mind. Please direct my feet along Your path, and I will follow You wherever You go." If you say that and Jesus is not the truth, the way and the life, then it is not going to make any difference. You have just wasted a few words.
- Do you have the courage to try this experiment? If you do, will you? If not, why not?

OK — IT IS THE BIG AND UNAVOIDABLE QUESTION:

*If God is God and God is powerful,
why does he allow suffering?*

This program involves perhaps the most perplexing question in the whole world. It is one that concerns every one of us personally, because we're all going to have to face it. It is the problem of suffering.

The problem of suffering has become an enormous one in the West these days, partly (I think) because of the power of television. Constantly, pain is brought into our sitting rooms, night after night after night. We can take only a certain amount of it. But in a society that is committed to trying to find personal happiness above anything else, pain is the great obscenity, the thing that refuses to fit in.

Today, there is a tremendous amount of agnosticism about the purpose and meaning of life. We are good at analyzing where we came from, how we are all made up, and the chemistry, but we are not at all good at thinking of our destiny. Therefore, pain doesn't seem to have any sort of context to fit into. It doesn't make a lot of sense.

What's more, I think we have all lost the sense of belonging to a "family of peoples." We have become so individualistic that suffering doesn't really affect us. We have lost the idea of solidarity of a world that is in pain. With the decline of Christianity in the West, we've taken our eyes off the cross. And yet the cross is the place where most of all the problem of suffering is brought into clear relief. It was on the cross that God Himself tasted human suffering.

7

The Good, the Bad & the Suffering

Program Outline

Introduction

- **The Problem**

World Views

- **Humanism**
- **Islam**
- **Buddhism**
- **Dualism**

In Practice

- **Guilt & Punishment**
- **Choosing to Suffer**

Jesus Christ

Conclusion

So Many Voices



Suffering is God-forsakenness. That is why he who is in communion with God cannot suffer.... If Christ only becomes the Christ in suffering and rejection, his disciple only becomes disciple in suffering and rejection, as fellow in crucifixion. - **BONHOEFFER**

BONHOEFFER We are threatened with suffering from three directions: from our own body, which is doomed to decay and dissolution, which cannot even do without pain and anxiety as warning signals; from the external world, which may rage against us with overwhelming and merciless forces of destruction; and finally from our relations to other men. The suffering which comes from this last source is perhaps more painful than any other. - **FREUD**

You can hold yourself back from the sufferings of the world; that is something you're free to do, and it accords with your nature. But perhaps this very holding back is the one suffering you could avoid. - **KAFKA**



Man is never helped in his suffering by what he thinks for himself but only by revelation of a wisdom greater than his own. It is this which lifts him out of distress. - **JUNG**

JUNG There isn't much sense in suffering, since drugs can be given for pain, itching, and other discomforts. The belief has long died that suffering here on earth will be rewarded in heaven. Suffering has lost its meaning. - **KUBLER-ROSS**

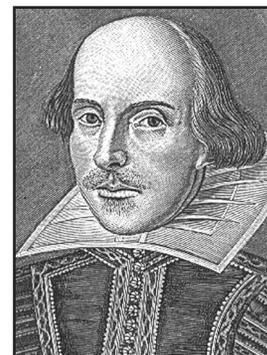
How often—or will it be forever?—how often will this endless void take hold of me as something entirely new, that will evoke me to say, “Never until this moment have I realised how great my loss has been”? The same leg is amputated again and again. The first cut of the knife felt over and over. ~ What do people mean when they say, “I am not afraid of God, for I know His goodness.” Have they never been to the dentist? - **LEWIS**

A healthy child is somehow very much like God; a hurting child, his son. - **MILLER**

Do not vainly lament, but do wonder at the rule of transcendency, and learn from it the emptiness of human life. Do not cherish unworthy desire that the changeable might become unchanging. ~ All created beings are unmanifest in their beginning, manifest in their interim state, and unmanifest again when they are annihilated. So what need is there for lamentation? - **BHAGAVAD GITA**

The world is full of suffering. ...In fact, life that is not free from desire and passion is always involved with suffering. - **BUDDHA**

The liquid drops of tears that you have shed,/ Shall come again, transform'd to Orient pearl./ Advantaging their loan with interest,/ Of ten times double gain of happiness. - **SHAKESPEARE**



SHAKESPEARE

The path of sorrows, and that path alone,/ Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;/ No traveller has reached that blessed abode,/ who found not thorns and briars in his road. - **COWPER**

There are people who have an appetite for grief. Pleasure is not strong enough, and they crave pain. - **EMERSON**

Most people get a fair amount of fun out of their lives, but on balance life is suffering, and only the very young or the very foolish imagine otherwise. - **ORWELL**

A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act. - **GANDHI**

Everything in life that we really accept undergoes a change. So suffering must become Love. That is the mystery. - **MANSFIELD**

Happiness is not a reward; it is a consequence. Suffering is not a punishment; it is a result. - **INGERSOLL**

Search the Scriptures

- *Cast your cares on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.* - Psalm 55:22
- *“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.”* - Mark 14:34
- *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.* - Romans 8:18
- *...sorrowful, yet always rejoicing....* - 2 Corinthians 6:10
- *Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.* - 2 Corinthians 7:10
- *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.* - James 1:2-3
- *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.* - 1 Peter 4:12-13
- *For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God. For one is approved if, mindful of God, he endures pain when suffering unjustly.* - 1 Peter 3:18-19
- *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.* - 1 Peter 5:6
- *Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.* - James 5:13

Think about it: The wonder of the cross of Christ—one of the things that makes it so unique—is not only that Jesus tasted the cup of suffering and drank it to the bottom, but that He also dealt radically with the problem of human weakness. He took the badness, the poison and the guilt upon Himself. Jesus’ sacrifice is why He is able to stretch out His arms to sinners like us and say, “Come back. All is forgiven; I have carried your guilt. As you have to go through suffering in human life, you and I can go through it together with your hand in mine.”

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- Sometimes it seems like suffering is increasing, or is this just an impression caused by the fact that we see more of it through modern media?
- If suffering were to increase, would it be because people become more evil?
- Green states that because of individualistic thinking, we cannot deal with suffering anymore. Would you be willing to sacrifice in an effort to reduce suffering in the world?
- Green speaks of a suffering God. At the cross God suffered. Why would the Almighty God choose to suffer?
- Why was it so necessary for Jesus to suffer? (Read Hebrews 2:14.)
- How would it profit you to know that God also suffers as a result of what is happening in our world today?
- What is the meaning of Hebrews 4:14-15?
- “God is an Almighty God, so He is responsible for all the sufferings in the world.” Would you agree?
- “If God is in charge, everything has meaning.” Do you agree? Why (not)?
- In his book *The Problem Of Pain*, C. S. Lewis says, “Suffering is God’s megaphone. When God cannot reach you, He sometimes will use the means of suffering to bring you back to Him.” How can a loving God do something like that?
- Why do some people have to deal with more suffering than others?
- “Shall he, that contendeth with the Almighty, instruct Him?” (Job 40:2) When God revealed His power to Job, that proved to be sufficient. Does that also work for you when you focus on God’s might and power?
- Why do we always look reproachfully up to heaven instead of somewhere else when something bad happens to us?
- Is it God who brings suffering to his life, or does the sinner have himself to blame?
- Is suffering punishment for sin? Do we deserve punishment? (Read Romans 5:1-11.)
- But what if our suffering is not the direct consequence of our own behavior?
- Consider this from Jesus on suffering: “Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.... Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when [men] shall reproach you, and persecute you...for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.” (Matthew 5:1-12)
- Is it possible to find God’s love in trials? How? (Read James 1:12-18.)

