Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

Instructor's Guide

The purpose of this course is to gain an understanding of 1) How to identify a false Jesus, 2) Why false Jesuses exist, 3) Understanding the true Jesus from the Scriptures and 4) Avoiding following a yellow brick road to hell. The instructor needs to invest sufficient time to comprehend the materials and present them in a way that people who do not have formal philosophical training can comprehend the important issues.

In teaching advanced topics, it is important for the instructor to realize the goal of his teaching. The saving truths are presented in the Scriptures, but they do not benefit a person's soul unless they are transcribed from the Scriptures onto the wall of faith in the mind and heart of the believer. Ideally, a Christian's faith will be a beautiful mural of all the teachings of the Bible appropriately linked with each other to give the Christian a perfect knowledge of God's will. This mural will never be completed in this world, but it is important that the Christian and those who teach him or her work to make it more complete. While pastors have a well-developed mural based on long and systematic training, laypeople often have scattered facts from the Bible placed here and there on their wall of faith. Sometimes they are misconnected with each other, and sometimes wrong information learned from non-Scriptural sources will be intertwined with Scriptural truth. In his presentation of the Scriptural material, the teacher will always try to guide his hearers so that they will put it into the correct place in the mural and make the correct attachments to the other materials that are there. This is what makes teaching the Word of God challenging and rewarding.

For this course, you will first need to consider the many ways that a Christian can be led astray by Satan's wiles. Teaching students how to understand the difference between Law and Gospel in the various scenarios is essential because Satan is continually trying to confuse these doctrines in people's minds. The book is written as a text for a course, so it should be easy to work with.

This course is set up to be taught in twelve sessions. Presenters should open the sessions with prayer before showing the videos and leading the discussions. The student notes contain a lot of background information not found in the book with the object of trying to help the students better understand the various cases presented. Some of this material is not covered in the videos and appears in the student notes in a gray color. The presenter should feel free to cover this material in the discussion. From educational research we know that reading the material before the class, answering the study questions, and considering the issues that are being raised by the readings are essential to maximizing learning. Students should be strongly encouraged to do so.

Note that the study questions and answers are inserted in the teaching text where they might be used, but they can be moved in the actual presentation or ignored.

1. The Mascot

I. Introduction How are you in danger of being led astray? Look at yourself and your friends to see where repentance and returning to the faith are necessary.

A. Key Terms

1. The myth of free will. a) Free will is the concept that we can choose to do good or that we can choose to do evil (moral decisions, not material decisions). b) While Adam and Eve did indeed have free will, they lost their ability to choose good the first time they chose to do evil. Moses recorded, "The eyes of both of them were opened (they lost control of their thoughts), and they realized that they were naked" (Genesis 3:7). c) Now we can only choose to do evil. Good no longer dwells in the human heart. "The LORD saw that the wickedness of mankind was great on the earth, and that all the thoughts and plans they formed in their hearts were only evil every day" (Genesis 6:5). The devil is more determined than a squirrel trying to get into a birdfeeder.

2. Idolatry. Idols represent invisible gods. a) Originally idolatry involved the making of images and bowing down to worship them (e.g., car, house, sport). People placed the hopes of their hearts on the ability of the idols to help them. b) Any idea that has divine power. But, idols are really any idea that the heart believes will help it, and the heart finds it comforting to personify this idea. This leads to doing a remake of Jesus as the personification.

3. Cognitive Dissonance. a) Cognitive dissonance is caused when people are forced to hold two conflicting sets of information at the same time. The mind is forced to distort one or both sets of the information to resolve the problem. b) When the biblical Jesus conflicts with our own ideas, we are forced either to deny our own ideas by repenting of them or to reshape Jesus to fit our ideas. Self-denial is an essential part of Christianity, but NOT like the monks tried to do it. "Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone wants to follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me'" (Matthew 16:24).

4. Postmodern relativism = "I am the measuring stick of truth." a) Sophism is the belief that mankind is the measuring stick for truth. Each person can recognize the truth from his perspective of the world, and such truths might not agree. b) Postmodern relativism is the current version of this idea that truth is relative to the understanding of each person.

II. Engaging the Ethical Hedonist

Q1. What are the three main characteristics of the Mascot? A: 1) Avoiding the Law, 2) denial of hell, and acceptance of ethical hedonism.

A. The nature of the person - Jillian

1. Christian beginning. a) People who end up remaking Jesus in their own image often start out as church members when they are young. The Jesus of their youth was cuddly. There they learned the comforting attributes of Jesus. He was a little baby and he helped people. b) However, the (Santa) Jesus they believe in is fixed in their mind as a child-sized Jesus. The problem was that Jesus was made too cuddly. They never came to grasp the real Jesus or what his mission was.

2. The baggage of life. a) If people do not understand that they are totally depraved in the sight of God, they begin building lives for the purpose of validating themselves in their own eyes. They want to show that they are "good people." b) Jesus said, "The seeds that fell into the thorns are the ones who hear the word, but as they go on their way they are choked by the worries, riches, and pleasures of life, so they do not mature" (Luke 8:14). They never believed in a strong Jesus.

3. Escape from the Law. a) Everyone wants to be accepted by some group, whether family, friends, or business associates. Pragmatism. They buy into "if you want to get along, go along" (quote from House speaker Sam Raybourn). They therefore reshape their morals to match their environment, using the thinking that "it can't be wrong if it feels so right." b) Solomon said, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it is the road to death" (Proverbs 14:12).

4. The happy life. The theology of glory. a) People rationalize that if no one gets hurt and they are happy ("no harm, no foul"), then there can be no violation of God's Law. Happiness is always good. Whereas Vince Lombardi said, "run to daylight" was the way to success, they think "run to happiness" is the way to the good life. People do not want to hear that's sinful. b) God sees things differently. The happy sinful life is the path to hell. "But each person is tempted when he is dragged away and enticed by his own desire. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin. And sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:14–15).

B. Worldview

1. What it is. Picturing the world as how we want it to be. a) When we look about us, we see the physical things of the world. This allows us to move about without running into them in unpleasant ways. b) We also have a mental worldview. In it we place the things of this life and arrange them so that we can encounter them in the ways we prefer to encounter them.

2. How it is applicable here. A changed reality. a) Jillian views the world through "rose-colored glasses," and she likes the view. She does everything she can to bring the world she encounters into alignment with her view of reality. b) God's worldview is different. Sin has made the world non-perfect. Jesus said, "Whenever you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled….In fact, nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places. There will be famines" (Mark 13:7,8).

C. Presuppositions

1. The management of worldview. a) Although one's worldview sets the general tone for one's life, it needs to be fine-tuned to the situation that one expects to exist. It wants good to be really good. When one goes on a picnic on a sunny day, every optimist will expect to have a delightful day. b) When an optimist goes to the dentist for a root canal, she will not expect to have a pleasant day, but instead expects the pain will not be unbearably bad. Bad will be not so bad.

2. How they are applicable here. The discipline of the Law = evil. a) A person who presupposes that pleasant is always good and suffering is always evil will classify God's Law and his discipline as evil because they cause pain and displeasure. b) God's presupposition about suffering is quite different. The discipline of God is good. "Endure suffering as discipline. God is dealing with you as sons. Is there a son whose father does not discipline him? If you are not disciplined…, then you are illegitimate children and not sons" (Hebrews 12:7,8).

D. What is Ethical Hedonism?

Q2. What does the Bible say about ethical hedonism? A: It is a dead-end path that cannot save.

1. Definition. a) Hedonism is based on the idea that the pursuit of pleasure is man's ultimate goal, so doing anything to obtain pleasure for oneself or avoiding pain is good. Me first and my good only. This can lead to some people doing terrible things to other people. b) People try to reduce the offensiveness to others of this self-centered behavior by limiting it to activities that supposedly do not harm others. Good for me, but not too bad for others.

2. How it is applicable here. a) People who want to blend ethical hedonism, which they find highly appealing, with Christianity, which they see as a positive path to God's blessings, restrict God's Law to only those cases where someone is hurt by their choices. They feel that they have a right to be happy. They want to restrict God's Law only to preventing harm. b) Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it. How narrow is the gate, and how difficult is the way that

leads to life, and there are few who find it" (This is a hard saying.) (Matthew 7:13,14). Few people are willing to have their hearts changed to accept the narrow way.

E. Is it wrong for a Christian to pursue happiness?

1. Happiness versus Christian joy. a) Happiness and pleasure in American culture are rooted in oneself. Happiness is about ME. People strive for them so that their psychological and physical beings can feel great about themselves. People often congratulate themselves for the feeling of happiness they get from some accomplishment. b) Christian joy is not centered in us, but in the Giver of the good things that have been received by ourselves and others. Christians rejoice in the goodness of the LORD. Christians recognize that the good we have in this life is a gift from God. Christian joy accepts these gifts with a grateful heart rather than with a boastful spirit.

2. How it is applicable here. a) As with the striving for money, the striving for happiness can become a person's god. Striving becomes serving a god. Happiness is transitory. The smile of today can become the frown of tomorrow when winning turns to losing and being "on top of the world" is replaced with being "at the bottom of the barrel." b) Jesus said, "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven. In fact, that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:11,12). Serving the LORD will have negative consequences – the theology of the cross.

F. Lawlessness

Q3. What does the Bible say about lawlessness? A: It is not compatible with the Christian faith.

1. The Law and the Gospel. What are the purposes of the Law and the Gospel? a) The Law and the Gospel are the central teachings of Christianity. The Law, summarized in the Ten Commandments, shows us our sins. It brings our total corruption into view. The Gospel shows us our Savior, Christ whom God sent to redeem us. It is totally about God's grace. b) Lawlessness claims to be the Christian way because Christians are under grace, not law. Cheap grace. Lawlessness therefore rejects the Law and abuses the Gospel. However, ignore the Law, and the Gospel fails. c) Legalism, on the other hand, makes keeping the Law a condition of salvation. Legalism therefore rejects the Gospel and abuses the Law. Cling to the Law, and the Gospel is irrelevant.

2. How it is applicable here. a) Jillian believes in a lawless Christianity (antinomianism). The Law causes pain, and she does not believe that pain is part of God's plan for mankind. Therefore, the Law, at least to the extent that it would give her pain, is not something her Jesus would require of her. Avoid pain by avoiding the Law and changing Jesus. b) St. Paul wrote, "Then is the law against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given that could give life, certainly righteousness would have been derived from the law. But Scripture imprisoned all things under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ would be given to those who believe" (Galatians 3:21,22). The Law points to the need for Christ.

Q4. What does Jesus say about the final judgment? A: It will occur suddenly at the end of time. Those who do not repent and believe will go to hell.

G. Sweet Poison

Q5. Why does the Mascot avoid the doctrines of hell and the Law? A: Hell and the Law cause pain, not pleasure.

1. Sin means death. a) Sin is subtle. It looks harmless but breaks down resistance. It often looks harmless or at least something that can be controlled. Sin breaks down resistance to more sin. If you do it once and there are no harmful consequences, it is less stressful to justify doing it again. Each time gets easier to do with fewer feelings of guilt. b) Within the human mind two things happen that make sin hard to get rid of once it has become accepted. The nonconscious mind sets pleasure triggers, and the conscious mind rationalizes them. First, a script is developed for the conscious mind to rationalize the sin. The nonconscious develops a script that has a set of triggers to remind a person how pleasurable the sin is whenever one of the triggers is tripped by something it senses. c) King Solomon said, "Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly. Later it bites like a snake, and it strikes like a venomous viper" (Proverbs 23:31,32). Yielding to temptation leads to bitterness.

2. How it is applicable here. a) Jillian gradually began indulging in "harmless" sins as she became less attached to the church. Soon her little sins became bigger, and her occasional sins became more frequent, until sinning and rationalizing them became her life, and she was happy with it. Sin grew in Julian's life – where are you now in relation to the points of the past? b) St. Paul wrote, "Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough?" (1 Corinthians 5:6). Sin works corruption.

III. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Ethical Hedonist - Jillian

1. The pleasure/pain trap. a) When everything that causes pleasure is good, then people want the reinforcement of hearing that their view is correct, and they want to do things that are good because they give pleasure. They want a Jesus who always grants pleasure. Their Jesus is a mascot that goes along with this idea. b) When everything that causes pain is evil, then people do not want to hear opposing ideas because they cause pain, which is evil. The real Jesus causes pain and is therefore evil. They do not want to hear about the real Jesus.

   Q7. How can you interact with the ethical hedonist? A: You must show him that what is good or evil is not always obvious.

2. What to say? a) It is first necessary to ask whether things that at first seem good can turn out to be evil and whether things that at first seem to be evil can turn out to be good. Sharing things in one's own life that looked good and turned out bad or looked bad and turned out good can help to weaken the good/evil worldview. Good and bad cannot always be initially recognized. b) If the person becomes less sure of themselves, have a Law/Gospel presentation ready that is appropriate to the situation. Each of us are sinners who sometimes get drawn away from good behavior to doing evil. When this happens, we have a waiting Savior who will forgive us. He will not excuse, but he will forgive. We are all sinners, but Jesus the Savior is waiting for us. c) It is not necessary to redefine Jesus if one is willing to repent.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Mascot. a) The Mascot is a phony Jesus who cheers us on to happiness, to success, to all the good things in life. A "good times' buddy. b) But, he is not there to share our tears and sorrow when things go bad because he is a being of happiness. Eventually, we all meet sorrow, either when someone important to us dies or when our own death approaches. Jesus the Mascot will not be there when he is needed most. He will be of no help in bad times.

   Q6. Why is the real Jesus not compatible with ethical hedonism, lawlessness, and the denial of hell? A: He came to redeem people from the consequences of their sin. If there were no sin, His

coming would not have been necessary.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus is a God for all seasons. The Real Jesus will help us in good times and bad ("in guten und schlechten Tagen"). St. Paul wrote, "Preach the word. Be ready whether it is convenient or not. Correct, rebuke, and encourage, with all patience and teaching. For there will come a time when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, because they have itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in line with their own desires" (2 Timothy 4:2,3). b) Jesus said, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28–30). Jesus gives us real relief, not spiritual morphine.

2. Religious Pluralist (The generic Jesus)

IV. Engaging the Religious Pluralist

A. The nature of the person - Tamar

1. Secular Humanism (not the study of humanity). a) Humanists view human beings as the most developed species on Earth. Because people hold this exalted position, Humanists feel if a God existed, he would treat them with special care. Everyone thinks that humans are special. b) It seems "self-evident" (the basis of philosophy) to them that all humans should have the same rights and freedoms. If they err because they are human, they should be given a second chance (no hasty judgment).

2. The differences in humans. a) A culture is how people interact with each other. Human beings can be culturally different from each other. Their cultures developed over many centuries in response to local conditions which often changed slowly, if at all, for long periods of time. These cultures are frequently quite different from each other, although each culture must deal with similar factors that are characteristic of the human experience. b) When cultures encounter one another, there is natural suspicion and sometimes conflict. "They are doing things wrong!" Imagine how German and Japanese factory workers would interact with each other when one culture is based on efficiency and the other is based on community. This can occur through no inherent fault in the cultures themselves, but happenstance in the ways the cultures developed. Imagine one culture where all the screw threads ran clockwise trying to deal with a culture where all the screw threads ran counterclockwise. c) Conflicts can occur because some cultures are more aggressive than others. Different approaches do not always work well together. Cultures that are more technically advanced often find reasons to exploit cultures that are less advanced, and they have the technical superiority to do so. When one culture resists another, war ensues. d) Different cultures also worship different gods. These gods are the product of the characteristics that each culture has and what things the culture feels threatened by. Except for biblical Christianity, each religion has ways in which a person can earn merit before its god or gods. The various parts of the human brain desire different types of gods.