CAN IT BE TRUE THAT THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH, ONLY PREFERENCES AND OPINIONS?

But what more than truth, if anything, can be found reliable?

Do you want to find it?

There is an enormous skepticism today about the claims of the Enlightenment. People are saying that modernism has proved inadequate to cope with our world. Today we are moving into a stage called Postmodernism. Nobody knows exactly what it is, but they know that it reflects the disenchantment with the modernity worldview. In Postmodernism, there is no such thing as absolute truth. There is no big story that helps us to understand all the other stories. There is your story and there is my story, and the world is a mosaic of all these little stories. There is no “metastory,” as they call it, to help us explain the whole thing.

Postmodernism is extremely subjective, if we’re going to use that word, because it simply concentrates on one’s personal views. For instance, when you’re reading the text of a book, a Postmodernist would say. “That text has no meaning. It is only my meaning that I see. There is no overall at all.” It drives you into your own self, and so it is disastrous for society. The word “Postmodernism” only exists because they cannot think of any other word for it. But you can’t live that way. You don’t just live by personal perception. Your feet stumble against reality and truth.

If there is no absolute truth, no overall ethic, a person with power could feel free to manipulate others to do exactly what he wants. Nietzsche foresaw this a hundred and twenty years ago.

8

Truth, Lies and Videotape

Program Outline

Introduction

Subjective-Objective

- Descartes
- Empiricism

No Truth

- Postmodernism

My Truth

- Fundamentalism
- Religious
Fundamentalism

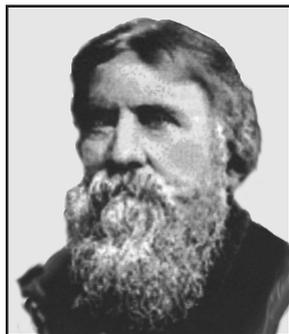
Jesus Christ

Apologetics

Conclusion

So Many Voices

Do you so love the truth and the right that you welcome, or at least submit willingly to, the idea of an exposure of what in you is yet unknown to yourself—an exposure that may redound to the glory of the truth by making you ashamed and humbled? ...To be humbly ashamed is to be plunged in the cleansing bath of truth. - **MACDONALD**



MACDONALD

God has been replaced, as he has all over the West, with respectability and air conditioning. - **BARAKA**

The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts. - **RUSSELL**

If you can't convince them, confuse them. - **TRUMAN**

It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore and to see ships tost upon the sea: a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle and the adventures thereof below. But no pleasure is comparable to standing upon the vantage ground of truth and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below. - **BACON**

Religions die when they are proved to be true. - **WILDE**

Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the test. - **JOHNSON**

Traditional scientific method has always been, at the very best, 20-20 hindsight. It's good for seeing where you've been. It's good for testing the truth of what you think you know, but it can't tell you where you should go. - **PIRSIG**

There is no such source of error as the pursuit of absolute truth. - **BUTLER**

Man associates ideas not according to logic or verifiable exactitude but according to his pleasure and interests. It is for this reason that most truths are nothing but prejudices. - **DE GOURMONT**

With the truth, you need to get rid of it as soon as possible and pass it on to someone else. As with illness, this is the only way to be cured of it. The person who keeps truth in his hands has lost. - **BAUDRILLARD**

Truth implies more than a simple statement of fact. "I don't have any whisky," may be a fact but it is not a truth. - **BURROUGHS**

Truth is a pain which will not stop. And the truth of this world is to die. You must choose: either dying or lying. Personally, I have never been able to kill myself. - **CELINE**

Do not be too quick to condemn the man who no longer believes in God: for it is perhaps your own coldness and avarice and mediocrity and materialism and selfishness that have chilled his faith. - **MERTON**

We are not abandoning our convictions, our philosophy or traditions, nor do we urge anyone to abandon theirs. - **GORBACHOV**

The businessman who assumes that his life is everything, and the mystic who asserts that it is nothing, fail, on this side and on that, to hit the truth. No, truth, being alive, was only to be found by continuous excursions into either realm, and though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset is to ensure sterility. - **FORSTER**

Truth is simply a compliment paid to sentences seen to be paying their way. - **RORTY**

There are times when we must sink to the bottom of our misery to understand truth, just as we must descend to the bottom of a well to see the stars in broad daylight. - **HAVEL**

When I tell any truth it is not for the sake of convincing those who do not know it but for the sake of defending those who do. - **BLAKE**



BLAKE

In order to swim one takes off all one's clothes: in order to aspire to the truth one must undress in a far more inward sense, divest oneself of all one's inward clothes, before one is sufficiently naked. - **KIERKEGAARD**

The truth has never been of any real value to any human being—a symbol for mathematicians and philosophers to pursue. In human relations kindness and lies are worth a thousand truths. - **GREENE**

Search the Scriptures

- *Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.* - Proverbs 12:19
- *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* - Isaiah 9:6
- *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* - John 1:14
- *“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”* - John 8:32
- *“He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him.”* - John 8:44
- *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* - John 14:6
- *“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.”* - John 16:13-15
- *“Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed, and in so doing have wandered from the faith.”* - I Timothy 6:20

Think about it: What do we mean by truth and by reality? Is it something that can be measured only by the five senses, which is what the materialist claims? Is it something that exists in the realms of the mind and of the idea...? I believe...if we want to find the truth, we are never going to find it without a personal encounter. The heart of the matter is that the beyond has come into our midst, that the ultimate truth has become something that we can experience in Jesus Christ.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- Sometimes people confront us with their opinions and ideas, presented as the absolute truth. Is there a difference between these “truths” and absolute truth? Can you give an example?
- Do you ever allow other people to determine what is truth for you?
- Do you ever draw a line and decide, “This might be true for others but not for me”?
- In that case, is your truth better or more absolute than somebody else’s?
- Would you agree to the statement that truth as a relative concept is an internal contradiction?
- Do you make a distinction between absolute truth and personal truth, or is it always a matter of preference? Is truth absolute or personal?
- What does it mean, when something is absolute truth? What are the consequences?
- What would you do if something you consider to be true would hurt someone else’s interest?
- Is Jesus’ claim, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” the same as the postmodern truth claim that truth is something personal, changing from person to person and, therefore, absolute truth does not exist? Or does Jesus mean something entirely different?
- Jesus did not claim only to know the absolute truth but said He is the absolute truth. Was Jesus a fundamentalist? If not, then what does the phrase “an eye for an eye” mean? (Deut.19:21)
- 2 Cor. 5:10 says, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body.” On what ground will God judge us? What absolute standard will God measure our lives by?
- Subjectivism and rationalism both set a limited human perception of truth as standard. This will not work. Why not?
- Green indicates how truth is not defined by opinions but actions. The subjectivist would say, “OK, but the definition of a good deed will differ for different situations, so the truth will differ in each situation....” What is the difference between these two?
- Green says, “Truth is a person: Jesus Christ. He is the greatest fact and the greatest act.” How does this statement exclude the option of subjectivism?
- “The commandments...are summed up in this sentence, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:9-10) Can you think of one example in Jesus’ life when He did not live up to this standard?

DO YOU EVER SENSE THE DIVINE SPIRIT IMPINGING ON YOUR LIFE?

Do you welcome him or turn away?

The Holy Spirit is the great Christian spiritual force. I think you could say that the interest in general spirituality, which there has been in secular society, has probably been parallel to some extent by the renewed interest in what used to be called the forgotten member of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit. And what has been happening is a swing against the rationalistic, dry fundamentalism or the contentless liberalism that has marked the Western scene for so long. And the people are saying, “Hey, this is God we are talking about.”

Well, let us get quite clear about this. The Holy Spirit is God, no less. The unique thing is that He is God Almighty and that He is holy. He is not an undifferentiated spiritual force. He shares the holiness, the awesomeness and the purity of the living God.

Now Christianity has always been shamelessly monotheistic. There is one source of all reality. But that unity also has diversity within it. There is one world, but there is a lot of diversity within that one world. There is one God, but there is diversity within the godhead. At the heart of the divine there is relationship. That is the critical thing that the doctrine of the Trinity is saying, that at the very heart of the godhead there is relationship. You see, Christians believe that God is love. You cannot have love without relationship. Love has got to have a giver, and there has got to be a receiver. And at the heart of all reality is that relationship which we find so valuable.

9

Who Is This Spirit?

Program Outline

Introduction

Who is This Holy Spirit?

- **Trinity**

How Do We Know Him?

- **Evidence**

How Does He Work?

- **In Me?**
- **Experience**
- **Abuse**

Jesus Christ

Conclusion

So Many Voices



E. S. JONES

If the Holy Spirit can take over the subconscious with our consent and cooperation, then we have almighty Power working at the basis of our lives, then we can do anything we ought to do, go anywhere we ought to go, and be anything we ought to be. Life is supplied with a basic adequacy... ~ The conscious mind determines the actions, the unconscious mind determines the reactions; and the reactions are just as important as

the actions. Many Christians are Christians in their actions—they don't lie, steal, commit adultery, or get drunk; but they react badly to what happens to them: they react in anger, bad temper, self-pity, jealousy, and envy... When the depths are upheld by the Holy Spirit, then the reaction is Christian. - **E. S. JONES**

But when does the flesh receive the bread which He calls His flesh? The faithful know and receive the Body of Christ if they labour to be the Body of Christ; and they become the Body of Christ if they study to live by the Spirit of Christ: for that which lives by the Spirit of Christ is the Body of Christ. - **ST. AUGUSTINE**

Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for pow-

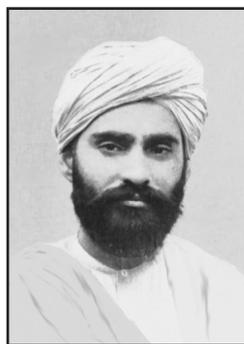
He who desires to become a spiritual man must not be ever taking note of others and, above all, of their sins, lest he fall into wrath and bitterness and a judging spirit towards his neighbors. - **TAULER**

ers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you yourself shall be the miracle. - **BROOKS**

God, though present everywhere, has His special residence, as being a pure Spirit, in our minds: "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." He is somewhere in the recesses of our soul, in the springs of our existence, a light in that mysterious region of our nature where the wishes, feelings, thoughts, and emotions take their earliest rise. The mind is a sanctuary, in the center of which the Lord sits enthroned, the lamp of consciousness burning before Him. - **SAPHIR**

What doth it profit thee to enter into deep discussions concerning the Holy Trinity, if thou lack humility, and be thus displeasing to the Trinity? - **À KEMPIS**

There is no other interpreter of the Word of God than the Author of this Word, as He Himself has said, "They shall be all taught of God." (John 6:45) Hope for nothing from your own labors, from your own understanding: trust solely in God, and in the influence of His Spirit. Believe this on the word of a man who has experience. - **LUTHER**



SINGH

Salt, when dissolved in water, may disappear, but it does not cease to exist. We can be sure of its presence by tasting the water. Likewise, the indwelling Christ, though unseen, will be made evident to others from the love which he imparts to us. - **SINGH**

Broadly speaking, I learned to recognize sin as the refusal to live up to the enlightenment we possess: to know the right order of values and deliberately to choose the lower ones.... - **BONDFIELD**

The principal part of faith is patience.

There is more hid in Christ than we shall ever learn, here or there either; but they that begin first to inquire will soonest be gladdened with revelation; and with them He will be best pleased, for the slowness of His disciples troubled Him of old.

The Son of God is the teacher of men, giving to them of His Spirit—that Spirit which manifests the deep things of God, being to a man the mind of Christ. The great heresy of the Church of the present day is unbelief in this Spirit. - **MACDONALD**

Faith is the leading grace in all our spiritual warfare and conflict; but all along, while we live, it hath faithful company that adheres to it and helps it. Love and hope work, and all other graces...work and help faith. Yet when we come to die, faith is left alone. Now, try what faith will do. ~ It is not the distance of the earth from the sun, nor the sun's withdrawing itself, that makes a dark and gloomy day; but the interposition of clouds and vaporous exhalations. Neither is thy soul beyond the reach of the promise, nor does God withdraw Himself; but the vapours of thy carnal, unbelieving heart do cloud thee. - **OWEN**

Search the Scriptures

- *The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life. - Job 33:4*
- *But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. - 1 Corinthians 2:10-12*
- *The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. - 1 Corinthians 3:10*
- *You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. - 2 Corinthians 3:2-3*
- *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. - 2 Corinthians 3:17*
- *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. - Galatians 5:22*
- *Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. - 1 John 4:2*
- *But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. - Jude 20*

Think about it: It is wonderfully attractive to have Him in your life. He brings these gifts of joy and peace and self-control and power, but He makes God real. That is a whole new dimension of opening up. It is as if throughout my life I have been going around with dark glasses. When the Spirit comes in, He rips the glasses off my face and I have 20-20 vision. I begin to see things that I never saw before. And I say, "How is it that I missed it all these years?"