3. The Humanistic worldview. a) Humanists desire harmony between members of different cultures. They seek a common denominator. They therefore look for features common to all or most cultures and develop philosophical ways of explaining the differences and accentuating the

commonalities so that cultures will understand each other and live together harmoniously. b) The human mind is prone to cheat for its own benefit. Because all human ideas are corrupted by man's depravity, Humanists continually fail to meet their goal of developing harmony because they become prisoners of their own corrupted view of the human situation. One generation of Humanistic philosophies is replaced by the next, but all eventually fail.

4. The "god" problem. There is not enough wealth to "buy off" (accommodate) everyone. a) Many people naively buy into the ideas of Humanism because these seem to be the only hope for mankind in a crowded world. However, numerous people, constrained by the requirements of their religious beliefs, reject the beliefs of others, causing social stress. b) People like Tamar, who do not have deep religious roots, cannot believe that a God would be so petty as to allow all but one religious group to go astray and be damned. Thus, they reason that God cannot do this but that he will accept people of all religions. They have created their own image of "god," i.e., their own religion.

B. Religious Pluralism

Q1. What are the three key characteristics of the Option among Many? A: 1) Their Christ is non-exclusive. 2) They have a false view of tolerance. 3) They reject binary opposites.

1. Three kinds of religion. a) Many people believe in the existence of multiple gods. A god or saint for everything. Modern examples are Hinduism and tribal religions in less developed countries. Polytheism has had a long history and was common in the Roman Empire during early Christianity. Paganism in Rome was particularly vibrant because it absorbed the gods of conquered nations into its pantheon of gods. They just added more gods. b) Judaism and Islam are examples of monotheism, where only a single god is worshipped. That god is regarded as very sacred, and rituals are often rigorously followed. Merit was earned through rituals. c) Biblical Christianity is unusual in having both one God with three persons and its God granting free salvation without requiring any works as a prerequisite for that salvation. The Christian God saves bad people.

2. Efforts to unify the religions. What does it mean to be a Christian? a) When America was dominated by Protestant Christian groups, there was a continual effort to unify these groups into a single church similar to the Prussian Union in Europe. The goal was to get churches to stop attacking each other's doctrine and work in harmony within local communities. After all, it was argued, they were serving the same God. False! b) The efforts to turn America into a multicultural society have also turned it into a multi-religious society. Because the members of these different religions regarded each other as pagans, Humanists first pushed people to be tolerant of other religions. They want people to live in peace with one another. c) Tolerance, however, soon came to be regarded as too low of a standard. Tolerance might prevent violence, but it did not build the multicultural society that many desired. Second, Humanists therefore advanced the argument that all religions led to the same eternal destination, so different religions should be supportive of each other. Humanists began to claim that all religious paths led to the same place, a place of eternal contentment. All non-Christian religions lead to hell, so this standard is quasi-true.

C. Doctrine and Practice

1. Source of doctrine. a) Every religion has a source for its doctrine. Leader-based, standard = leader, e.g., R.C.C. In many religions that source is the religious leaders, whether they be popes, priests, or shamans through whom revelation from the god or gods of the religion comes. These people have complete control of what the members of that religious faith believe. b) Other religions rely on a written text that was somehow sent to man from the divine being that is worshipped. Book-based, standard = book, e.g., Lutheran. Christianity is such a religion, whose revelation is the Bible and whose God is the LORD. c) In a third type of religion people believe that the revelation from God comes directly into each believer. Spirit-based, no standard. Some Christians sects have historically claimed this form of revelation, such as the Quakers, but in recent times various Evangelical and Pentecostal sects ("spiritual" people) have also endorsed this form of revelation.

   Q2. How are Jesus' conception and birth different from those of other religious leaders? A: Jesus was not conceived through sexual intercourse.

   Q3. How is Jesus' incarnation different from other world religions? A: God actually took on a human nature.

   Q4. How was Jesus exclusive in his life? A: Jesus was perfect according to God's Law.

   Q5. How was Jesus exclusive in his death? A: He made the perfect sacrifice.

   Q6. Why is the resurrection of Jesus so incredibly important to the Christian faith? A: Jesus' resurrection demonstrated that His victory over sin was complete.

2. Faith and practice. a) Christians must understand the nature of their God. Reshaping their God (taking a chisel to God) to meet their desires is the most dangerous false doctrine among people who call themselves "Christians." St. Paul wrote, "For there will come a time when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, because they have itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in line with their own desires" (2 Timothy 4:3). b) The Law of God requires that we always place the service to the LORD and our fellowman first in our lives. Not ourselves, not a "perfect world." Jesus said, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:37–40). c) The Gospel of Jesus Christ tells how He earned salvation for us. Justification. St. Paul wrote, "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9). d) When the Holy Spirit calls people to faith, he also changes their hearts to serve out of love for God. Sanctification. Paul continued, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance so that we would walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

D. Tolerance versus Love

1. What is tolerance? a) Too often in American society tolerance means that you must put up with everything that I want to say and do, but what you want to say or do is bigoted and therefore

wrong. The "inequality" of tolerance. b) In worldly matters, true tolerance means that Christians treat others with respect even though they disagree them. It is concerning such environments that Jesus said, "Stop judging, so that you will not be judged" (Matthew 7:1). God judges; we proclaim. Paul wrote, "For what business is it of mine to judge people outside the church? (1 Corinthians 5:12). c) In matters of doctrine (Things that pertain to salvation, e.g., election controversy), the Christian church cannot be tolerant because false teachings lead people to hell. Jesus said to the church in Thyatira, "But I have this against you: You allow that woman Jezebel, the one who calls herself a prophetess, to deceive my servants and to teach them to commit sexual immorality and eat things offered to idols" (Revelation 2:20).

2. Christians are to deal in love because we too are sinners. a) Like God, Christians want all people to be saved. This means that we must be careful in how we bring people's errors to their attention, so that the people can come to understand our concern for them and that their errors are fatal to their hope of salvation. b) St. Paul wrote, "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we would in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head" (Ephesians 4:15).

E. What is Love?

1. Types of love. a) Pleasure (one-way love, intense like) – A person can love a beautiful day, a Ford Mustang, or Yellowstone National Park. Such love means a strong affection for something that cannot return that affection. b) Friendship (a bond between – in Greek *philio*) – People strongly like other people who in turn strongly like them. A bond of fellowship exists between these people because they feel comfortable in each other's presence. c) Carnal (sexual relations – in Greek *eros*) – Someone has physical cravings for another person and desires to engage in sexual activities with that person. d) Selfless (unconditional – in Greek *agape*) – A person genuinely desires the welfare of another, even sacrificing his own interests for him, without any conditions that the love needs to be returned or responded to.

2. Scriptural definition of love. a) Obedience: Love is the fulfilment of God's Law because God is love. Jesus said, "If you love me, hold on to my commands" (John 14:15). b) Godden Rule: Love causes us to treat others as we would want to be treated. St. Paul wrote, "Love does no harm to a neighbor, so love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10). c) Love the unlovable: Jesus also said, "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:44–45). d) Unfathomable love: The greatest love of all is the love that God showed to fallen mankind. Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

F. Binary oppositions in the Bible

1. Types of opposites. a) The Bible contains numerous binary opposites, such as heaven and hell or Jesus and Satan, where one is always good and the other is always bad. When the Bible identifies such opposites, it always indicates the bad is to be avoided. Elijah gave Israel a clear choice when he said, "If the LORD is God, follow him. If Baal is God, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). Moral Law obey; adiaphora do not judge. b) The Bible, however, also gives opposites which do not correspond to the model of one being bad and other being good. When God created man and

female in Genesis 2, they were both good. Likewise, parents and children are opposite in position, but neither is labelled as evil. Even in a more difficult relationship, God labels neither masters nor slaves as good or evil. c) Some things, like money, are labelled as evil only if they are set over against God. One cannot serve both, but simply because someone has money does not mean that they cannot be a Christian and serve God. Discernment, i.e., Christian maturity. Jesus said, "You cannot serve both God and *mammon*" (Matthew 6:24). St. Paul wrote, "For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evils" (1 Timothy 6:10).

2. Deadly opposites. a) Satan and his demonic hosts are behind all the evil in the world. They are always evil. His agents are therefore completely evil. False prophets are such agents who work against God's true prophets. "This is what the LORD God says, 'Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and prophesy things which they have not seen'" (Ezekiel 13:3). Need to put on the full armor of God. b) The saddest polar opposites are the believer in Christ and the unbeliever because one will be saved and the other damned. John the Baptizer said, "The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who rejects the Son will not see life; instead, God's wrath remains on him" (John 3:36). This is why we do mission work.

V. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Religious Pluralist

1. The nature of the pluralist – Tamar. a) The pluralist truly believes that people can have a peaceful world only if they are willing to rein in the undesirable characteristics of their gods. If people would accept that their religious differences could be reconciled by developing a set of good deeds that was bound to please any god, then the "real god" certainly would be pleased and save everyone. A uniform way of earning salvation b) Hidden in the back of the mind of all pluralists is the idea there is safety in numbers. If people could agree and coexist, then all people would be saved, and so would the pluralist. After all, "God can't damn everyone!" There would be no need to worry about having bet on the wrong god. It is dangerous for Christians if people think they will be saved because "they are such good people."

   Q7. How can we effectively communicate the truths of Jesus to our "spiritual" friends? A: 1) Show that the gods of their religions claim exclusivity. 2) Show their gods have not promised anything for sure.

2. What to say? a) We should try to undermine a pluralist's confidence that all religions are the path to the same god by showing how Allah and Jesus both claim supremacy and condemn those who would follow another god. Gods themselves claim superiority. This requires a little study, however, so we can know the central features of several religions well enough to be able to use this tactic effectively. b) Our goal with the religious pluralist is to create cognitive dissonance, that is, to give him or her two sets of information that cannot be reconciled. If the person realizes that there are two religions that are inherently different, either he or she will have to give up any attempt to reconcile them or will attempt to learn more so that a new position of understanding can be reached. The pluralist will be forced to study. That is our chance to witness. Get them to study our materials! c) We must have our message ready and ready to present effectively. Peter

said, "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The One Option Among Many. a) The pluralist's god is only promoting one thing: love. But the syrup of love is no real help. How is that god going to help when things in life go wrong or when doubts arise? There is no doctrine that one can fall back upon, only the vague hope that "god" will accept anything we do to please him. b) The pluralist's god leaves all the details of religion in the hands of man. "Let us make a god in our own image." He lets them continue to stumble around without divine guidance as to how things might be done right or even be done better. Moreover, if this god cares so little, why shouldn't people get what they can when they can and ignore him.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus is a God of action. Jesus saves! He has done the heavy lifting. When the world was lost in sin, He rescued man from his hopeless plight. Where other gods demand, Jesus gives freely. St. Paul wrote, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time" (1 Timothy 2:5,6). b) Jesus made it extremely clear who he was when he said, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through me" (John 14:6). Jesus claims to be the only way. If He isn't, then there is no way at all.

3. The Good Teacher

We have seen Jullian shape God into her image of happy and lawless, and Tamar shape God in his image of generic and loving. Now we will see Mr. Darby shape God into his image as a good teacher.

VI. Engaging the Good Teacher

A. The nature of the person – Mr. Darby

Q1. What are Mr. Darby's main presuppositions that created the Good Teacher? A: 1) The Bible is not all true. 2) The existence of God is unlikely. 3) Jesus encouraged good behavior.

1. The snide critic uses slash-and-burn tactics. a) In general, snide critics know just enough to be able to say something provocative, but they lack the understanding of the deeper context of their remarks. They like to cause distress. b) There is a sense of arrogance about such critics because they think they are smarter than the people whom they belittle. They want to show false superiority. People who are actually smarter do not need to use such tactics.

2. Evasiveness. a) Because snide critics do not have a deep knowledge for their remarks, they do not want to be pinned down to any specific details about a subject but want to move on to another point of attack or leave their opponent aggravated but helpless. This is called kettle logic. b) When counterattacked, they try to move the discussion to ground on which they feel more secure either because they know it better or they think their opponent knows less about it. Run & hide tactic.

3. The agnostic. a) Agnostics do not know whether a god exists, but they know the type of god that they would want to exist if a god did exist. They may not have completely defined it, but they definitely know what they do not want in a god. They have an image in search of a god. b) Agnostics are less likely to bait Christians because Christians might possibly give them answers that they do not want to hear. They find serenity in not being forced to consider the man-god relationship that the existence of a god would force them to face. Agnostics generally like to avoid conflict.

4. The atheist. a) Atheists can be more arrogant about their position because they do not want a god to exist, and they want to crush any idea that one does. They employ snide comments about religion to show that they are beyond the reach of anyone so foolish as to think that they would even consider a god existing. They want to show that belief is below their dignity. b) A "better than thou" attitude. Like someone whistling in the dark to keep the monsters away, atheists need to justify their position to others to show that they are smart, thinking people who cannot be led to believe religious superstition. They want to vote God out of existence. c) Denying the existence of God is not a new idea. King David wrote, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Psalm 14:1). And fools they are.

B. What if God is dead? (Premise: There is no God! – Is this a good idea?

1. How could God be dead? a) If God had never existed, then he could not be dead, but he would be as good as dead because he is not around to manage the world, i.e., dead or never was. b) About the time of Isaac Newton, intellectuals began to believe that while God was still alive, he was no longer actively interested in the universe he had created. He sat off in some corner of space and ignored it unless it was in danger of spinning out of control. God wasn't needed. c) Modern philosophers have tried to kill off God because they want the human race to be free from the moral influences in man that people have historically ascribed to the will of God. God isn't wanted.

   Q2. What is the significance of God drawing near to Adam and Eve after they sinned? A: He had not abandoned them.

   Q3. What was the significance of the Old Testament tabernacle? A: God was dwelling among His people.

2. A godless world. a) In a godless world, who will make the rules? A godless world no common law. While it might seem that they could be made democratically, what happens if no majority can be found, or if a sizable minority refuses to comply? This is postmodernism. One cannot appeal to conscience because there is no god to back up its dictates. b) The appeal to self-interest will only work if one can produce big enough bribes to buy off the most rebellious factions. Self-interest leads to bribery. This was the "bread and circuses" approach used by some of the emperors of Rome, but frequently it failed because they did not have enough resources to quell the mobs for long. This often led to riots and civil war. Tyranny or anarchy when there is no unifying force. c) The final appeal is to government coercion. That will lead to brainwashing, a passive resistance which will destroy the functioning of the government, or slaughter of those who are judged enemies of the state.

C. Incarnation (Premise: Jesus was just a good teacher)

1. The non-god Jesus. a) Jesus claimed to God. He said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30) and "The one who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). And "Before Abraham was, I AM. b) If Jesus was not God and knew he was not God, then he was a liar. Can a liar be a good teacher? Can we learn from a liar? Jesus said of Satan, "Whenever he lies, he speaks from what is his, because he is a liar and the father of lying" (John 8:44). If Jesus was a liar, then he was a follower of the father of lies. Does lying lead to a good place? Why would we want to follow a liar? c) If Jesus was not God and he didn't know that he was not God, then he was a lunatic. He was a madman who had delusions of grandeur. Can a lunatic be a good teacher? Is this the type of person we want to follow, a person who gets crucified by annoying the religious leaders?

   Q4. Who is the Word and True Light that is coming into the world? A: Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate.

   Q5. How did Jesus draw near and live in the world? A: He dwelt as a man who kept the Law perfectly.

   Q6. What is the significance of the word "dwell" regarding the person of Jesus? A: He intentionally put His physical presence among His people.

2. The God made flesh. a) If what Jesus said about Himself was true, then He was the Word in human form. God of gods and Lord of lords. John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made" (John 1:1–3). Instead of being a liar or a lunatic, Jesus was the LORD. b) God incarnate. St. Paul summed this up when he wrote, "This gospel is about his Son—who in the flesh was born a descendant of David, who in the spirit of holiness was declared to be God's powerful Son by his resurrection from the dead—Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Romans 1:3,4). c) In fact, the incarnation of the Son of God was necessary so that he could *take our place under the Law of God*. "For this reason, he had to become like his brothers in every way, in order that he would be a merciful and faithful high priest in the things pertaining to God, so that he could pay for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).