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- Green says, “The heart of the Divine Being is relationship. Because God is love, in the Divinity there is a relation, the relation between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” If in that respect God is all provident in Himself, why did He create man?
- Christianity has always been monotheistic, for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are One. That still sounds like three persons. How can this unity be compared to a marriage, the unity of husband and wife?
- What comes to your mind when you read the word “spirit”? (Read 1 Cor. 2:11 and Gen. 1:1-2.)
- How can the invisible Holy Spirit influence the visible world through signs and wonders?
- In the rational approach of reality that has dominated the Western world for centuries, signs and wonders have not had much effect. What conclusions does these kinds of events lead you to?
- Green indicates that it is important to question whether a supernatural event can truly be ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Why? What risk do we run if we do not consider that?
- Is it possible that there are other sources for supernatural phenomena? Which?
- When Green speaks of “charismata,” he means the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit through people. How do you think this sort of thing is possible?
- “The supernatural work of the Holy Spirit through people” sounds peculiar or even threatening. Does a person lose control in these events? (Read 1 Cor. 14:32-33.)
- Green says, “He never comes as an intruder. He always comes as a guest who was wholeheartedly invited to come in.” Does that imply that much of the work of the Holy Spirit depends on us?
- What is the aim of the Holy Spirit? (Read 1 Cor. 2:6-16, Gal. 4:6, Romans 8:26-27.) Do you notice these things in your life?
- Would the awareness of God’s presence in your life (1 Cor. 3:16) have any positive side-effects on your self-image?
- The Bible indicates two forms in which we recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in men: (1) “the gifts of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 12 & 14) and (2) “the fruit of the Holy Spirit” (Galatians 5:19-23).
- What is the difference?
- The Bible indicates that “the fruit of the Holy Spirit” is a part of sanctification: the process of becoming holy. In other words, the Spirit is sanctifying the Christian. Why is holiness important? (Read Hebrews 12:14.)
- Would it be right to say that the aim of the Holy Spirit as He works through the charismata is also holiness? Why?

NEVER HAVE WE HAD SUCH POWER TO MANIPULATE & MANAGE OUR WORLD.

So...how well are we doing?

We are all good-willing and well-thinking people. With our scientific and technical inventions we make fantastic progress. But we are not able to make a good society. What went wrong? We all think that we've got a heart of gold and that we do everything from the best of intentions. Well, perhaps it isn't always quite like that. Things get in the way, and sometimes they trip us up.

Science is particularly fascinating for Western European people, because science arose in a Christian environment. I believe it could have arisen nowhere else. In the days of Plato and the Greeks, they wouldn't have gotten onto science, although they were great thinkers, because they dealt with ideas, not with the physical world. In the East, if you move out to India and similar places, you find that the basic understanding is that matter, the physical world, is not important while the spiritual world is much more important. Science could never have grown there. It could never have grown in the polytheist world with many, many gods because there would have been no harmony to hold the different scientific discoveries together, no center of unity. And in the pagan world, they deified—worshipped—nature. It was too holy to touch. It certainly is not the sort of thing you experiment on. So really it's only in the Christian West that science could have begun.

Newton, for instance, wrote more on prayer than he did on the natural sciences, and he said that this world can arise from nothing but the perfectly free will of God. So science was a Christian invention. But increasingly under the influence of the Enlightenment, God was kicked upstairs where He could do no harm, and man reveled in the power to explore. And gradually God was simply left out of account. And that is how science has continued since then.

10

We Meant No Harm!

Program Outline

Introduction

- **History of Science**
- **Genetics & Engineering**

Politics

- **Society without God**
- **Western Society**

Goodness

- **What is Good?**
- **Who is Good?**
- **Who Makes Good?**

Conclusion

So Many Voices

This is the patent age of new inventions,/ For killing bodies, and for saving souls,/ All propagated with the best intentions. - **BYRON**

Of all virtues and dignities of the mind, goodness is the greatest, being the character of the Deity; and without it, man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing. - **BACON**

Science has nothing to be ashamed of even in the ruins of Nagasaki. The shame is theirs who appeal to other values than the human imaginative values which science has evolved. - **BRONOWSKI**

Science in the modern world has many uses; its chief use, however, is to provide long words to cover the errors of the rich. - **CHESTERTON**

The latest refinements of science are linked with the cruelties of the Stone Age. - **CHURCHILL**

My kingdom is as wide as the world, and my desire has no limit. I go forward always, freeing spirits and weighing worlds, without fear, without compassion, without love, and without God. Men call me Science. - **FLAUBERT**

Hate sometimes stands quite close to love. God too stands often near to evil—like silent chessmen—side by side. Only the color of the squares is different. - **MILLER**

Science is the record of dead religions. - **WILDE**

The end of science is not to prove a theory but to improve mankind. - **HALL**

The Victor will never be asked if he told the truth. - **HITLER**

Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. If we continue to develop our technology without wisdom or prudence, our servant may prove to be our executioner. - **BRADLEY**

The pace of science forces the pace of technique. Theoretical physics forces atomic energy on us; the successful production of the fission bomb forces upon us the manufacture of the hydrogen bomb. We do not choose our problems, we do not choose our products; we are pushed—we are forced—by what? By a system which has no purpose and goal transcending it, and which makes man its appendix. - **FROMM**

Science and art are only too often a superior kind of dope, possessing this advantage over booze and morphia: that they can be indulged in with a good conscience and with the conviction that, in the process of indulging, one is leading the “higher life.” - **HUXLEY**



BYRON

For the first time in the history of mankind, one generation literally has the power to destroy the past, the present and the future, the power to bring time to an end. - **HUMPHREY**

Can a society in which thought and technique are scientific persist for a long period, as, for example, ancient Egypt persisted, or does it necessarily contain within itself forces which must bring either decay or explosion? - **RUSSELL**

It is absolutely impossible to transcend the laws of nature. What can change in historically different circumstances is only the form in which these laws expose themselves. ~ The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it. - **MARX**

The present age prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, fancy to reality, the appearance to the essence; for in these days illusion only is sacred, truth profane. - **FEUERBACH**

To rely upon conviction, devotion, and other excellent spiritual qualities—that is not to be taken seriously in politics. - **LENIN**

Nails were not enough to hold God-and-man nailed and fastened on the Cross, had not love held Him there. - **CATHERINE OF SIENA**

I began revolution with 82 men. If I had to do it again, I'd do it with 10 or 15 and absolute faith. It does not matter how small you are if you have faith and plan of action. - **CASTRO**

We have genuflected before the god of science only to find that it has given us the atomic bomb, producing fears and anxieties that science can never mitigate. - **KING**

We are tainted by modern philosophy which has taught us that all is good, whereas evil has polluted everything, and in a very real sense all is evil, since nothing is in its proper place. - **DE MAISTRE**

Only those who try to live near God and have formed the habit of faithfulness to Him in the small things of our daily life can hope in times of need for that special light which shows us our path. To do as well as we can the job immediately before us is the way to learn what we ought to do next. - **UNDERHILL**

We ought not to be weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed. - **BROTHER LAWRENCE**



CATHERINE OF SIENA

Search the Scriptures

- *“The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; his word is upon my tongue.” - 2 Samuel 23:2*
- *“Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.” - Psalm 25:4-5*
- *“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” - Psalm 51:10*
- *“I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God.” - Isaiah 61:10*
- *“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” - Matthew 26:41*
- *How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God? - John 5:44*
- *“So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.” - Romans 7:21-25*
- *“I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.” - Romans 7:15-19*
- *...you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. - Colossians 3:10*

Think about it: When the Christian opens up his life to the Holy Spirit, there is a progressive change. Christians are still fallen creatures, but they're not alone. They have within them the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and in the New Testament it's called the fruit of the Spirit, the quality of life that the Spirit produces: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, self-control, faithfulness, and so on. (See Galatians 5:22-23.) These are fruit, if you like, on the tree of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit grows this stuff in our lives.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- In the famous novel, Count Frankenstein creates a monster a humanoid creature that is stronger and better than most human beings but very ugly. Thus its tender feelings toward women remain unmet. Gradually the monster develops an intense hatred toward his maker and seeks to avenge itself on him. What dilemma does the writer of this novel put under question? In other words, what is “hubris”?
 - What we see in the Frankenstein story is an attempt to redo and improve the work of the Creator. However, the shortcomings of its maker seem to cumulate in the creature and result in disaster. If you look at this image and then consider genetic manipulation, do you see any risks?
 - In discussions on the ethics of science a question many people ask today is, “Should everything that can be done, be done?” What do they mean?
 - Why would scientists be interested in trying everything that can be done, even if they do not see any direct practical use for their experiment yet?
 - If we all just try very hard to do good, wouldn’t we come a long way in creating a better world for ourselves?
 - We would all know what is right if we just used common sense. Do you agree?
 - In their attempts to improve the condition of humanity, all great thinkers and leaders seem to seek their resources in the problem’s source: man himself. This sounds like a circle approach. Do you think this approach will ever be successful, or do we need help from outside?
 - You cannot change the world if you cannot change yourself. Do you agree?
 - Green mentions several “bad examples” like Marx, Stalin, Castro and Mao—all communists.
- Do you think the capitalist political systems of the West have taken care of things in a better way?
- Green says, “The political ideology makes no difference.... It’s the nature of the animal. All I’m doing is imposing my will and power on other people....” So the monster is inside us, or we are the monster. Would you agree to that?
 - If everyone was so impressed by Mother Theresa, why do so few people follow her example?
 - Is Jesus a model for your life, or does that sound like a mission impossible?
 - If you compare yourself to the standard Jesus puts down in the Sermon on the Mount, how perfect are you?
 - Mankind has two problems: (1) we are not perfect and (2) our imperfection blocks the road to perfection. To be able to change, we need to get to the source of goodness: God. But we can’t get to Him because He is perfect and we are not. How did Jesus, through His death on the cross, help us?
 - Our tendency to sin has similarities to an addiction. We cannot shake the habit. (Read Rom. 6:16-18.) Jesus’ blood is called a “ransom” in the Bible. Why?
 - “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me: and that [life] which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, [the faith] which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.” (Gal. 2:20)
 - If a person’s relation to God is restored, a very fundamental change in his inner being takes place. If you consider this quote from Paul, what sort of change does he indicate?
 - Can we achieve perfection on earth? What can we do to develop toward this perfection?

WHAT IF YOU WERE MADE TO BE A FRIEND OF GOD?

How would you go about becoming his friend? Is there anything on earth to be preferred over that?

One of the keywords in Western society today is change. Nothing is the same as it was years ago, or even a year ago. Clothes change, the packaging of food changes—everything is changing. We are obsessed with change. This is one of the marks of our culture. I think that deep down, this is a direct sign that we are not satisfied with how far we have come.

Change is not something only in our external circumstances which we are always keen to follow up. But of course, as one looks at the appalling state of the world, it becomes quite apparent that great change is necessary in the hearts of human beings. People have all sorts of recipes to help bring such changes about.

The society around us is urgent for change, because sheer realism shows us that we are not what we ought to be. Look at the crime rate. Look at the lack of education after years in school. Look at the way we treat one another. Look at the lies our politicians tell. There has got to be change if we are going to become an interdependent society where people can really trust one another. After all, it is a global village these days. We have got to become such a society; otherwise, we will go under.

Okay, we all know that there is much badness in the world, but not everyone is criminal. Many people are not guilty; they are full of good intentions. It seems that only the bad people need change when we want to become a better society. Change is relevant, but for whom?

11

Can I Change Myself?

Program Outline

Introduction

- **Relevance**

Who Needs Change?

- **Man is Good**
- **Man is Bad**
- **Man is Divine**

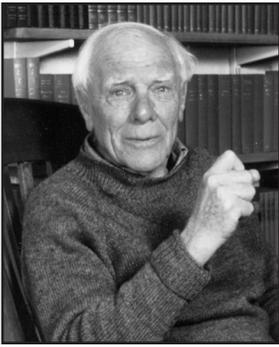
Good, Bad, or Balance

Real Change?

- **Perfectionism**
- **Moralism**
- **Church**
- **Jesus Changes (Who?, How?)**

Conclusion

So Many Voices



MUGGERIDGE

The trouble with kingdoms of heaven on earth is that they're liable to come to pass, and then their fraudulence is apparent for all to see. We need a kingdom of heaven in Heaven, if only because it can't be realised. - **MUGGERIDGE**

Many things seem good and yet are not because they be not done with a good mind and intention; therefore, our Saviour saith in the Gospel, "If thy eye has naught, all thy body shall be dark." For when the inten-

tion is wicked, all the work that follows is naught, although it seemed to be never so good.