D. Ontology- the study of being

1. Levels of being. a) Not alive. A stone is a physical object. It can be characterized in many ways, but it is incapable of any action unless acted upon by something else. b) Alive. A flower is also a physical object, but it is, in addition, alive and has the inherent ability to grow and to die. c) Active/aware. A cat is also a physical object and is also alive, but it further has the ability to be aware of its surroundings and attempt to adjust them. d) Self-reflective. A human is also a physical object, is alive, and has the ability to be aware of its surroundings. In addition, it can self-reflect on the meaning of its life and the morality of its behavior.

2. God and His creation. a) Eternal. The Lord God has always existed. He had no beginning and will have no end. Moses wrote, "Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth

and the world, from eternity to eternity you are God" (Psalm 90:2). b) Beginning and end. The whole creation had a beginning, and except for man, it will have an end of its present form. St. Peter wrote, "By that same word, the heavens and earth have been stored up for fire, since they are being kept until the day of judgment and the destruction of the ungodly" (2 Peter 3:7). It is clearly distinct from God, who has no beginning or an end. c) Beginning but no end. Man differs from both God and the rest of his creation. Man had a beginning, but he will have no end. He will spend eternity either in heaven or in hell. Moses recorded, "God created the man in his own image. In the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). Jesus told of the Final Judgment and the eternal consequences in Matthew 25:31-46. Mr. Darby only believes point b.

E. Is Darby the first?

Q7. Is Jesus a mere man or more than a man? A: If He was only a man, then he was either a liar or a lunatic, not a good teacher.

1. Those who questioned Jesus' divinity. a) The people of Nazareth (Jesus' hometown folks) – They said, "'Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother named Mary? And aren't James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas his brothers? And aren't all of his sisters here with us? Where then did this fellow get all of these things?' And they took offense at him" (Matthew 13:55–57). How could he be "the expert!"? b) The Jewish leaders knew what he could not be. – "The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God'" (John 19:7). c) The Ebionites (pseudo-Christians) – A Jewish Christian sect that began in the second century and that viewed poverty as a blessing. They believed that Jesus was the natural child of Joseph and Mary and was a mere man, who by virtue of his righteousness was chosen by God to be the Messiah. He sought to abolish animal sacrifices by prophetic proclamation and died a martyr's death to move all Israel to repentance.

2. Modern non-trinitarians. a) Unitarians – Of them it was once said, "They believe in the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the neighborhood of Boston." (Welcome to jolly old Boston, the land of the bean and the cod, where the Lowells speak only to the Cabots, and the Cabots speak only to God.) b) Jehovah's Witnesses - They believe Jesus was God's first creation and began in heaven. He is a separate entity and not part of a Trinity. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that he is the Archangel Michael of the Old Testament and also "wisdom" in Proverbs 8. He resumed these identities after his ascension to heaven following his death and resurrection. Strange conclusions. c) Mormons – The religion originated with Joseph Smith and became notorious for its practice of polygyny, even though the *Book of Mormon* prohibits it. Despite Christian trappings, Mormons believe that people through their works can rise to become god-like. Jesus is a good example. d) Oneness Pentecostal – They believe in one indivisible God with no distinction of persons and that Jesus Christ is the manifestation, human personification, or incarnation of the one God. They baptize only in the name of Jesus. God in total became incarnate.

F. How do we read the Bible literally? (How do we know what the Bible says? Premise: You can't take everything in the Bible literally.)

1. Nature of the Bible. a) The Bible is a unique book. The Bible is strictly God's book, his message to mankind. St. Peter wrote, "In fact, no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were being carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). b) The Bible has a specific purpose. It contains all the necessary instructions. "All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, well equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16,17). c) The Bible is centered on Jesus. It points to the promised Messiah. Jesus said, "You search the Scriptures because you think you have eternal life in them. They testify about me!" (John 5:39).

2. Structure of the Bible. a) The first part of the Bible consists of 39 books and covers the people of Israel before the coming of Christ. It is usually called the "Old Testament" and deals with the covenant of Sinai that God made with the Israelites. It is sometimes also called the "Hebrew Bible." b) The second part of the Bible consists of 27 books and covers the life of Christ and the people of the "new" Israel since the coming of Christ. The "New Testament" deals with the growth of the Christian church and was written in Greek. O.T. □ Christ □ N.T. c) Nature of the Bible. The Bible was written by perhaps 35 penmen and covers numerous genres.

3. Some biblical genres. a) To read the Bible literally, we must read each set of verses according to its literary genre. We must read history as history and parables as parables. We must read what is written without interpreting it by external standards. Below are the common biblical genres. b) Poetry (e.g., Psalms) – "Your words are a lamp for my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105). c) Parables (e.g., Matthew) – Jesus said, ""Listen, a sower went out to sow. As he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it…" (Matthew 13:3,4). d) History (e.g., Genesis) – "This is the account about the development of Noah's family. Noah was a righteous man, a man of integrity in that generation. Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9). e) Letters (e.g., Romans) – "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God in Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:1,2). f) Revelations (e.g., Isaiah) – "Jesus replied, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven'" (Matthew 16:17). g) Apocalyptic literature (e.g., Revelation) – St. John wrote, "I was in spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard a loud voice behind me, like a trumpet, saying…" (Revelation 1:10,11).

VII. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Good Teacher

1. The Intellectual – Mr. Darby. a) The Bible is a book written by backward people. Many people think that they are too sophisticated to believe in a religion that was written at a time when the human knowledge base was much smaller. They assume that those people were so backward that they could not possibly have any insight for the educated of today. b) Religion = works. A religion has historically meant a set of rules to please a deity to gain a good place in the afterlife. Biblical Christianity does not function that way, many Christians are misguided and act like it does. Unbelievers sense (false understanding) they will be placed in a moral straitjacket if they made any commitment.

   Q8. How can you speak the truth to people who think of Jesus as merely a Good Teacher? A:

Jesus was recognized as one who spoke with authority who condemned sin and told of the Kingdom of God, because He was God in the flesh.

2. What to say? a) When the intellectual makes statements contrary to the biblical teaching, we can ask why he believes his statement is true. How much does he really know? We can present to him biblical statements that might challenge his view. We might ask him how much of the Bible he has read and suggest he read more. b) By a thoughtful interchange we may find the place where he is open to hear more (planting the seed). We can also digest his position and discuss it with a pastor to better prepare ourselves for future discussion. We are not trying to win an argument; we are trying to save a soul.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Good Teacher. a) The "good teacher" idol of Jesus is a convenient god for those who believe themselves to be smart and to have something they would like to teach the world to improve it. They want to make Jesus to be similar to themselves with similar ideas so that it would appear that he supposedly already taught people these ideas 2000 years ago. They want to read their ideas into Jesus' teachings. b) This idol, however, cannot give the forgiveness of sins, heal a broken heart, or help in time of earthly need. It is only a preacher of the Law to "good people," who couches it in a way that its followers can feel comfortable that they are basically good people, and that Jesus would accept them if they would ever meet him.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The only way to salvation. Jesus said, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father (be saved), except through me" (John 14:6). b) Jesus was the suffering servant on our behalf. "Though he was by nature God, he did not consider equality with God as a prize to be displayed, but he emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant. When he was born in human likeness, and his appearance was like that of any other man, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:6–8). It was not just Jesus' teaching that was important, but His whole life, and His mission.

4. The Therapist

VIII. Engaging the Christian Life Coach

A. The nature of the person – Wendy

1. What is a life coach? a) A person who is certified to train people to understand how they can make themselves happier through changes in their lifestyle. To identify problems to happiness. b) Someone who counsels and encourages people through challenges in either their personal or career lives. To help with challenges.

2. Life coach verses related professionals. a) A counselor needs to reach into a person's past to find what is blocking them from success. Special training and techniques are needed to bring these issues out and remove the obstacles so that a person can move ahead. Counselors begin their work in a person's past, while life coaches begin in the present and work toward the future. Counselors diagnose problems to fix them; life coaches paper over problems. b) A mentor has expertise in a particular area and provides knowledge, advice, and encouragement in that field. Mentors work

within their professions. Life coaches are not focused on a particular area of a person's life, but they work on a person's general attitude, trying remove roadblocks to happiness and mental health. Mentors teach how to do tasks in a particular profession; life coaches try to remove general roadblocks. c) A consultant is a specialist who is paid to generate solutions for a person's problems rather than to attempt to draw those solutions out of the person as a life coach does. The ultimate goal of both professions is to help people gain skill in long-term problem solving. Consultants generate solutions for problems; life coaches try to draw solutions out of the person.

3. The concentration on earthly problems. a) The goal of the life coach is to make a person's problems shrink or become more manageable through improving their attitude toward life, thereby increasing happiness. b) The coach naturally concentrates on earthly problems because in dealing with these problems, a person can set goals. By setting the goals in small attainable steps, people see success and their attitude improves. Goals must be manageable steps. This encourages people to try more things that will generate positive reinforcement.

   Q1. What are Wendy's main presuppositions that created the Therapist? A: 1) A two-tiered Christianity. 2) Her false Christ is a facilitator.

4. Bringing Jesus into the coaching. a) It is natural for Christians to want to have their life in harmony with the will of Jesus. It is easy for them to conclude that if they are living in harmony with Jesus, then they will be happier in the various aspects of their lives. Theology of glory. b) This idea is based on the false premise that Jesus is obligated to bless his followers with a happy and healthy, and perhaps wealthy, life. In fact, Jesus taught quite the opposite when he said, "If anyone wants to follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. In fact, whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:24–25). Theology of the cross. Worldly happiness versus Christian joy.

5. Coercing Jesus – bribing Jesus with our works. a) When Jesus is brought into life coaching, it is natural for the coach to want people to coerce Jesus to bless them and improve their lives. The life coach therefore encourages good works to force God to act by claiming God will bless those who apply themselves. b) Works before faith – *quid pro quo*. The life coach is interested in changing the behavior to increase the commitment to Jesus in the heart. Works are therefore placed before the faith necessary to produce them.

6. The works' ladder. a) God helps those who help themselves approach. The Roman Catholic church has long used the works' ladder to motivate its people. They are told that God gives them initial grace in Baptism, and they need to use this grace to do good works so that they can merit more grace to do even better works. b) Wendy, lacking the power of the Catholic Church, resorts to using a higher level of Christianity to motivate her clients to strive so they can reach this higher level. She needs to have a goal for motivation.

B. Keswick theology

1. What is it? a) Keswick theology teaches that the Christian life has two major events that must occur in the life of a believer, namely, justification and sanctification. These can occur at different points in life and under different circumstances. Two events two levels. b) After one

obtains salvation through justification, one must have another encounter with the Holy Spirit to progress into holiness and the deeper things of God. An argument of both the Gnostics and Pentecostals. Without this greater sanctification, truly understanding the deeper things of God is impossible. This is false theology. c) This is "entire sanctification" or the second blessing. This second experience corresponds with the Pentecostal idea of the "Spirit baptism." It teaches that every Christian must obtain this greater sanctification to realize the true potential of being a Christian and become a "first class" Christian.

2. What is the result? a) Keswick theology emphasizes sanctification at the expense of justification. One benefits from one's work rather than God's grace. Justification, that great gift of God, is regarded as merely a steppingstone to the real power of God. But in this idea lies the trap. To obtain this sanctification, the person must do appropriate good works, thereby shifting his or her focus from the grace of God to human deeds. b) Sanctification for the Christian is a long and tortuous process which is never completed in this life. A life-long process. All believers must continually strive to sanctify their behavior with the help of the Holy Spirit. However, there is no second level of Christianity. St. Paul wrote, "But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Law: Keswick: Person is a sinner. Needs a pot-hole filler for sins. □ weak Gospel, look for more help.
Lutheran: Person is totally depraved. Jesus has completely rescued us from the pit of sin.
Try describing the history of the RCC, e.g., sins being treated as separate entities.

C. Testimonials

1. It's all about me. The person, the method, the success. a) The problem with testimonials is that they center on the person giving the testimonial. The person is often chosen to give one because he or she has had one or more experiences that are bound to impress the hearers and frequently to tug at their heartstrings. b) A testimonial invariably becomes focused on the person giving it rather than on the one responsible for his or her salvation. Even when Jesus and/or the Holy Spirit are mentioned, they seldom are given the top billing because their work is commonplace and uninteresting.

2. It could be all about you. You could be the next success story. a) As people listen to a testimonial, the presenter or those sponsoring the presenter hope all those listening will be moved emotionally to join the speaker as he or she tells the tale of being put on a new plane of joy and happiness by buying into whatever is being sold. b) There are bound to be hooks in the presentation that will cause particular types of people to be caught up more than others. For the rest, other days will be available for other presenters with other hooks, i.e., the right hook for every sucker. We all need something, and the life coach only needs to find out what in order to draw us into the feeling that we just would hate to risk missing out.

Q2. Who are people who have received Jesus to walk in line with? A: All Christians.

Q3. In what two ways are we Christians to walk in Jesus? A: 1) Be rooted in His Word. 2) Be built up in Christ.

Q4. What does it mean to be complete in Christ? A: We have everything we need in Christ.

Q5. What is the problem with Keswick theology? A: It leads people away from what Christ did for them.

D. Moving beyond Jesus

1. Getting on the ladder. Using justification as the first rung. a) If you are going to climb a ladder, you need to get on the first rung. You need a firm grip on its sides and at least one foot on that first rung before you can climb. If you are not yet on the first rung, which is justification, then you are not yet ready to climb. b) Some churches care how you got on the first rung and whether you are really on it. They have a desire to vet others. They will insist on knowing the details about the decision that you made for Christ, details such as how old you were and how you were led to it. c) Keswick theology is not as concerned about that. They do not care why or how you became a Christian. They are centered on getting you to climb to the next level, so they really do not care how you got into the position from which you will be induced to climb. You are there in the ideal position for them to do their work.

2. The spur of unhappiness. Sadness need to look inside for strength. a) Everyone experiences times of sadness. You may have had a financial loss, an injury, or an unpleasant surprise. Perhaps a close family member has died. At such times it can seem that God has abandoned you, and you need to look inside yourself for strength. To get that strength to persevere, it is natural to turn to someone who can coach you to reach a higher level of happiness. b) Another reason to be unhappy is that you feel "unfulfilled." Want that feeling of earthly success. When you were younger, you thought of yourselves as being able to leap any hurdle and handle whatever life threw at you. But you have failed to accomplish all you had hoped to or to obtain the satisfaction that you had expected. You sense you need a new goal which you can attain to give you that satisfaction you are missing.

3. The thrill is gone. a) When you were young, you may have liked the routine of church. In Sunday school you learned cute songs about Jesus, and you loved to sing them. Jesus seemed so big and comforting. As time passed, however, church became boring, and Jesus seemed more like a piece of the church furniture and less like someone who was with you to help in your daily life. If your faith does not grow, your Jesus shrinks. You have come to feel the "shrunken Jesus" effect. b) Perhaps you always thought of your relationship with Jesus in terms of the work which you did for your congregation. You become anchored in activities rather than in the Word. You were active in various church groups, but then the church changed, perhaps through a new pastor or the departure of several dear friends. The work no longer seemed as satisfying, and you lost the feeling that you were really serving Jesus.

4. The good worldly life. a) Life in a first-world country can be quite pleasant. You can become addicted to success. You have much material wealth and many options to enjoy yourself. You are always busy. You have been a success, and you have loved it. You have kept Jesus in your life, but he has always been sitting on a back bench where he can watch you but will not interfere with your reaching your dreams. b) However, you know the worldly life has its limits, and as you have aged, you have thought about the importance of moving Jesus higher in your life's priorities. Your

church membership is still intact, but your congregation just does not have the programs to give you that feeling of success that has come to dominate your life. The church has become too mundane to help. You need a more high-powered approach to life and religion. Need to discuss visible versus invisible church.