- **GREGORY I**

The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children. - **BONHOEFFER**

There is nothing permanent, except change. ~ He who cannot obey himself will be commanded. That is the nature of living creatures. - **HERACLITUS**

You are a man, not God; you are human, not an angel. How can you expect to remain always in a constant state of virtue, when this was not possible even for an angel of heaven, nor for the first man in the Garden? - **À KEMPIS**



À KEMPIS

To give up the task of reforming society is to give up one's responsibility as a free man. - **PATON**

Of course, Behaviorism "works." So does torture. Give me a nonsense, down-to-earth behaviorist, a few drugs, and simple electrical appliances, and in six months I will have him reciting the Athanasian Creed in public. - **AUDEN**

The word "good" has many meanings. For example, if a man were to shoot his grandmother at a range of five hundred yards, I would call him a good shot but not necessarily a good man. - **CHESTERTON**

Only strong personalities can endure history; the weak ones are extinguished by it. ~ What is good? All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man. - **NIETZSCHE**

The greatest destroyer of peace is abortion, because if a mother can kill her own child, what is left for me to kill you and you to kill me? There is nothing between. - **MOTHER THERESA**

Good and evil, we know, in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably. - **MILTON**

The son of a hangman will play with ropes and dream of the day when he will have a scaffold of his own to tend. But let him drink too deep of love, and he will only stroke the hemp and cry that he is man. - **MILLER**

I have found little that is "good" about human beings on the whole. In my experience, most of them are trash, no matter whether they publicly subscribe to this or that ethical doctrine or to none at all. That is something that you cannot say aloud, or perhaps even think. ~ The time comes when each one of us has to give up as illusions the expectations which, in his youth, he pinned upon his fellowmen, and when he may learn how much difficulty and pain has been added to his life by their ill-will. - **FREUD**

It is because the body is a machine that education is possible. Education is the formation of habits, a superinducing of an artificial organisation upon the natural organisation of the body. - **HUXLEY**

The will is that which has all power; it makes heaven and it makes hell: for there is no hell but where the will of the creature is turned from God, nor any heaven but where the will of the creature worketh with God. - **LAW**

Our imitation of God in this life—that is, our willed imitation, as distinct from any likenesses which He has impressed upon our natures or our states—must be an imitation of God Incarnate. Our model is the Jesus, not only of Calvary, but of the workshop, the roads, the crowds, the clamorous demands and surly oppositions, the lack of all peace and privacy, the interruptions. For this, so strangely unlike anything we can attribute to the divine life in itself, is apparently not only like, but is, the divine life operating under human conditions. - **LEWIS**

The Kingdom is to be in the midst of your enemies. And he who will not suffer this does not want to be of the Kingdom of Christ; he wants to be among friends, to sit among roses and lilies, not with the bad people but the devout people. O you blasphemers and betrayers of Christ! If Christ had done what you are doing, who would ever have been spared? - **LUTHER**

Humility and love are precisely the graces which the men of the world can understand, if they do not comprehend doctrines. They are the graces about which there is no mystery, and they are within reach of all classes.... [The poorest] Christian can every day find occasion for practicing love and humility. - **RYLE**

A humanist in choking sea,/ Called for help and presently,/ Received in full intensity,/ Advice. "You must swim, if you would be./ Rescue breeds dependency;/ Self-reliance makes one free."/ "That's nice!" He said,/ And floated easily./ And dead. - **MILLER**

Search the Scriptures

- *...count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus....* - Romans 6:10
- *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* - Romans 6: 22-23
- *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.* - 2 Corinthians 3:18
- *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.* - Philippians 3:20-21
- *Not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.* - Titus 3:4-7
- *God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.* - I John 4:16
- *Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation; for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.* - 1 Peter 2:2

Think about it: Jesus does not come to save souls as though the soul is some internal little bit of me, quite separate from the rest of me. What Jesus Christ has come to do, is so to magnetize me, so to fill me with His change and His love and His power, that I go into society and spread that. Not just for myself alone.

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- People often complain about the bad state this world is in. But what exactly is wrong with it?
- Can you make a list of the symptoms that indicate something is wrong in today's world?
- Now try to look behind the symptoms. What is your diagnosis of the problem of mankind?
- Is there one root cause, or do you see many different causes?
- If you know how you'd like people to treat you, you will also be able to understand how other people would like you to treat them. If we all agree to this, why is there so much in our society that is not right?
- What would the "Human Potential Movement," that concentrates on the good in men, want done about the evil in men? Is their solution a realistic one?
- Aren't Christians focusing too much on what is wrong in men? Or is that exactly what they should do because nobody else wants to do it?
- If Green states that you were created in the image of God, that you carry His likeness, that you are special in His eyes, what does that do to you? Do you then see yourself in a different way?
- Does your opinion of fellow human beings change if you become aware of the fact that they are also created in the image of God? Does this awareness have any influence on your attitude toward others?
- In Romans 3:9-20, Paul states that nobody does what is right. (See also Ps. 14:3, 143:2, Eccl. 7:20.) Is this pessimism or realism?
- Why do people sin? What do you think of the explanation that is given in Ecclesiastes (8:11, 9:3)?
- Would it be helpful if we had a tool that would define precisely what is wrong with mankind?
- Read Galatians 3:22-24. What does the Bible do to us through its precise definition of sin? What does "being justified" mean?
- Can we make the amount of good in us increase, or does it remain at more or less the same level, no matter what we do? And at the other end of the spectrum, can we ban sin from our lives completely?
- Green says, God accepts us as we are. He knows how to deal with our sin problem. He accepts us, and yet He will deal with us. What does acceptance mean then?
- Many think Christianity is too easy. Just ask God to forgive you, and you can go on with your life and do as you did before. Is this an accurate picture of Christianity?
- "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? (Rom. 6:1-2)
- What is this sort of needed change about?
- Paul says, "We who died to sin." Jesus says, "You must be born again." (John 3:7) Do you see a connection between the two?
- Green describes two things Christ does in your life to bring about real change. The first is that "He first of all stills that accusing conscience." How does He do that?
- Does this indicate that our conscience has been giving us false information up until then?
- What then happens to our conscience? Does Jesus switch it off forever? Or should we say that He adjusts it?
- The second element in the work of changing us that Christ performs, Green describes as follows: "I am going to give you my unseen Self, my living Spirit inside you, to change you from the inside."
- Does this indicate that our personality will be eradicated? If not, what does it indicate?
- Green does not think of men as part good and part bad and for the bad part you need Christ. We need grace for our complete self. Are you able to see the balance: I am not OK, but I am God's creation?
"...it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me." (Gal. 2:20) What difference does this make?

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY:
IF THE CHURCH IS FLAWED,
then maybe there is room for you.

The Church has to do with relationship in two ways: It is a place to meet God and to meet other Christians. When you say that you don't need relationships in your life, you deny one of the important characteristics of human nature. Relationships are not just an option for us; they are necessity. Some countries in the world think of human beings only in terms of the tribe. Communism used to think in terms of the collective, while the individual didn't matter. Others in the West think so much of individualism that they've almost forgotten that they belong to the tribe. In order to have a completely balanced life, we need both.

When we ponder the entire concept of relationships and individualism, there are several ways to respond. Sometimes people think it means to be totally dependent on somebody else. Certainly in these days of a healthy feminism, it is demeaning for women to feel that they are dependent upon somebody else. Yet when you really stop to think about it, we are all actually dependent upon someone else. If my tooth is hurting, I am dependent upon the dentist to go and do something about it. And if I am a cobbler and the same dentist wants his shoes mended, he is dependent upon me to do it. So there is really nothing wrong with dependence, so long as it is seen as interdependence. We all depend on one another. We all depend on one another, and we all depend upon God, who is the very source of our lives. This serves to make us all a sort of "family."

Interdependence—the helping of one another within the family. The parental leadership of the family is the source from which they get the whole family holding together.

12

Why on Earth the Church?

Program Outline

Introduction

About Relationships

- **Relations**
- **Belongings**
- **Individualism**

About God

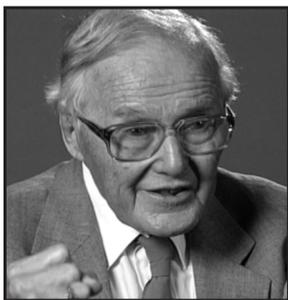
- **God is Love**
- **Relationship with God**

About the Church

- **Church in Society**
- **Revival**

Conclusion

So Many Voices



NEWBIGIN

We feel that other churches must accept, as the preconditions of fellowship, such changes as will bring them into conformity with ourselves in matters which we regard as essential, and that a failure to insist on this will involve compromise in regard to what is essential to the Church's being. But for precisely the same reason, we cannot admit a demand from others for any changes in ourselves which would seem to imply a denial that we already possess the essence of the Church. - **NEWBIGIN**

The Servant Messiah carries out his ministry in the lives of his ministers. His life is reproduced in their lives, so they also are servants. But this ministry is exercised in and towards the Church, so as to enable the Church itself to carry out the ministry of the Servant. The Messiah came as a Servant; his ministers are servants; and the Church he created is a Servant-Church. - **HANSON**

The multiplication of individual sects should not fool us: the important point is that the whole of America is preoccupied with the sect as a moral institution, with its immediate demand for beatification, its material efficacy, its compulsion for justification, and doubtless also its madness and frenzy. - **BAUDRILLARD**

There should be less talk; a preaching point is not a meeting point. What do you do then? Take a broom and clean someone's house. That says enough. - **MOTHER THERESA**

There are many things which a person can do alone, but being a Christian is not one of them. As the Christian life is, above all things, a state of union with Christ, and of union of his followers with one another, love of the brethren is inseparable from love of God. Resentment toward any human being cannot exist in the same heart with love to God. - **HAM**

We have taught our people to use prayer too much as a means of comfort, not in the original and heroic sense of uplifting, inspiring, strengthening, but in the more modern and baser sense of soothing sorrow, dulling pain, and drying tears—the comfort of the cushion, not the comfort of the Cross. - **STUDDERT-KENNEDY**

In a Christian community, everything depends upon whether each individual is an indispensable link in a chain. Only when even the smallest link is securely interlocked is the chain unbreakable. ~ A community which allows unemployed members to exist within it will perish because of them. It will be well, therefore, if every member receives a definite task to perform for the community, that he may know in hours of doubt that he, too, is not useless and unusable. ~ The Church is her true self only when she exists for humanity. As a fresh start, she should give away all her endowments to the poor and needy. The clergy should live solely on the freewill offerings of their congregations, or possibly engage in some secular calling. - **BONHOEFFER**

The problem is not that the churches are filled with empty pews, but that the pews are filled with empty people. - **SHEDD**

We can do nothing, we say sometimes; we can only pray. That, we feel, is a terribly precarious second-best. So long as we can fuss and work and rush about, so long as we can lend a hand, we have some hope; but if we have to fall back upon God—ah, then things must be critical indeed! - **GOSSIP**



NEWTON

I endeavor to keep all Shibboleths, and forms and terms of distinction out of sight, as we keep knives and razors out of the way of children; and if my hearers had not some other means of information, I think they would not know from me that there are such creatures as Arminians and Calvinists in the world. But we [would] talk a good deal about Christ. - **NEWTON**

He who begins by loving Christianity better than truth will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all. - **COLERIDGE**

Theologians have felt no hesitation in founding a system of speculative thought on the teachings of Jesus; and yet Jesus was never an inhabitant of the realm of speculative thought. - **RAUSCHENBUSCH**

Search the Scriptures

- *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.” - Matthew 5:13-15*
- *“For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” - Matthew 18:20*
- *Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord. - Acts 9:31*
- *Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. - Acts 14:23*
- *In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. - 1 Corinthians 11:18-19*
- *As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don't need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don't need you!” - 1 Corinthians 12:20-21*
- *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. - Ephesians 1:22-23*

Think about it: So don't just be put off by the externals. Alas, sometimes the Christian Church looks very unattractive from the outside. Read the Acts of the Apostles and see what it could be like, and determine that you're going to do your bit to make it a bit more like that in your part of the Christian community. You see, you will be such an encouragement to them. If you, fairly newly committed to Jesus Christ, come and join them, it is like new oxygen in the water. It gives it brand new bubbles and dynamism; and equally, you are going to need those who have been living a Christian life a bit longer than yourself. They will all have things to share with you (1 Corinthians 12:25). Are you relying on other people, or are you trying to avoid it?

Items for Reflection and Discussion

- What is the difference between the way you depend on your parents, friends, partner, or your dentist?
- Do you like our Western society the way it is, or is it too individualistic? (Would you appreciate more social control?)
- In relationships that mean something to you, how important is the fact that you depend on these people?
- How important are moments of solitude?
- Solitude also can be an escape. Would you say too much solitude is dangerous?
- What is the importance of being with other people?
- Being among people can also be an escape. Would you say being around people too much is dangerous?
- Jesus carefully selected a group of people for His friends (Mark 1:14-20, 5:37). Yet He calls all people His mother and His brother (Luke 8:19-21). What does this tell you?
- Read Matt. 22:37-39. What does this mean if you look at your relations with other people?
- Read Luke 10:29-37. Jesus answers the question, “Who is my neighbor?” from the opposite angle: “Who are you a neighbour for?” Why?
- What would be a good reason for you to visit a church?
- Would you go there to meet God or other people or just to sit and listen?
- Is the church primarily there for God, or is it there for us?
- Is it possible to be a Christian on your own? Why (not)? (You can believe in God all by yourself, you can pray alone, praise God alone, read your Bible alone and be good to your neighbor alone....)
- Read Eph. 3:17-19. In this Scripture, Paul gives us at least one reason why faith is not a solitary thing. What is that?
- Should the church be the voice of the Christians, or should Christians face the world by themselves? Why (not)?
- Catholics often keep the Spirit in the sacraments and Protestants, often in their confessions of faith. The church according to Green easily turns into “our church” instead of “God’s church.” Why is this?
- If the Holy Spirit blew through the church in the sort of way Green describes, would that be healthy for the community, or wouldn’t it?
- Stiff faces and old habits do not make a good invitation. How can the church become a good place to be for the unchurched?
- Is the right question, “What can the church do for me?” or “What can I do for the church?”

Optional Follow-up Exercises

These exercises are for written response, personal reflection, and possible discussion after the program viewing.

Program 1

Write down what you know about God. Be specific.

Program 2

Assume it is time to give your life an evaluation. Write down how you would assess your own life. Then go on and try to imagine how God would assess you. Where are the assessments alike or different?