5. A new beginning. a) Regardless of how you have reached the point of giving Keswick theology an opportunity to change your life, you are there. Keswick has come to fill a need. You have been motivated by one of the situations above to get off the first rung, the rung of low-level Christianity, and to begin climbing to the next plateau of Christianity. That plateau appears to have much to offer. b) Keswick theology appears to offer just what a person like you needs, often for a false, worldly hope. It is led by energetic, joyful people, which is how you want to be. Seeing is believing, and it is easy to believe that this group can put a joy into your heart and a bounce into your step that will make you the person you would like to be while keeping an association with Jesus.

6. The false road. Looking for biblical support. a) Keswick theology claims to be rooted in the Scriptures. The writer to the Hebrews wrote, "Therefore, leaving the beginning discussion of Christ, let us press on toward matters that require greater maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, of faith in God, …" (Hebrews 6:1). b) It would appear from this passage that the initial stages of Christianity are just for beginners. Misread to claim that Jesus is only the first step. Once you have mastered this level, then you are ready to move on to what is really important in the Christian church, namely, restructuring your life to be reaping the earthly benefits of a strong Christian faith. c) The writer, however, wanted the readers to grow in their faith by studying more of the teachings of the Scriptures (learning more about Christ and His work) rather than being content with knowing what they hoped would be the bare minimum necessary to get them into heaven. Jesus called on his disciples to train people "by teaching them to keep <u>all</u> the instructions I have given you" (Matthew 28:20).

7. Reaching the wrong goal. a) Keswick theology centers on the here and now. It builds an earthly kingdom. It is about building a better life here. It is about fixing the problems that are responsible for you not having the life that you want, whether that is your marriage, your employment, your friends, or your golf score. b) Keswick theology accomplishes the goals it promises by causing you to look to yourself rather than looking to God. It is not about your sin and God's grace, but about you and the improvements that you can make in your life. It's about "you" and "your success."

   Q6. Can you describe a situation in which you have experienced the Therapist? A: Answers may vary.

IX. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Therapist - Wendy

1. The two-tiered system. a) Keswick theology is about moving people from a lower tier of Christianity to a higher tier of a more sanctified life by giving them the right motivation. People must be given a reason to believe in that higher tier by the life coach modeling the behavior of

someone on that tier. b) Life coaches fish for those needing help. To get you interested in the program, the coach must identify some problem you have that you see as holding you back from achieving happiness in this life. That is the hook to getting you onto the road to the next level and away from Christ.

Q7. How would you respond if someone presented Jesus as the Therapist? A: Ask them to prove the two-tiered Christianity from the Scriptures. Show them that Jesus does not differentiate among people based on their strength of faith.

2. What to say? a) One needs to ask the life coach where the Bible speaks about a two-tiered Christianity. Insist on clear Scripture. You want the coach to produce clear passages such as those that exist for other doctrines. The passage from Hebrews 6 does not meet that criterion; it is merely encouragement to study biblical doctrines more. You must raise doubts that such passages exist. b) Point out that Christians' real goal is to better understand sin and grace so that we stay close to Jesus. The final real goal is eternal life. He never promised us perfection in this life, so it is not a good thing to spend our time chasing it instead of studying God's word. He rather told us to search the Scriptures.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Therapist. a) The Therapist is a phony Jesus who leads us on a wild goose chase for temporal happiness. He promises us a pot of gold, but he cannot get us over the rainbow to collect it. It is a false promise. The things of this world are never going to sustain us. b) The second tier must be kept illusionary because if it were ever reached, then what? Does one sit there and bask in the glow of temporary success? What is the next goal worth striving for? Might there be yet a third level where the benefits of Christianity are even better? The life coach must keep people striving, never obtaining.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The writer to the Hebrews wrote, "Let us get rid of every burden and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and let us run with patient endurance the race that is laid out for us. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the author of our faith and the one who brings it to its goal" (Hebrews 12:1–2). Keeping our eyes on the heavenly prize. Look to Jesus and only to Jesus. b) Peter warned us to beware lest we fall away from Jesus by trying to find a better situation in life than just being a believer in Jesus. He wrote, "Dear friends, since you already know these things, be on your guard so that you do not fall from your own firm position by being led astray through the error of the wicked. Instead grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:17–18). We must grow in grace, not in short-term success.

5. The Giver of Bling

X. Engaging the Giver of Bling – Jim & Stacy

Q1. What are the main presuppositions of the Jaegers that make up the Giver of Bling? A: The Giver of Bling gives more to those who believe more. It's a matter of the proper relationship with God.

A. America – the bling-ladened land

1. The Protestant work ethic. a) The goal of the first British companies that placed settlers in America was to make money. They viewed America as a land to be exploited. They thought there were riches in America, perhaps gold like the Spanish had found in Central and South America. Bling was sought from the beginning. b) The Pilgrims and other religious refugees came to America because they believed that God would bless their willingness to work if they believed in Him and kept His laws. They could earn God's blessing. c) The free land and abundant resources caused many to come from the British Isles during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Some already had wealth and sought more. Most had little and sought a chance to start over away from creditors and nosy neighbors. "Come, away, come away, come away with me, and I'll build you a home in the meadow…." d) With an interior of a continent to settle, the American government heavily recruited Germans with agricultural skills to immigrate. Riches were available to be earned. Scandinavians came because there was a shortage of land in their home countries. e) America God will bless. Industrialization greatly increased the ability of people to produce goods and services. Hard work and personal discipline, enforced by the fear of starvation, caused the people of America to become progressively richer. The availability of bling mushroomed.

2. "We hold these truths to be self-evident…." a) God came to be seen as more than just someone who gave material goods. He also gave personal liberties. The early settlers wanted to worship God in their own way, but they also wanted only those who worshipped in their way to be in their communities. "Communities of God." God would bless, but only those who believed correctly about Him. b) Early communities established restrictions on religion much like there were in Europe. Because there was so much land in America, however, those expelled from one place could move to another. People could seek God's blessing elsewhere if they were worthy. Freedom was relative. c) The trend of local religious restrictions extended in many cases up to the state level, where voting rights often had religious requirements, even if other activities did not. d) The Masons, led by Thomas Jefferson, managed to remove such religious restrictions in Virginia, and this idea was carried to the national level in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. God: "yes;" church: "not necessarily." In other words, anyone could seek God's blessing through their efforts without being bound to a church.

3. "One nation, under God, indivisible…" a) Initially, it took a long time for goods and news to travel between places. Americans needed to be self-sufficient. People counted only on their hard work (It was easy to see who got the most bling.), their neighbors, and God for their survival. b) The railroads, telegraph, and the spreading industrial revolution began to bring people together. People with common interests formed political blocs, and those blocs worked to control state governments. People worked together to get more bling. The states often struggled against each other for the benefit of their citizens. They all sought the blessings of the Giver of Bling. c) The Civil War was fought over the amount of control the federal government should have versus how much control the state governments should have. The result of the war was that states were prevented from leaving to go their own way. The nation was cemented together. d) Thereafter, people began to believe that America was God's chosen nation, the "New Israel" and that He had given it a "Manifest Destiny" to reshape the world. A land with the right to more bling. e) The

idea of national destiny led America to enter two world wars and numerous local conflicts. Americans began to see their nation as the world's policeman. God could give His blessings at the national level, as well as the local, and the personal. The world's bling leader.

B. The civil rights movement

1. Equality. a) Roman Catholic restrictions. Initially, immigration was greatly restricted from countries where Roman Catholicism was the state religion due to the Catholic Church's tendency to meddle in government. b) "The peculiar institution." Slaves imported from Africa were viewed as property and not given the right to prosper under the American system. Freed slaves, in theory, had the same rights as other citizens. c) The civil rights movement was intended to get America to fulfill the original intent of all people being treated with equality under the law and have an equal opportunity for bling.

2. Diversity. a) The purpose of the Great Society was to open the riches of America to people from anywhere on planet Earth. Immigration was encouraged from all quarters and caused America society to become highly diverse. It was argued that there was plenty of bling to go around. b) While numerous people who quickly learned the America system have reaped a bountiful harvest of bling, diverse immigration has caused total chaos in the American educational system, which has not been able to handle that amount of cultural diversity. Managing the distribution of bling became a problem.

3. Inclusiveness. a) The flower has faded. The failure of the civil rights initiatives to accomplish their objectives has led to a growing demand for society to do more to include those who have not been able to board the bling train at the regular stations. b) The problem of how to make and distribute enough bling. With the amount of bling limited by the effort and resources necessary to produce it, this has led to growing hostility as to what the minimum level of bling should be in American society and how to guarantee that everyone will get his/her share. c) Inclusiveness raised the issue of who the Giver of Bling really is. Is it a divine being with a purpose, is it blind chance, or should it be a paternal government? Who is ultimately responsible for bling distribution?

C. Does the believer have a right to bling?

1. God's promises. God promised O.T. Israel specific blessings. a) God said, "You shall serve the LORD your God, and he will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from your midst" Exodus 23:25. b) "He will bless the fruit from your womb and the fruit from your soil, your grain and your new wine and your fresh olive oil, the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flock" Deuteronomy 7:13. c) "Give freely to him, and do not feel resentful about giving to him, because on account of your giving, the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and whatever you put your hand to" Deuteronomy 15:10. d) "Yes, you bless the righteous, LORD. You surround them with your favor as a shield" Psalm 5:12. e) "The earth will yield its harvest. God, our God, will bless us. God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear him" Psalm 67:6,7.

Q2. In Job 11:13-14, what does Zophar say that Job should do? A: Repent of his sins.
Q3. In Job 11:15-20, what does Zophar say will happen to Job? A: His suffering will depart, and his life will improve.
Q4. Do bad things always happen to bad people and good things always happen to good people? A: No, God controls good and bad things for his purposes.
Q5. Is Zophar right that Job can change his situation by changing his behavior? A: No, God is in control.
Q6. How does this section of Job shed light on the Giver of Bling? A: He is not the eternal God.

2. Adversity. a) Job said, "If we accept the good that comes from God, shouldn't we also accept the bad?" Job 2:10. In fact, God gives both. b) "His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that God's works might be revealed in connection with him'" John 9:2,3. We often do not know God's reasons. c) "We sent him to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, so that no one will be shaken by these trials, for you know well that we are destined for this" 1 Thessalonians 3:2,3. Christians should encourage one another.

D. The efforts to manage God

1. We act personally. a) Those who believe in the Giver of Bling think that when something bad happens, it must be a test to see whether we really believe strongly enough. We receive evil because our faith is weak. God is saying, "Show me your faith," and it is up to us to convince Him we have strong enough faith. b) Certainly, prayer is a good starting point, but these people believe that a lot more must be done. They must make their own faith stronger to get their bling. This is not inherently bad if people need help, but it is bad if the motivation is that we must prove to God that our faith obligates Him to act favorably.

2. We get others to act in concert with us. a) Because the goal is to pressure God to act, it only makes sense that the more people involved, the greater the pressure will be on God to do what He needs to do. "Let's gang up on God." As with the prophets of Baal, more seems better. b) If brotherly love is not enough to motivate people to do their part to bring about God's blessing, then guilt is brought in as an additional motivating factor. "You would not want your lack of faith to cost Mary her life, would you?" Guilt motivation is not a Christian approach.

E. Considering faith

1. The Word-Faith Movement. a) This approach to Christianity accepts that Jesus has done what is necessary for our salvation. In effect, God has done His part, and so now we need to do ours. We and God teamed up to work together. b) It regards faith as a work of man rather than a gift of God. Man must strengthen his own faith. These folk need to build their own faith so that they can receive salvation. c) Paul: "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" Ephesians 2:8,9.

2. Building faith. a) Faith cannot be built or strengthened by talking about faith or trying to believe more strongly. We cannot build our faith. This would place the burden of salvation back upon us rather than upon God. b) We are not saved by our faith but by the object of our faith. It is NOT the strength of faith that matters. No matter how strongly we believe in something that is false, it does not thereby become true.

3. The theology of the cross. a) The Christian life is lived in this world, which is inherently a "vale of tears." This world is a land of heartbreak. Because of sin, bad things will always happen, and we must expect them as part of following Christ. b) Jesus said, "You will weep and wail, but the world will rejoice. You will become sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy" John 16:20. Our joy will come.

4. False eschatology. Faith no suffering. a) The Word-Faith Movement rejects the premise that Christians will suffer here by fast-forwarding the Christians' future reward to the present. b) It teaches that the Giver of Bling will provide abundantly for those who truly develop their faith so that they are worthy of His intervention. People can make themselves worthy.

G. Troubles with the prosperity gospel

1. The worldly (American) standard. a) The prosperity gospel is rooted in the American Dream, not in the Scriptures. It takes its terminology from the Scriptures, but its ideas are from the world of marketing. b) It cannot handle the bad things that happen in this world. It blames them on personal lack of faith and the evil unbelievers in the world for any ills that befall Christians. BAD THINGS SHOULD NOT HAPPEN!!

2. The LORD's discipline. a) The LORD sometimes allows us to pass through a course of suffering to strengthen our faith and sometimes He removes us to the heavenly realms. God knows what He is doing. b) Solomon wrote, "Do not reject the LORD's discipline, my son, and do not despise his warning, because the LORD warns the one he loves as a father warns a son with whom he is pleased" Proverbs 3:11,12. God treats us as His unruly but loved children.

XI. Our Reaction

A. Responding to prosperity theology – Jim & Stacy

1. The evil root. a) False cause and effect linkage. When faith and prosperity are linked in a cause-and-effect relationship, it is natural to assume that more and better faith will yield more and better prosperity. b) Be positive! Because positive words build and actuate faith, it is important to use them whenever possible and to ignore reality by avoiding negative words and assessments of a situation.

   Q7. How can you share the Gospel with someone who believes in the Giver of Bling? A: Show them that their god is not helping them to get everything that they want. They could be richer and better off in other ways.

2. What to say? a) We need to challenge the status quo of positive theology thinkers. If their faith is working for them, why have they not advanced further in their careers? Why are they not richer? Why have their children not done better in school or in their careers? Why hasn't it worked for positive thinkers? b) Blaming others, never yourself. It is easy for them to blame other people' problems on their lack of faith, but it is hard for them to accept the idea that their lack of faith is the cause of their failures, so this must be emphasized.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Giver of Bling. a) Accepts credit, redirects blame. The Giver of Bling is ready to accept credit for all the good things that happen to us and those around us who are in our circle of believers. He does this because he is merely reflecting our belief in our own faith. b) No help in a crisis. He is no help at all when things go bad, when even the best efforts of people and of their faith circle do not reach the level so that this phony Jesus will respond to their pleas. He is a god only for this world when times are good and not around when things turn ugly.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The Real Jesus is not about the glory of this world. He came to suffer. He gave up the glories of heaven to come to earth to take our place and be despised. "He was despised and rejected by men, a man who knew grief, who was well acquainted with suffering. Like someone whom people cannot bear to look at, he was despised, and we thought nothing of him" Isaiah 53:3. Jesus' suffering had a purpose, and so does ours, although we do not know it yet. b) But He also took our place to endure God's punishment so that we would not have to. "He was crushed for the guilt our sins deserved. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" Isaiah 53:5. He endured all to give us a gift far greater than any bling He could bestow upon us. We always get heaven, but we may not always get bling. c) Because Jesus saved us from our sins and made us His siblings, we should look to where He is rather than being obsessed with where we are. "Therefore, because you were raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things" Colossians 3:1,2. God will deliver; we need to wait. We need to patiently endure and await His call.

6. The National Patriot

Everyone has their view of what they think America is and what makes it great. Most of these views are unrealistic, but they make people happy. German chancellor Otto Bismarck said that God has made a special providence for fools, drunkards, and the United States of America.

XII. Engaging the National Patriot – Jack – This is a hard doctrine for some people to accept.

Q1. What are the presuppositions of Jack that make up the National Patriot? A: He cannot distinguish between the civil realm and the religious realm. He redesigned Jesus as ruler of a theocracy.

A. Sorting out God's kingdoms

1. The kingdom of power – the temporal realm. a) For the ease of our understanding, we partition God's rule into the kingdom of power, the kingdom of grace, and the kingdom of glory. The latter is not relevant to this lesson. b) Physical governance, direct rule by God: 1) laws of nature & 2) miracles. God's kingdom of power involving nature is a direct application of His divine power to objects that do not have a soul. He can work systematically in a manner that we call the "laws of nature" or in a supernatural manner that we call "miracles." c) Indirect rule through government and parents. God can also work indirectly through human agents. These agents are what is discussed in the fourth commandment. We are called upon to obey these agents unless they direct us to act against what God has revealed in the Scriptures. d) The civil government is one of God's agents. Governments are established to maintain domestic tranquility, support the economy, and defend their citizens from others. This has been called "the left hand of God" and does not save souls.

   Q2. What was the request by the mother of the sons of Zebedee?? A: That her sons could sit at Jesus' right hand and left hand in His kingdom.

   Q3. Did the sons of Zebedee and their mother truly understand what they were asking for? Explain. A: No. They could not endure the suffering that Jesus needed to endure to save mankind.

   Q4. How does Jesus contrast his kingdom of grace with his kingdom of power? A: The power of His kingdom comes through the cross, not through armed forces.

2. The kingdom of grace – the spiritual realm - This has been called "the right hand of God" and does save souls. a) The kingdom of grace is God's rule for the purpose of bringing people to faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins. b) The kingdom of grace is represented by the visible church, within which the Word of God is preached, and the sacraments are administered. It is focused on the salvation of souls.

3. Theocracy. a) The government enforces the dictates of the church. In a theocracy the civil government is subject to the moral dictates of the church. Church doctrine establishes governmental laws and policies. The government punishes those who break the church's rules. The Roman Catholic Church, Calvinists, and Humanists all want the government to impose their ideas of morality to some extent. b) The inverse of a theocracy is a state church in which the government runs the church as an agent of the state. The church preaches the glories of the state.

B. The history of nationalism

1. Old Testament nations. a) Loyalty: local tribe. At the time of Abraham, nations were little more than small cities and the land surrounding them. The "kings" were tribal chieftains with armies of at most a few hundred men. Patriotism was loyalty to one's tribe. b) Loyalty: National god and king. As nations grew, rulers resorted to coercion to control their countries. It was common to force a "national deity" upon the people to unify them. Patriotism was worshipping the designated god and coming with weapon in hand to fight when the king called you. c) Loyalty: High priest/God and His chosen king. God established Israel as a theocracy in which the LORD

Himself ruled through His priests and His kings. Everyone was to obey the Mosaic Law as a sign of loyalty to both God and country. The center of the nation was the temple in Jerusalem. d) Israel's theocracy ended when Judah was carried away into captivity in Babylon, and it was not reestablished when the captives returned.

2. The Greeks and Romans. a) The Greeks and Romans were more democratic in the organization of their states. Every male civilian was a soldier. People had voice in the leadership, so patriotism was strong. Initially, the citizen-soldier was the ideal of every man. b) As time passed and the states became more heterogenous, the Romans found it necessary to establish trained professional armies. A professional army led to declining patriotism. While Roman citizens continued to regard themselves as patriotic and the backbone of the army, self-interest caused most of them to ignore serious involvement with the military. c) The Greeks and Romans worshipped many gods, and various of these gods were appealed to by the numerous city-states for aid. Emperors had themselves declared gods to promote unity. Because the Roman Empire was pagan, the Christians obeyed its laws, but they did not attempt to link support for the national government with their religion. There were no signs of the Roman government in the churches.

3. The fragmentation of Europe. a) After the fall of the Roman Empire in the west, the continent gradually became divided into smaller and smaller states. These territories were ruled by strongmen, who were linked by a series of liege arrangements. Most of the people had little concern for national loyalty but rather were subservient to their local lord. Loyalty = subservience. b) The church became the uniting factor because it controlled the way to heaven for lords and peasants alike. The civil rulers and the church both cooperated and competed with each other for control of local and regional affairs. The church and the state struggled for people's loyalties. c) Military forces consisted of relatively few trained men. These men served both as the army and the police force. They were often brutal and inspired little loyalty (the lords and their thugs). The lower classes were more concerned with survival than national loyalty to any level of ruler.

4. The building of nation-states. a) The more powerful rulers struggled to be the top dog and hold the title of king and create national loyalty. Often the king did not even have the largest army in a region. It took centuries to create sizable states that might be called countries. Even then loyalty was often more local than national. b) Wars continued to be fought using small professional armies (usually only a few thousand soldiers). The people of the nations showed their loyalty by paying taxes. c) It was not until Napoleon and the industrial revolution that patriotism became fashionable and large armies of patriotic citizens were fielded. Napoleonism led to patriotism growing in Europe.

C. America – "God Bless America," "…God shed His grace on thee….," and "…one nation under God…."

1. God and locality. a) Early settlers in America were often religious, but they associated their religiousness with their communities. Community ≡ church. Many were Calvinists who believed the local government was responsible for the enforcement of morality within the community. b)

In other places, the Church of England dictated both the form of worship and the behavior of civil government. The church of England cooperated with the colonial government. Since the king was the head of both, loyalty to one implied loyalty to the other.

2. The American revolution was Humanistic and economic, NOT Christian. a) The revolt against England was generally led by the Masons and secularists. These people desired a nation in which businessmen and planters would rule, rather than those of noble birth. Christianity is often falsely attributed to these men in retrospect. b) After the revolution, America opened to new settlers and rapidly expanded. Religion was confined to localities and often highly divided among groups that immigrated from various places. Most American leaders were more Humanistic than Christian. There was no linkage between church and state. Fourteen US presidents were Masons.

3. The Civil War. a) The middle of the 19th century saw a growing national movement against slavery. It was an example of "civic morality." It was not inherently Christian, but many Christians agreed that slavery could no longer be justified. It split the churches, but it established morality as a governing principle. b) Reform movements against all sorts of alleged ills in American society proliferated during the last half of the 19th century. The churches were called upon to moralize the nation and eliminate these ills. This was a very Calvinistic view of the role of government.

4. Moralizing the government. a) The moral role of government was strengthened by the world wars. Protestants in Europe supported Germany in WWI. Both sides assumed that God was on their side in both world wars. Humanists called upon America to join the fight to rid the world of evil. Church members were expected to join the effort both as Christians and patriotic citizens. b) After the military conflicts, the government regarded its battle against Communism as a moral crusade in which all Christians as patriots needed to engage. A case of moralizing political behavior. c) Once the government had put on the "moral mantle," Humanists began to use that mantle to argue that the government needed to take the lead in enforcing human rights of every imaginable type throughout the nation. Christianity ≡ civil righteousness ≡ civil rights. d) However, much of the Christian church recognized that many of these "human rights" merely protected gross sinners from suffering the consequences of their sinful acts. Who has the right to establish morality? The alliance between the Humanists and the Christians who had bought into government-backed morality fell apart and has become a bitter struggle for the soul of the nation.

D. The cross and the flag

1. The use of the cross. a) Groups often use symbols to indicate their gathering places and their members. These are intended to identify the people and places to others. b) The Christian church adopted the cross as its symbol very early in its history. This related to Jesus' words, "Whoever does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" Matthew 10:38. It is a gruesome symbol, but it was where our salvation was won.

2. The symbol of government. a) The Roman symbol of government was the Roman Eagle. It was used by the government and by the Roman legions. It was a government and army symbol. It was

not used in the Christian church. b) Countries switched to the use of flags as an easy way to mark their territory and designate their troops. The Christian flag is of recent origin, not a historic standard. The "Christian flag" was not designed until the beginning of the 20th century. c) State churches have always been expected to display a symbol of the state's power as well as the cross because they are agencies of the state. National flags were only used in state churches.

3. Flags in American churches. a) Except for the Episcopal church, the use of the national flag was not common (rarely used) unless the church building was also used as a school. Because the Episcopal church is the American version of the Church of England, some once questioned its loyalty to America. b) American flags in churches became common during to the world wars. It was an effort to "get God on the side of the American cause" in the wars. In German-speaking churches this was regarded as essential. The loyalty of German-speaking churches was questioned. The Christian flag was added as a counterbalance. c) The American flag was supposed to be placed in the rear of the church or in the front of the nave, away from the pulpit. In some churches it has been brought into the chancel, which runs the risk of theological confusion. How flags cause theological confusion: 1) the teachings of the church are sanctioned by the state, 2) the church is an agent of the state, 3) Americans are God's people.

E. Distinguishing Law and Gospel

1. The Law. a) The Law is God's will; it is what we are supposed to do and not do. The Law condemns by revealing sin. b) The Law, however, cannot save. No matter how well we try to keep it, we will fail to keep it well enough. The state uses the Law as a curb. The church uses the Law as a mirror to show the need for repentance.

2. The Gospel. a) The Gospel is pure grace. We do not have to do anything to obtain it. Only the church has the Gospel. b) We cannot wed the Law and the Gospel by putting legal conditions related to God's kingdom of power on receiving God's grace. Agents of the state cannot force people to accept the Gospel.

3. It is a false dilemma that we must choose to accept only God's Law or God's Gospel. The Law and the Gospel are very different, but they both serve a purpose in the Christian life. Distinguishing between the use of the Law and the use of the Gospel is one of the most important, yet one of the most difficult, tasks with which a Christian is faced. People want to fuse Law and Gospel like they want to fuse church and state to create a Christian Nationalism.

XIII. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the National Patriot

Q5. How do the previous questions shed light on the National Patriot? A: The National Patriot Jesus is about the American Dream.

1. The politicized church. The old covenant was based on a theocracy. a) People have always wanted God on their side. Moreover, the Old Testament gives us plenty of examples under Israel's theocracy where God demanded that the government punish those who disobeyed His moral Law. b) The new covenant separates church and state. Moreover, the church seems like a perfect agent to coerce the government to do as God demands in the Scriptures. However, the role of the church is not to moralize society. It is to preach the Gospel for the salvation of souls. Civil righteousness does not save.

   Q6. How can we teach the real Jesus and expose the National Patriot? A: Point out the differences between the duties of the church and the duties of the state.

2. What to say? a) We must talk about God's two kingdoms and the purpose of each. As Christians, we are citizens of the nation in which we live and also members of the church to which we belong. We can work for each of them separately. This is like someone having the responsibilities of being both married and employed. We do not need one of them to leverage the other. In fact, trying to use such leverage will often harm both. b) Care much be taken because people become defensive when their fundamental understanding of such a critical matter is challenged. The person's problem may be one that dates back several generations with his or her family to a time when an ancestor was convinced by propaganda that he was fighting for both God and country. The state confused the issue by making national policy a moral imperative.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The National Patriot. a) God as superman. The National Patriot is a phony Jesus who is a two-fisted god that stands up for truth, justice, and the American way. It is the aura of Superman, a superhero who will eagerly rescue those imperiled by injustice. b) Yet, if the National Patriot were a real god, why did he allow the problems threating America to arise anyway? Why doesn't He use His power as He did against Israel's enemies? Would he not have known what would happen if he was not continually vigilant? Doesn't he care enough about his followers to be proactive, rather than waiting for them to call on him to solve obvious problems?

2. The Real Jesus. a) Jesus was quite clear when he said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight so that I would not be handed over to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here" John 18:36. Christianity is NOT a national religion! b) Paul preached obedience to government emphatically, but he did not mix it with the message of salvation. He did not call for a "holy war" to force the state to enact Christian principles or destroy the forces of evil. Instead, he wrote, "Everyone must submit to the governing authorities. For no authority exists except by God, and the authorities that do exist have been established by God" Romans 13:1. We pray for our government, but we do not use the church to leverage it. Civil matters the state; spiritual matters the church.

7. The Social Justice Warrior

XIV. Encountering the Social Justice Warrior - Simon

The background information given below is essential to understanding the issues involved. Slavery through much of history was not based on race.

Q1. What are the main presuppositions of Simon that make up the Social Justice Warrior? A: Jesus worked only for the oppressed. Jesus was a victim of the oppressors.

A. The history of enslavement – What is oppression?

1. Old Testament Israel. a) Slavery has had a long history, dating back to early human civilization, and it has been practiced in most cultures, including in Israel, in one form or another (Genesis 21:10). Those enslaved were defeated enemies, criminals, and poor people. b) Israelite culture differed from other cultures in that the slaves were given off from work every sabbath, as was the rest of the population (Leviticus 25:6,7). Slaves in Israel had rights. c) The Bible also recorded numerous laws to protect slaves. For example, Hebrews could only be enslaved for 6 years before being given their freedom (unless the slave opted to remain a slave), and slaves who were concubines could not be sold (Deuteronomy 15:12).

2. The New Testament era. a) Slavery was widely practiced in the Greek and Roman world in which Christianity began. At one point almost half the population of Rome were slaves. Slavery was peculiar in that numerous slaves held prominent positions in Roman society. Slavery was sometimes very different than we imagine it today. Being a slave meant that a person would be housed and fed. There was otherwise no safety net for the poor. b) The Christian church saw parallels between slavery to humans and slavery to sin, but it took no position on slavery, regarding it as a political issue and outside of the church's mission. Many early Christians were slaves (1 Corinthians 7:20,21).

3. Medieval Europe. a) As the Roman Empire in the west collapsed, social order broke down, and many people escaped slavery. The collapse of slavery hastened the arrival of the "dark ages." Because no new lands were being conquered, the number of new slaves dwindled. Eventually, slavery was effectively outlawed. b) Serfdom replaced slavery as the main means of restricting people's freedom. Rather than being owned directly by a person, serfs were bound to a piece of land and were bought and sold with the land. Many people from Europe had ancestors who were serfs. c) Serfdom began in the 10th century, and it did not end in places in eastern Europe until the middle of the 19th century. Lords needed to protect their serfs, as well as feeding and housing them.

4. Islam. a) The rise of Islam caused a renewal of the practice of slavery in the Middle East and in northern Africa. Many slaves came from people captured when Islam conquered new territory. b) The Swedish Vikings, who became known as the Russ, kidnapped Poles and sold them as slaves in Turkey. They used the network of rivers in western Russia and Ukraine as their trade route. This introduced a racial component into slavery. c) Some slaves were also captured by raiders along the eastern coast of Africa, and others were bought from the rulers in western Africa and

shipped north across the Sahara from Timbuktu. It was through these mechanisms that "Black slavery" was introduced to Europeans.

5. The Americas. a) Lacking the serfs of Europe, the Portuguese and Spanish attempted to enslave the Native American population to do the heavy work needed to exploit the local wealth. This was an effort to introduce serfdom into the Americas. Their low resistance to European diseases and their lack of stamina for the heavy labor in the topical climate doomed this plan. b) Workers were needed who could withstand the hot climate of the Caribbean region. The Portuguese, Spanish, and finally the British began importing slaves from western Africa where rulers were eager to sell those people they wished to be rid of as slaves to the Europeans. Slaves were used primarily in plantation agriculture, at least initially. c) Numerous Europeans were also placed into servitude. 1) Some worked as indentured servants to pay for their passage to America, and 2) others found themselves in company towns where they were always in debt to their employers and therefore unable to leave.

B. Ending involuntary servitude

1. The industrial revolution required more workers with greater skills. There was a need for economic restructuring. Governments found it advantageous to end serfdom to increase the non-agricultural workforce.

2. The growth of Humanism as more people learned how to read and then became educated made it clear that the suppression of human freedom inhibited the innovation necessary for modern economics to compete. Society needed more entrepreneurs and craftsmen. The human spirit needed to be free to thrive.