Program 3

Think over your life and write down those times when you feel that you most directly and vividly encountered evil? How has that affected you? What have you learned from this?

Program 4

What do you think would happen to you if you died tonight? Nothing—you would just be dead? Heaven? Hell? Write down how you arrived at your answer.

Program 5

Write Jesus a letter. Tell him about when you first became aware of him. Then go on to express what you think of him or what he means to you right now.

Program 6

What do you believe about how we are to approach God? Do think of this as “truth,” or is this just your personal opinion or preference? Explain how you arrived at your answer.

Program 7

Think of times in life when you personally suffered most. How did that later affect you? Do you see any good that has come out of such experiences?

Program 8

Most of us would not think that in our own ability we could arrive at absolute truth with certainty. But can we trust Jesus as “The Truth” personified? Go on to respond to a question a theologian once said is “the important question of all”: “Is God as good as Jesus?” Is he? And why is that question so important?

Program 9

Has the Holy Spirit played any real role in your life that you can identify—for example, in guiding you, showing you your gifts, or cultivating “the fruits of the Spirit” in your life?

Program 10

Imagine that in school you are asked to write a paper about yourself to answer the question, “Am I a good person?” Outline what key points you would be sure to include in your response?

Program 11

Has your life been changed by the Lord? If so, describe. If not, have you ever sensed that he was trying to get through to you, but you would not open the door? Why have you resisted.

Program 12

What can you do to strengthen and help your local church that you have not done thus far?

Other Recommended Resources

Jesus, the New Way

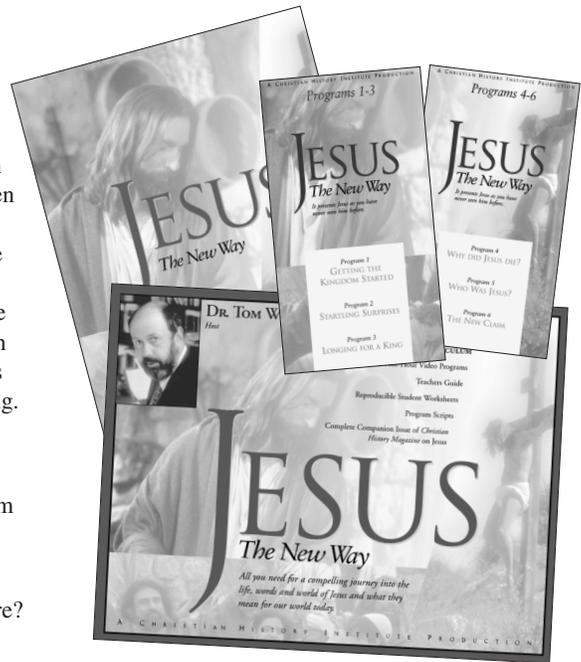
With Dr. N.T. (Tom) Wright

Noted British scholar, Dr. Tom Wright, uncovers fascinating backgrounds from the first-century world of Jesus and shows how he was indeed a “new way” then and continues to be for us today.

Wright’s acclaimed scholarship is delivered in a winsome and understandable way, showing how Jesus is the fulfillment of Israel’s ancient hopes and humanity’s deepest dreams. You will see Jesus as you have never seen him before in the context of his Jewish and Roman world. You will find explosive new meaning in his familiar words and deeds as Wright unfolds his incomparable life and shows how it remains an unavoidable summons to our world and to our way of thinking.

The six programs are:

- 1. Getting the Kingdom Started** Into what kind of world was Jesus born? What do we learn from the Dead Sea Scrolls, John the Baptist, and the kingdom announcement of Jesus?
- 2. Startling Surprises** How did the kingdom announced by Jesus parallel the expectations of the Jewish people that they derived from their study of Scripture? Why was Jesus’ news shocking and offensive? What was he really saying?
- 3. Longing for a King** In a Jewish world wired for the welcome and recognition of a Messiah, how did Jesus redefine what that should mean? What were the implications for the main symbols of Israel’s life such as the Holy Temple?
- 4. Why Did Jesus Die?** What were the charges? What was the real and great battle being fought? How was history racing toward its climactic moment, and how did Jesus understand and undertake his role therein?
- 5. Who Was Jesus?** How do we begin to understand the meaning of Jesus by reexamining what we really mean by God? How did Jesus understand himself? How did the early church view Jesus? Was Jesus divine?
- 6. The New Claim** Was Jesus really raised from the dead? What about all the skeptics’ explanations as to why that is impossible? What did resurrection mean to first-century Jews? How does the resurrection of Jesus address our individual lives?

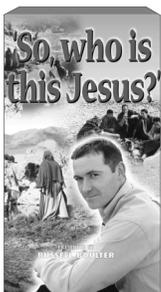


Winner of the Gold Award from Worldfest Flagstaff and the Chris Statuette from Columbus Film Festival

The complete curriculum package includes:

- Six half-hour video programs
- Comprehensive leader’s guide
- Reproducible student worksheets
- Program scripts

Complete curriculum package, 160 minutes, #4264
\$79.99

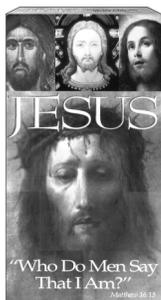


So, Who Is This Jesus?

This three-part video, filmed in Israel, is a captivating introduction to Jesus and His life. As an adult Jesus never traveled more than 60 miles. He was betrayed by one of his twelve followers and executed for crimes he did not commit. His name is familiar to us all — even if only as a swear word. But who is he — who is this Jesus? Russell Boulter provides answers to the question in a down-to-earth, no nonsense style. It has been specifically designed for people with no previous knowledge of Jesus. *The Video Librarian Journal* gave it four stars and called it a “superb vehicle for meeting Jesus for the first time or getting to know an old friend a lot better” (Nov./Dec. 1999). Winner of a Silver Award at the 1999 Worldfest-Flagstaff Film Festival.

We highly recommend this for you to use with anyone who needs to become acquainted with who Jesus really was and why he came into our world. Includes discussion guide.

48 minutes, #4317 \$19.99



Jesus: “Who Do Men Say That I Am?”

It’s a critical question. This documentary shows what’s involved in your answer. Who is this unforgettable and incomparable man called Jesus? Was He a man of miracles, a rebel, an imposter? What do modern Americans think of Him? Intriguing investigations with everyday people and leading Bible scholars reveal some refreshing and often startling answers. Includes guide.

48 minutes, #4163 \$14.99!



Stumbling Blocks to Faith

This video examines a number of stumbling blocks to faith for many people. Among the issues discussed are the following: How are we to explain the apparent hypocrisy of believers’ not practicing what they preach? Was man created by God in his own image, or did man evolve from a cosmic blast? Why does God permit innocent people to endure disease, natural disasters and other trials? Includes discussion guide.

95 minutes, #4341 \$19.99