3. Anti-slavery movements spread as people both began to see such restrictions on the freedom of other people to be morally wrong and to also be an economic roadblock to the growth of national wealth. Most people could understand the technology of the time and could use the new equipment being developed.

C. Political oppression (Oppression is a relative thing. Rights depend on the available wealth to support them.)

1. Monarchies. a) Throughout much of history and before most people were educated, monarchies had been seen as an essential stabilizing force to prevent widespread violence. The French Revolution and the 1848 revolutions in numerous Germanic states forced a rethinking of this strategy. The middle class was rising. b) The structures of governments themselves were forced to change as parliaments grew stronger and monarchs' powers became more limited. World War I brought an end to most monarchial power in Europe.

2. Colonization. a) Colonization was once seen as a way for European countries to extend their control and superior societies over the whole planet. They believed in the rule of the better educated. The revolutions in the United States and in Latin America greatly reduced the European

colonial presence in the Americas. b) European colonization of the rest of the world continued through much of the 20th century. The driving forces behind colonization were access to raw materials, access to markets, and establishment of strategic bases to protect national interests. Europeans saw it as the best use of available resources. c) The end of colonialization often left a legacy of exploitation by the remaining Europeans and by the native upper classes that resisted democratic reforms. Economic control of these classes often continued.

3. Labor unrest. Workers began demanding a bigger share of the wealth and safe working conditions. a) The Industrial Revolution led to many labor disputes over how the factory owners and the workers would share the new wealth being generated. Safety and working conditions were also major issues that divided the parties. This spurred the growth of labor unions. b) Governments began standardizing working conditions and creating minimum wages through legislation to reduce the number and severity of strikes.

4. The human rights movement. (Moral rights vs. obligations.) a) Humanists in the 18th century argued that human beings were superior to other species. Because of their reasoning ability, they had inherent rights, and it was the duty of governments to protect these. This is clearly shown in the Declaration of Independence. b) Militant philosophers in the 19th century began turning their attention to all aspects of human life and arguing for a broad range of economic and social rights. Humans had rights regardless of their contributions to society.

D. Liberation theology

1. Civil disobedience. a) The principle of civil disobedience was developed by Mohandas Gandhi, who was in no respect a Christian. He wanted the British out of India. He used the tactic to force the British government to accept his demands as the lessor of two evils. b) Martin Luther King, Jr. brought the tactic to America, attached a Christian aura to it, and employed it to attack segregation laws in various states. The goal was to make people's lives miserable if rights were not granted.

2. "Christian" Marxism. a) Numerous Roman Catholic priests in Latin America, without the church's formal permission, began to preach a form of Marxism which separated people into two groups, the oppressor and the oppressed. The politics of division. Because the Catholic Church relied on the patronage of the rich, this ploy was really an attack on the middle class. b) The goal of liberation theology is to gain control of the poor masses by claiming that Jesus is behind the movement because he was a friend of the poor. This was a blatant lie.

3. "Sanctified" bullies. a) People who employ this tactic are trying to sanctify bullying to gain their cause. By linking Jesus to their causes, they hope to gain the support of those who do not think analytically and to paralyze their opponents by invectives. The use of emotional blackmail. b) There is no need for there to be any religious merit in their arguments. One just claimed to be helping the oppressed Once the idea of a linkage to Jesus' "real mission" is made, anything can be placed on the banner.

E. “Us versus them” theology

1. Activists and division. a) Happy people make poor rebels. They have nothing to fight for and therefore would rather go their own way. b) Activists need to sow the seeds of discontent. They need unhappy people. Either they can find unhappy people to champion, or they try to make people unhappy in a way that blames other people for their unhappiness. Victimhood. c) Activists never encourage people to count their blessings, only their deficiencies. “Others have, why don’t you?” might serve as a general summary of their message, a message of greed. It is then alleged that people do not have because someone has oppressed or cheated them.

2. Activists don’t care about the cause. (Have megaphone, will travel.) a) While those truly suffering from a problem are focused on getting relief from what is causing the problem, activists are more interested in the anger of the people as a tool for social change. b) When activists find a tactic that works, they recast it into the terminology of the next target of their activism, regardless of its relevance.

3. The mantle of morality. a) Shaming people morally. To get people who have little interest in the cause at hand to become supporters of it and add the weight of public opinion to their cause, activists label their opponents with toxic words like “racist” or “homophobic,” which imply that the opponents lack a moral compass. b) Seeking endorsements. Activists attempt to get people of good moral reputation to endorse their position or at least not appear to be opposed to it. Neutrality can appear to be an endorsement.

   Q2. In Isaiah 52-53, who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed? A: Oppressor: the consequences of sin. Oppressed: the suffering servant.

   Q3. When the armed mob came for Jesus, who was the oppressor and who the oppressed? A: Oppressor: the mob who came to arrest Jesus. Oppressed: Jesus.

   Q4. Did Jesus have any choice but to be the suffering servant? A: Not if mankind were to be redeemed, but He took the role willingly.

   Q5. What was the mission of Jesus Christ? Did it involve anti-government activity? A: Jesus’ mission was to live a perfect life under the Law and to atone for the guilt of the sins of all mankind, not to lobby or overthrow the government.

4. Dragging in Jesus. a) Most activists have little understanding of the message of the Scriptures, even if they are members and sometimes leaders of the church. In fact, they may regard the church as an enemy of their cause, but certainly Jesus wouldn’t be. The Jesus’ mantel. b) Activists rely on the fact that the average person knows almost nothing about what is actually in the Bible. They use ignorance as a tool. Therefore, they are not able to recognize the lie that Jesus was a liberation activist for causes just like theirs. c) To the activists, the truth is irrelevant. The end justifies the means, so telling lies about their causes, their opponents, or Jesus is a perfectly legitimate tactic. After all, “all is fair in love, war, and politics.” Beware of making common cause with liars. d) Jesus also serves as a red herring in the activist’s campaign. His name is inserted merely to gain attention. Those people who do not understand Jesus will believe what

they hear. Those who do understand his message will be incensed at the misrepresentation and take themselves out of the fray over the present cause to defend Jesus. e) Falsifying the message of Jesus poisons people's minds to hearing the real message of Jesus. It confuses the people about who Jesus was. It means that the false message must be removed before the true message can be proclaimed. This shows Satan's use of the liberation activist for his purposes.

XV. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Liberation Activist - Simon

Q6. Is there a time and place to work for change against an abusive system? A: Yes, but it is not the mission of the church to do so.

1. Acknowledging there is oppression. This is certainly true. a) Oppression certainly exists in this sinful world, and it is widespread. Unfortunately, oppression is almost always in the context of wealth or the freedom to sin. However, people cannot be clearly divided into the two camps of oppressor and oppressed and labelled as "evil" and "good." b) In fact, all people are to some extent oppressors. Some of the poorest are still bullies and thieves. Getting them more rights will not cure those problems, it will just put the mailed glove on a different hand (It fits any hand.).

Q7. How do you challenge the world view of the Social Justice Warrior? A: 1) Hate comes from promoting divisions. 2) Everyone oppresses someone else sometime in their lives. 3) Jesus died willingly to save both the oppressed and the oppressors.

2. What to say? a) Acknowledge the good of wanting to personally help the downtrodden. b) Point out that Jesus did not divide people and turn them against each other. He attempted to reach all people, even his enemies, with his message of repentance and forgiveness. He judged people only by whether they accepted or rejected his message of free salvation, a division based on their decision. c) Jesus did not rabble rouse. He never asked people to protest or to take action against their oppressors. On the contrary, he urged the people to forgive their oppressors. He was not killed because He urged protests.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Social Justice Warrior. a) The Social Justice Warrior is a phony Jesus who is concerned only about the things of this world and who stirs up conflict instead of fostering harmony. He must have an enemy. b) He is always a protestor and destroyer rather than an affirmer and a builder. When the activist moves on to the next cause, the Social Justice Warrior Jesus abandons those who he had been helping to seek a new rowdy crowd to please. He is just a passing parade. There is no long-term relationship to be had with this Jesus.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus was not interested in just helping the oppressed, but all people. He is everyone's Savior because all have sinned. St. Paul wrote, "He died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves but for him, who died in their place and was raised again" (2 Corinthians 5:15). b) The real Jesus was not interested in overthrowing earthly order but

overthrowing Satan who held the whole world in bondage. Earthly causes come and go, but heaven can't wait!!! The writer to the Hebrews noted, "Since the children share flesh and blood, he [Jesus] also shared the same flesh and blood, so that through death he could destroy the one who had the power of death (that is, the Devil) and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death" (Hebrews 2:14–15).

8. The Moral Example

Righteous = meeting the standard

1) The righteousness with which God Himself is righteous because He always meets His standards. Only God can have this righteousness, so it cannot save us.
2) The righteousness which Christ earned for us by keeping the Law – foreign or vertical righteousness.
   This is the righteousness that saves (*coram Deo*).
3) The righteousness of Christians serving their neighbors – horizontal righteousness (*coram mundo*).
   This righteousness does not save. It is always tainted by sin but viewed as acceptable for Christ's sake.
4) Civil righteousness, which is gained by being a "good person" in the eyes of others.
   This righteousness does not save.

Justification = declaring righteous.

XVI. Encountering the Moralist

Q1. What are the main presuppositions of Ruby that allow her to embrace the Moral Example? A: 1) Conversion erases original sin. 2) Sins are individual events.

A. The nature of the person – Ruby

1. Justification is a doorway versus the status of being declared righteous. a) The Christian moralist believes that Jesus died for his or her sins and that it is necessary to know this to be saved. It was an historical act about which she no longer needs to be concerned. b) However, the moralist also believes there must be more to obtaining salvation than just faith in what Jesus has done, i.e., Jesus & I. This is the error of synergism. Several underlying problems cause this false belief.

2. Original sin has been attenuated by Ruby. a) Original sin makes us totally depraved before God. Totally imperfect, "by nature sinful," *verdämmlich*. It is an evil root in us that will not depart from us until our death. It causes us to continue to sin and need forgiveness. b) St. Paul wrote, "I know that good does not live in me, that is, in my sinful flesh. The desire to do good is present with me, but I am not able to carry it out" (Romans 7:18). The evil root remains and must ever be fought against.

3. Sins as separate events. a) If the root system for a noxious plant becomes established in a garden, it will send up several shoots. Destroying any of the shoots will not kill the root. Original sin is the same way. It keeps producing actual sins in our lives, but they are only the symptom of the

problem. This situation forces us to return continuously for forgiveness. b) People who view individual sins as their problem can never understand that their whole life is sinful before God, and they cannot solve their soul's problem by concentrating on the sins separately. Being sinful is a condition, NOT an event.

4. The weak Law. a) Moralists like to believe that they have what it takes to wrestle their sinful life into submission. They can win the fight. All they need to do is learn the Law and get pastoral encouragement. b) The weak Law is more palatable to congregation members than the strong Law. The weak Law reminds them that they are sinners, but it does not disturb them. They can handle it. The strong Law cuts them to the heart because they know that they cannot handle it. ***It is the strong Law that drives people to their Savior.*** Recall Peter on Pentecost.

B. Justification

1. The total depravity. We are totally evil. a) Isaiah wrote, "All of us have become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a filthy cloth. All of us have withered like a leaf, and our guilt carries us away like the wind" (Isaiah 64:6). b) God only wants people who are totally rotten sinners to come before Him in repentance. We must be bad enough in our own sight to get into heaven because only bad enough people repent. If people are still thinking that they have something good to offer or some mitigating circumstances to plead, then God will reject the feigned repentance they offer.

2. The magnificent declaration. A change in status, not a change in nature. a) When God declared us righteous in His sight, He did not change our nature; He merely changed our status before Him. For Jesus' sake, He no longer looks at us as vile sinners but as His dear children. b) Free and total justification. St. Paul wrote, "In fact, there is no difference, because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:22–24). c) God's objective justification, however, does not change us. There is a continual struggle within. We are still suffering from the evil root of sin, i.e., the Old Adam within us, and will continually be driven by it to sin. However, being God's children, we will not want to give in to these temptations. There is a civil war going on within us.

C. Can Christians do good works? (coram mundo)

1. The vine and the branches (John 15:5-8). a) Grapes grow on the branches of grape plants. Vintners prune the branches carefully so that they produce as many grapes as possible. In the same way God wants Christians to produce as many good works as possible. b) The branches of grape plants, however, cannot grow grapes on their own. The branches originate with the vine, and without their being attached to the vine they can produce no grapes. Instead, they will wither and die. This is because they get their nourishment from the vine that they need to produce the grapes. c) In the same way Christians originate with Christ. Without Jesus, there would be no Christians to do good works. But even once people are Christians, they are still incapable of doing good works without the nourishment and motivation they get from Jesus through the teachings of (the "sap" from) God's Word. d) The most important part of God's Word is the

Gospel because it is the Gospel that changes our hearts from being God's enemies to being God's children, giving us vertical righteousness. It is the Gospel that works the love in our hearts to serve God out of willingness rather than as slaves who must be beaten by the Law to carry out the works that God desires (horizontal righteousness). e) Moreover, doing the works without the motivation of love for God worked in our hearts through the Gospel is not at all pleasing to God. It is only civil righteousness. He wants us to respond to His love, not to our sense of duty.

2. The product of God's work. a) St. Paul outlines how we are saved, and it is all about God. He wrote, "Indeed, it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9). Vertical righteousness comes only from God; it is "alien" to us. b) But Paul immediately follows thus statement with the reason that God saved us, namely so we could serve Him in His way, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance so that we would walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). Horizontal righteousness in our life of progressive sanctification.

D. Is Jesus a promoter of sin? – Pelagius

1. Doing no more than necessary. a) In earthly affairs, most people work no harder than they need to. If they can keep their job by working at half speed, they see no reason to be a real go-getter. They gauge their work life by what they must do to support their non-work life in an acceptable style, and they work no longer or harder than necessary. They are "functionally lazy." b) In the same way, they don't buy a ticket if they can get in free. Unless the paid seats are much better than the free seats or the function is a charity event, they keep their money in their pockets. They take every advantage by learning to "game the system."

2. Why should people work for a free heaven? a) What is commonplace in life people project into their behavior in the church. If people can be saved even though they do not reform their ways and do not do a "respectable" number of good deeds, why would they choose to do more? It would seem that one should do the minimum necessary to keep one's free pass to heaven. Trying to use civil righteousness rather than horizontal righteousness. b) This argument misses that when people are converted to Christianity by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit changes their hearts to want to serve Jesus to the greatest extent possible, in the same way as when someone really loves another person, he or she will want to strive to please that person. They are motivated by love for Jesus. c) ***It is the changed heart and not some form of *quid pro quo* that causes Christians to want to avoid sin and serve God.*** d) St. Paul wrote, "For example, someone might say, 'If by my lie the truth of God increases all the more to his glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?' And why not say (as some slanderously claim we say), 'Let us do evil so that good may result.' Their condemnation is deserved" (Romans 3:7,8). Paul rejects this false reasoning.

E. Why both Law and Gospel are needed.

1. The need for the Law. a) If a course having no tests were graded pass/fail based solely on attendance, how seriously would most students study? It is the threat of failure that makes

students study hard. People must fear the consequences of lawlessness. b) Would people fear to break a rule if the punishment were slight? That is why God's Law must be so strong as to make people realize that they cannot keep it. This is essential.

2. The need for the Gospel. a) If there were no Law, why would people need the Gospel? What would they need to be saved from? b) If the Gospel did not address the problem posed by breaking the Law, why would anyone bother with it? The Gospel must apply to all sins, regardless of size.

F. To be like Jesus

1. In which ways do Christians behave like Jesus? Three things to which faith motivates us. a) They seek to give all glory to God. "Jesus said to him, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment" (Matthew 22:37–38). b) They serve their fellowman. Jesus said, "The second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:39). c) They spread the message of salvation. Jesus said, "Therefore go and gather disciples from all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and by teaching them to keep all the instructions I have given you" (Matthew 28:19,20).

2. In what ways do Christians behave differently than Jesus? a) Different mission. They do not have the same mission as Jesus, namely, to atone for the guilt of the sins of all mankind. They will do the tasks that are appropriate to their station in life, such as working for their living, marrying, and raising children. b) Different surroundings. They live in a different culture than Jesus lived. They will therefore dress and interact with people as is appropriate for their culture. c) Different gifts and abilities. They will not expect that God will work miracles through them nor will they claim to receive direct revelation from God.

G. What does it mean to cooperate with God?

1. Not as partners. a) When two horses pull a wagon, they cooperate by sharing the load. When baseball players cooperate, they may toss the ball from short stop to the second baseman to the first baseman to carry out a double play. The actors in these scenes are basically equal. b) The frail human and the almighty Holy Spirit do not make a team that can accomplish anything. It would be like teaming up a strong elephant and a dead ant. The Holy Spirit does not need the worthless help of humans to accomplish His purposes. The Holy Spirit does all the work of sanctification.

2. But as agents through which the Holy Spirit works. a) Humans can act as agents of the Holy Spirit, however, by relying on His strength alone. They can study the Scriptures so that He can reveal its truths to them. b) They can tell others about Jesus so that the Holy Spirit can work through the words He inspires in them and convert the hearers. They can do this only to the extent that He works through them. Horizontal righteousness.

XVII. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Moralist - Ruby

1. The "pretty good" person. a) Jesus' role is limited. Many nominal Christians get led astray believing that Jesus is essential to getting them into the proper relationship with God, but then he can no longer do anything directly to help them. He has done his part. b) Phase two of Christianity is for them to do their part. (Jesus and & I partnership) To do this they need guidance from Jesus the Moral Example. He led the good life that they need as their example so that they can live the God-pleasing life. Sections of the Gospels like the Sermon on the Mount are especially useful for this. They must prove their worth by doing their part I-theology.

   Q2. In Romans 7:14-23, is Paul speaking about himself in the past or present tense? A: He is speaking in the present tense about his situation after his conversion.

   Q3. Does the struggle against sin continue after conversion? A: Yes. There is still the old Adam within us.

   Q4. Does the apostle Paul see his sin as avoidable? A: No. He will try to avoid it, but he knows that he will fail.

   Q5. In Romans 7, what is he crying out for? A: To be liberated from the saint-sinner situation.

   Q6. What rescues Paul and what is done for him? A: Christ's atonement for his sins and that God has declared him righteous in His sight.

   Q7. How do Romans 7 and the questions help us understand the Moral Example? A: They show us that we cannot gain legal perfection, but the Moral Example makes us think we can.

   Q8. How do we respond to those preaching moral examples? A: We emphasize that Christians are and always will remain sinners until their deaths.

2. What to say? a) We need to challenge the idea that Christians can lead God-pleasing lives based on Jesus' examples. In Romans 7:7-25, Paul laid out the struggles he had living the Christian life that he was certainly committed to. Being called to faith changed his status before God, but it did not give him the power to avoid sin. We do not have the strength to follow His example; we need the help of the Holy Spirit. b) Christians remain active sinners. They never become "good enough." St. John wrote, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). Our Old Adam loves to sin and will continually find ways of enticing us to do what is evil in God's eyes. c) Followers of the Moral Example will have a difficult time jettisoning their life of supposed good works to let themselves to be totally dependent on Jesus for their salvation. Christians must deny themselves.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Moral Example. a) The Moral Example is a sweet-talking phony Jesus who expounds a law that is not too hard to keep. A weak law. He tells you that you simply have to keep working at trying to please God, and you will be welcomed with trumpets at the Pearly Gates. "You can do

it!" b) The Moral Example is a modern-day Pelagius who claims full and free forgiveness is too easy and will only lead to moral corruption. Instead, the real Christian will strive mightily to follow the Moral Example Jesus to the perfect life before God and man.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus came to die for us because we cannot keep the Law of God. We can do nothing. When he said, "Indeed I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and experts in the law, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20), he was not urging them to try harder, but to realize that they would have to have a righteousness so good that even the best performers could not attain to it. Being better is never good enough. b) St. Paul reaffirmed this when he wrote, "For if there had been a law given that could give life, certainly righteousness would have been derived from the law. But Scripture imprisoned all things under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ would be given to those who believe" (Galatians 3:21,22). Keeping the Law fails, only Jesus saves.

9. The New Moses

XVIII. Encountering the Legalist - Walter

Q1. What are the main presuppositions of Walter that allow him to embrace the New Moses? A: 1) His own traditions. 2) The need for Christians to be "super holy."

A. The Mosaic Law as part of God's overall plan.

1. The components of the Law. a) God's will for mankind. The Ten Commandments and their related explanations are God's moral law, the sense of right and wrong imprinted on man's heart at creation. It was necessary for it to be given again because sin had effaced that law in people's hearts. b) Orderly and repetitive (no changes). The ceremonial law was a set of regulations that was intended to impress on the Israelites the holiness of God and how He wanted them to worship Him. They were not to choose their own rituals but to approach God only on His terms. c) A nation of God's people. The civil law was a set of rules and punishments for disobeying the rules that the people needed to be able to live together peaceably. These rules were intended to make Israel a theocracy in which God ruled through His chosen leaders. The theocracy ended with the Babylonian captivity.

2. A people prepared for the Savior. a) The needs of a new enterprise. Whenever one wants to launch a large project, one needs workers who are trained to handle the various aspects of the project. The sales force must be trained in the features of the new product, the manufacturers must know how to produce it efficiently, and technical support must be ready to handle questions and troubleshoot difficulties. b) Old Testament Israel provided organization and manpower for the church. The launching of the Christian church likewise needed people who could become leaders and missionaries, but also people who could become the early converts and serve as the body of the congregations until growth from the outside occurred.

3. A people needing a Savior. a) The Mosaic Law was never intended to save people. In fact, its real purpose was just the opposite. Law = show the extent of sin. It was meant to show the people how

difficult it was to please the LORD and how demanding his holiness was. He was almighty, and they were totally incompetent. "…with might of ours…." b) Even the people in Israel who were not led to follow other gods but retained at least some loyalty to the LORD found that they continually failed to keep the whole law. They realized that they needed God's mercy, not His justice. Some like the Pharisees never learned that lesson. c) A psalmist wrote, "If you, LORD, kept a record of guilt, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is pardon, so you are feared. I wait for the LORD. My soul waits, and in his word I have put my hope" (Psalm 130:3–5). We want God to have mercy and grant forgiveness, not to keep a ledger of our deeds.

B. Tradition

1. The need for tradition. a) Trying to learn how to deal with a new environment is time-consuming and stressful. Methods to address problems in an environment. Having those who have been in that environment "teach you the ropes" can greatly improve the learning process. The "ropes" are traditions people have adopted to manage the environment. b) Traditions allow people to relate to each other. It gives ways for people to work together. They prevent things from going wrong due to misunderstandings. They make people feel comfortable working together.

   Q2. In Mark 7:1-13, what are the Pharisees doing with the commandments of men? A: They are putting them ahead of God's Law.

   Q3. What results when the Pharisees elevate the commandments of men? A: Works righteousness, wanting to be seen by men.

   Q4. What happens to those who elevate the traditions of men to replace the commandments of God? A: They fall from faith in Christ and develop their own religion.

   Q5. Where does the real Jesus locate the problem of sin? A: Sin comes from the heart.

2. The dangers in tradition. a) Traditions often hamper progress. It can prevent instituting efficiencies and obstruct changes for the better. Once people are comfortable doing things in a particular way, they often do not want to change. Even better and easier methods to do things are sometimes rejected because "my dear, we have always done it this way!" b) In the visible church, Satan often induces people to make practices into traditions and turns traditions into spiritual traps by weaving false doctrine into them. It can enshrine practices to the point of making them sacred. Luther tried to retain useful traditions while removing the errors that had infiltrated some of the traditions.

C. Sin: celebrate, conceal, or confess?

1. Libertines a) Libertines love their sins, and they are proud to commit them. Arrogant sinners. If they meet God, they plan to tell Him a thing or two about their rights. b) Libertines love to taunt those who do not wish to share their love of open sinning. Audacious sinners.

2. Legalists. a) Legalists want rules for moral conduct that everyone will follow. They want to inflict their personal morality on all. They write these rules from traditions with which they are familiar or to create traditions which they think would be good for the community. b) Legalists often find it hard to live up to their own rules and either conceal their failures to keep the rules or rig the rules to give themselves exceptions. Moralists need to be concerned about appearances, lest they appear weak.

3. Christians. a) Christians recognize God's rules for moral conduct, not man's. They are not pietists. In fact, the Lutheran Confessions require us to disobey rules established to improve our status before God. b) Christians acknowledge that they cannot keep God's laws and often fail to do so. "I am totally depraved, and it shows." This failure drives them to repent of their sins against God and their neighbors.

D. How is righteousness obtained?

1. Through works. a) No matter how Christian the legalist claims to be, he or she nevertheless believes that his or her standing before God is affected by how well he or she keeps the rules. "Good Christians keep the rules!") b) In the mind of the legalist, being Christian is being morally superior to unbelievers. "Christians keep tougher rules!" Christians must act out this superiority by following a more rigorous set of rules.

2. Through grace. a) True Christians recognize that they are inherently no better than the unbelievers at keeping rules. They have experienced a status change, not a change of essence. It is rather that they have been declared righteous before God through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, not by anything they have done or can do. They have been given a "foreign righteousness." b) St. Paul wrote, "Indeed, it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8–9). This verse is a pillar of Lutheran teachings, but we must not forget about Eph. 2:10.

E. The complex audience of the Christian

1. The general public. a) Some people in the general public believe that Christians should be highly virtuous. They think Christians should be the models of humanistic values in everything they do. b) Some people in the general public believe that Christians should loosen up and not be such pious dolts. They should not make such big issues out of everything. People have wrong ideas about Christians because they do not understand that they are both saints and sinners.

2. The mission prospect. a) The friendly church. The mission prospect might like the Christian to be a "regular person," someone who is active and with whom he or she would like to be friends. b) The solid church. The mission prospect might like the Christian to be a bastion of spiritual strength, someone who can weather any storm but is humble enough to help others. c) The laidback church. The mission prospect might like the Christian not to be too pushy but available to talk things through until the prospect is really comfortable with the idea of church.

3. The weak brother. a) The weak brother or sister may be someone who needs reining in. A "wild" Christian. They have allowed their Christian freedom to get the best of them and need some help in setting borders. b) The weak brother or sister may be someone who is troubled by some aspect of the behavior of others. A "troubled" Christian. He or she might need help with the concept of adiaphora.

4. The legalist. a) The legalist may be someone who has genuine concern for the souls of others but who sees everything through the prism of enforceable rules. A wrong view of Christianity. Like the Pharisees, he or she wants to build a hedge around God's Law to prevent people from breaking it. b) The legalist may be someone who believes that people cannot be saved unless they reach a particular level of moral behavior. Being saved requires our help. Like the Judaizers, he or she believes that salvation is based on Jesus plus the works of the law. c) The legalist may be someone who wants to use the church to reengineer society. To this person the church is just a tool, a means to the end of building an earthly kingdom of morally superior people. A social reformer, either right or left wing.

F. Oppression of the soul

1. Satan's evil plot. a) He has clear objectives. Satan is very aware that Jesus died for the sins of everyone and that all have been declared righteous in God's sight. He understands that if people believe the message of free salvation, they will repent and be forgiven. He wants to stop this from happening. b) Satan is the accuser of mankind, but his accusations are worthless if a person flees to Jesus in repentance because there is nothing left of what the person can be accused. A righteous person cannot be accused. c) Satan must therefore keep people away from the message that will save them, and his favorite tool is despair. If he can convince a person that he or she is too evil to be saved because he or she has committed too many sins, the person will flee from rather than to Jesus. Tempting people to sin more can lead to despair. Satan knows that the more sins the person has committed, the easier his task will be.

2. The legalist's aid to Satan. a) Legalism multiples sins. The more things that are sinful, the more likely it is that a person will commit a large number of sins. Legalism therefore makes people worse sinners. The more sins committed, the more avenues of attack on the soul Satan has. He effectively has more cards to play in his evil game. b) The legalist helps Satan by his or her efforts to make the world a better place. Because rules do not change the heart, they can only create civil righteous, not bring a person into the righteousness declared by God. This may reform society but does not bring people to repentance.

G. Offense

1. Giving offense = making God's church or His people seem odious. a) Giving offense is behaving in such a manner as to cause people to unnecessarily think ill of the message of God's plan of salvation. This can be done through intent, carelessness, or ignorance. b) St. Paul wrote, "So whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do everything to the glory of God. Do not give offense to Jews, or Greeks, or God's church, just as I also try to please all people in all things, by

not seeking what is best for me but for the many, so that they may be saved" (1 Corinthians 10:31–11:1). Be God-centered, not self-centered.

2. Taking offense. a) People take offense when they set a standard, which is not God's standard, and claim offense when that standard is not met, e.g., political correctness. This is particularly a problem when they imply the path to salvation is at stake. b) "When the Sabbath came, he [Jesus] began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard him were amazed. They asked, 'Where did this man learn these things? What is this wisdom that has been given to this man?...Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And aren't his sisters here with us?' And they took offense at him" (Mark 6:2–3). They did not want to be taught by a carpenter.

XIX. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Legalist - Walter

Q6. How do Mark 7 and the questions shed light on the New Moses? A: The New Moses leads away from Christ to a human-centered religion.

1. Being weak versus being strong in error. a) New Christians can become legalists because they want to show their break with their previous sinful life by being super religious. They want to show their piety. These people need more instruction about the nature of the Christian faith. b) Longtime Christians can be entrenched in ideas that the reason the church is not more successful is that it has been too soft on sin. Being soft on sin" may be destroying the church. It needs to toughen its stance.

Q7. How can we address the Law/Gospel confusion of the followers of the New Moses? A: Ask them where the Bible speaks to support their claims. Provide counterexamples.

2. What to say? a) For the new Christian, it is necessary to further discuss the Law and the Gospel, with special emphasis on God's overwhelming love. Christians may struggle. It is important for the new Christian not to become judgmental of those who do not win every round in their battle against sin. b) To the longtime member, there may be a real problem with the mission of the church. He or she has sat through many sermons on Law and Gospel and has missed the point of why the church exists. It is necessary to find out if he or she really has a Lutheran understanding or has instead begun thinking like an Arminian who wants to rule the world by Old Testament law. c) In either case, the person needs to understand that imposing one's own rules on others is not compatible with the Christian faith. Legalism does not save.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The New Moses. a) The New Moses is just Satan carrying a couple papier-mâché tablets on which are written whatever rules his stooges desire. He is a backer of legalism. b) His only reason for going through with this charade is to turn people away from the Gospel to a set of rules which can only give people eternal grief. If they keep them, Satan will point them to themselves as great

Christians, worthy of heaven. If they fail, he will accuse them of being failures who are beyond hope. He can be a preacher of pride or despair. In the meantime, he will push them to preach their legalism to others, so that he can gain more converts.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus fulfilled the Law given through the first Moses so that we do not have to try to do what we cannot. St. Paul wrote, "God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons" (Galatians 4:4–5). Being already justified by grace through faith, we do not need the rules of a New Moses. b) Jesus quoted Isaiah when he said, "These people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. They worship me in vain, teaching human rules as if they are doctrines" (Matthew 11:28–30). People who make up their own rules are false worshippers. They rejoice in rule-keeping.

10. The Mystical Friend

XX. Encountering the mystic pietist

Q1. What are the main presuppositions of the mystics that allow them to follow the Mystic Friend? A: The most important thing is that Jesus lives in them and leads them.

A. The nature of the people – Zach, Mindy & Stephanie

1. Mysticism. a) Mysticism is the claim that a person can have a direct connection to God, bypassing the Bible. Through this connection the person receives God's revelation which is true for that person and perhaps for other people as well. b) Mysticism does not rely on the Bible as its source of God's revelation, but mystics may use the Bible to "awaken the Spirit" within them so that he will speak to their heart or give them tangible signs of God's will for them. This spirit gives warm feelings inside without regard for the written word.

2. Enthusiasts (translation of Luther's name for them). a) Adam and Eve became the first "enthusiasts" when they departed from God's command not to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They internalized the message and massaged it with their reason (rationalize it) to give it a new meaning (Genesis 3). b) Others who became enthusiasts were Aaron when he made the golden calf, Saul when he saved the best of the Amalekite livestock, and the Pharisees when they enhanced God's laws with their own. They thought, "I know what God really meant." c) At Luther's time there were numerous people who wanted to reform the church based on revelations that they claimed to have received directly from God. Wrestling with the Scriptures is hard work, so people skip it. Luther called them "Schwärmer." He also pointed out that the pope was an enthusiast. d) Enthusiasts today include various of the Evangelical churches but especially the Pentecostals. I-theology and "feelings." e) Enthusiasts always start with the Scriptures, but then they internalize the message and blend it with their reason to create a message that makes them feel connected to God. It is a three-step process. The message must "feel right" to truly be God's will for them. f) Discussion groups: Concerning God's Word, enthusiasts will

always ask, "What does it mean to me?" ("I" emphasis) rather than "What does it say to me?" (God emphasis)

B. The material versus the spiritual

1. Plato. a) Plato, an ancient Greek philosopher, identified that there was both a spiritual and physical realm and that man figuratively had a foot in each. He taught that the spiritual realm was right and perfect, while the physical world was flawed and only a changing shadow. Spiritual = good; physical = bad. b) He further taught that it should be the goal of mankind to escape the physical world where happiness would always be only fleeting. Goal = escape the physical, which is wrong because God gave us the physical world.

2. Gnosticism grew out of Jewish mysticism and Greek polytheism. a) Gnosticism began in the 1st century, but it grew stronger in the 2nd century and did not die out for a thousand years. Its name was derived from the Greek word for knowledge, and it had roots in both Platonian philosophy and Jewish mysticism. b) It worshipped a supreme god [Monad] who was all good, but also recognized other lesser gods. The lesser god that created the world was the Demiurge, and his harshness can be seen in the strict laws he gave to the Jews. Jesus was a lesser god who was sent to lead mankind to the greater god. He only appeared to have a body.

3. Old Testament Israel. a) The Israelites recognized that man had a soul as well as a body (was a dichotomy) because we often read that someone was "gathered to his people." b) Job said, "As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the end of time he will stand over the dust. Then, even after my skin has been destroyed, nevertheless, in my own flesh I will see God. I myself will see him. My own eyes will see him, and not as a stranger. My emotions are in turmoil within me" (Job 19:25–27). A belief in the resurrection of the dead. c) Solomon wrote, "The dust goes back into the ground—just as it was before, and the spirit goes back to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). A separation of soul & body at death.

Old Testament Judaism ended with the destruction of the Temple and was reformulated to create New Testament Judaism.

4. Christianity. a) The beliefs of the Christian church regarding body and soul were set forth by Jesus himself. Jesus proclaimed the dichotomy. He said, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). b) Jesus said, "Concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you never read what was spoken to you by God: 'I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:31,32). The soul continues after death. c) Jesus said, "They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other" (Matthew 24:30,31). The dead will be raised physically. d) St. Paul wrote, "in a moment, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and

we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:52,53). Our physical bodies will be changed.

C. Where is Jesus?

Jesus can be present in different ways: 1) Omnipresence (sustaining presence), 2) physical presence, 3) sacramental presence, 4) abiding presence (with His church), 5) indwelling presence, and several more.

1. Jesus is always omnipresent. a) When Jesus became incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary, he became was physically present on earth, but because he is the eternal God, he was also present as both God and man everywhere in the universe. b) After his resurrection, Jesus' physical presence was withdrawn from the surface of the earth, but he continues to be present as both God and man. He said, "Surely I am with you always until the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). Jesus can change how He is present.

2. Jesus for us – how we are saved. a) Jesus' work to save us was done outside of us. He acted "for us" to earn our salvation. Love for Jesus is now planted in our hearts from the outside by the Holy Spirit. Everything comes to us through the Word of God. b) St. Paul wrote, "He [God] saved us—not by righteous works that we did ourselves, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and the renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:5–6). God acted from outside of us. c) St. Peter wrote, "We also have the completely reliable prophetic word. You do well to pay attention to it…since we know this above all else: No prophecy of Scripture comes about from someone's own interpretation. In fact, no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were being carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:19–21). The written Word is the sure Word that does not change and is outside of us.

3. Jesus in us – Indwelling presence. a) St. Paul wrote, "So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:17). b) While Jesus is to live in our hearts, he does not work through our hearts or through our reason to give us his message. That message comes solely from his revelation in the Scriptures. We are not saved because Jesus makes us feel warm inside. c) St. John wrote, "This is how we know (from outside revelation) that we are of the truth and how we will set our hearts at rest in his presence: If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything" (1 John 3:19,20). Feeling in the heart and reasoning in the head are unreliable.

D. Knowing the LORD's will

1. Knowing the letter. a) God's moral law appears throughout the entire Scriptures. God demands that we recognize Him as the creator and owner of the world. We are mere tenants, and we need to know the rules of tenancy. We are here to serve God and serve our fellowmen. The Moral Law is God's will. We obey it because we love God, b) Moses wrote, "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words that I am commanding you today are to be on your heart. Teach them diligently to your children….Tie them as a sign on

your wrists, and they will serve as symbols on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:5–9). The letter is important.

2. Knowing the spirit. a) St. Paul wrote, "We should serve in newness of spirit (out of love), and not in the oldness of the letter" (Romans 7:6). b) He also wrote, "He also made us competent as ministers of a New Testament (not of letter, but of spirit). For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life" (2 Corinthians 3:6). We are not just to follow a set of rules.

F. Pietism

1. History. a) Pietism began in the Lutheran church as a response to the Thirty-Years War. This war, which had numerous participants at various times, had killed about a third of the population of Germany and completely corrupted the daily life of those who survived. War corrupts because in war there is an immediate need to survive. b) Lutheran pastors in northern Germany saw that moral conditions were much better in eastern Switzerland, which was under Calvinistic control, and some concluded that improvement in Christian behavior was at least as important as doctrine. They wanted better outward behavior and soon overemphasized this. This occurred during the "Silver Age of Lutheran Orthodoxy" when numerous preachers had become more interested in scholarship than pastoral theology.

2. Effects. a) The founder of Pietism was Philipp Spener who emphasized a personal transformation through spiritual renewal, individual devotion, and personal piety, i.e., acting pious. He used small groups of dedicated followers to spread his movement. b) The teachings of Pietism (being pious, deemphasizing doctrine, and a direct connection to God) were enhanced by Spener's followers. They saw little merit in a strict adherence to doctrine but focused on the Christian life. This led to a growing mysticism in the movement. c) Pietism soon found an audience in England and led to the founding of the Methodist Church and various holiness bodies. These churches codified pietistic practices so that their members would know how to please God. They thus became legalistic. Trying to please God through one's own rulebook = legalism.

G. What is the church?

1. What the church is not. a) It is not simply those who adhere to the pope and his claim of being the heir of St. Peter. Peter was never the head of the Christian church, never the pope, and almost certainly never in Rome. b) It is not simply a building, a group of people with a mission statement, trappings of an official organization, and regular activities which include worship services, classes, social events, programs to help the poor, and fund raisers. Something that can be defined in earthly terms. c) It is not simply a group of people who through their pious behavior appear to the outside world as a corner of heaven on earth. Not people who seem extremely pious.

2. What the church is. a) Signs of the church. It is the place where God's Word is purely preached and taught and where the sacraments are celebrated as Jesus instituted them. b) It is built by the Holy Spirit working <u>through the Word and the Sacraments</u> and by using those who preach, teach, and otherwise serve, motivated by His love, working as His agents. c) It (the LORD's kingdom) is

where the LORD reigns and His peace is proclaimed. David wrote, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD" (Psalm 122:1).

XXI. Our Reaction

Q2. How does 1 John 1:1 relate to Jesus? A: Jesus could be seen, heard, and touched.

Q3. Where does Acts 1:6-11 tell us that Jesus is now? A: At the right hand of God.

Q4. How can Jesus be present at God's right hand in heaven and also on earth? A: Jesus can be present in different ways for different purposes.

Q5. What do Romans 10:17, 1 Peter 1:23, Hebrews 4:12, and 2 Timothy 3:16 teach us? A: The Word of truth is the Scriptures.

Q6. How do these verses shed light on the Mystical Friend? A: He is not the Spirit of God, so he is guided by Satan.

A. Responding to the Mystic Pietist – Zach, Mindy & Stephanie

1. The mystic. a) The mystic is committed to a "Christ in us" focus. This focus gives a feeling of warmth and control in his or her relationship with God. It is that feeling that the mystic associates with the concept that they are loved by God. b) The mystic relies on feelings rather than the Word of God, so he or she never feels the condemnation of God's Law. Without the bite of the Law, the mystic does not feel the need to hear the Gospel. Without the bite of the Law, there cannot be the comfort of the Gospel. Certainly, if it is important for him or her to know anything related to Law or Gospel at some point, God will reveal it in the mystic's heart.

   Q7. How do you respond to someone who thinks he can learn everything in a discussion group? A: It is the blind leading the blind if there is not someone present who understands Scriptural context. Remember that a camel is a horse designed by a committee.

2. What to say? a) Mystics radiate a positive feeling about their relationship with Jesus. That is natural because they have created the god that they worship, but do they always feel secure? We need to ask them whether they always feel secure in that relationship. What do they do to get help when things go terribly bad and there is not "a still place" to meet God? b) Do they still have the same level of commitment as when they first made their decision for Christ? Or is this a fad fed by novelty? What happens when the feeling fades? How do they rescue friends who have started to lose their commitment? The steadiness of people's faith can become a problem if they are not properly fed from the Word of God.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Mystic Friend. a) The Mystic Friend will emphasize feelings because feelings are less unsettling than God's Law and Gospel. The Mystic Friend Jesus is only the image of the heart as seen in a cloudy glass. Yet our feelings are seldom constant. When one feels low, the Mystic

Friend may not be able to motivate one enough to address the problem because the Mystic Friend is merely one's own heart. b) The Mystic Friend is only a delusion when you think you feel what Jesus wants you do. He is a delusion that makes a person's own hopes and dreams appear to be confirmed by a voice coming from God.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus has a body and a soul just as we do. Jesus lived the perfect life for us. He has lived life as we do, and he will be there for us. As the writer to the Hebrews noted, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). b) Jesus is solid. He is not an imaginary image that we have to grasp for in the darkness to find. He is always there in His Word and Sacrament. He has found us; we do not need to grope about within our sinful hearts to find Him. He said, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28–30).

11. The Feminized

XXII. Encountering the Feminist

Q1. What are the main presuppositions of Eva that allow her to embrace the Femininized Jesus?
A: 1) Masculinity is inherently evil. 2) Men and women must always be treated as equals.

A. The nature of the person - Eva

1. The historical relationship. a) In secular terms, men and women are the two necessary components for the preservation and perpetuation of the human species. Two genders need to exist. Regardless of their overall religion or morality, people have always accepted this worldview. b) In the days before automation, when all work required manual effort, men needed to do the harder work because they had a more muscular frame and a better body mass distribution for heavy work. c) Women were challenged by the physical demands of their role as child-bearers. It is bad enough now and was much worse previously. Women suffered from the pain and iron loss caused by menstruation, the physical awkwardness and pain of pregnancy and delivery, and the limitations from the need to nurse children. d) Marriage as a secular institution was developed to protect the women from men impregnating them and then abandoning them to fend for themselves. Marriage contracts involving the parents were a further effort to protect women from mistreatment. e) Women's activities were usually restricted to the home for three reasons: 1) the work was generally easier, 2) much of it was work a woman could do when pregnant or nursing, and 3) it kept her away from men who might take advantage of her or entice her away from her husband. Remember Jacob's daughter Dinah.

2. The Industrial Revolution. a) The Industrial Revolution permitted more goods to be produced with less manpower. This offered more products for the home that had previously been produced in the home, thereby reducing the traditional skills (such as spinning and weaving) that women

needed. b) It caused the relocation of men and their families to cities, which reduced women's roles in subsistence agriculture. More time could be spent in child-raising, less on food gathering and preservation. c) Machines reduced the amount of effort needed to perform many jobs (e.g., power steering, forklifts) and created more demand for office workers. This meant that a larger number of jobs could physically be done by women than previously. d) Medical care improvements, such as food supplements and sterile techniques, reduced the difficulties encountered in childbearing and substantially improved the condition of women's health, at least for the upper and middle classes.

3. The women's crusades. a) Factory jobs were hard on men psychologically drinking. Women demanded to be treated better by their husbands and identified the chief cause of their problem as "demon rum." Temperance unions were established to place restrictions on alcohol to prevent men from becoming abusively drunk and squandering their incomes on whiskey and gaming. b) As more women entered the workforce and assumed more equal work roles, they demanded the right to vote in elections. They thought the influence of women would modify the excesses of the political process.

4. The modern woman. a) Money. The modern woman wants equal pay for equal work but still wants to retain some prerogatives relative to childbearing. b) Opportunity. She wants a path for upward mobility in her career. c) Protection. She wants protection against sexual abuse in the workplace. d) Equality. She wants to be regarded as the equal of men in all aspects of life.

B. What is marriage?

1. It is an institution of God. a) God instituted marriage by creating a wife for Adam. Moses wrote, "For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will remain united with his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). They were to become a single unit vis-à-vis the world. b) Marriage is intended to be a lifelong union. Malachi wrote, "So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not act unfaithfully against the wife you married when you were young. He [the LORD] hates divorce!" (Malachi 2:15,16). Only God has a right to separate the man-woman union.

2. It is intended for companionship and mutual support. a) Marriage builds societies. God realized that it was not good for a person to live and work by himself. Moses recorded, "The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is a suitable partner for him'" (Genesis 2:18). b) Husbands and wives have separate roles. St. Paul wrote, "Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he himself is the Savior….Husbands, love your wives, in the same way as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:22–25). Men and women can work together well only if they understand their different roles.

3. It is intended to produce children. Having children is both a command and a blessing. a) God directed people to populate the world. Moses recorded, "God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it'" (Genesis 1:28). b) The blessing of children

continued to be emphasized throughout the Scriptures. Solomon wrote, "Sons born during one's youth are like arrows in the hand of a warrior. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them" (Psalm 127:4,5).

C. Egalitarianism

1. The drive to make everyone equal. What is equality? a) Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that "all men (people) are created equal," but equality has always been difficult to define. Are we talking about intrinsic value, skills, wealth, intelligence, lack of the titles of nobility, or genetic characteristics? b) People come with different attributes. While certain inequalities can be erased by legislation, others cannot. The person who is 5-foot-2 will not play quarterback in the NFL and the person who is 6-foot-4 will not ride a horse to victory in the Kentucky Derby. Opportunities are limited by many factors.

2. Equality in marriage. a) There is no blueprint for marriage. Marriages usually fall into three patterns: the couple does almost everything together, the couple does very little together, or the couple have a variety of interlacing roles. Marriages may transition among these models and sometimes form hybrids. b) It is necessary to establish a viable relationship from the beginning. Marriages tend to have problems when both partners want to have the same role, or they cannot agree on the pattern of the marriage. It is here that egalitarianism tends to undermine marriages.

D. What are social constructs?

1. Constructs involved in forming a society. They are the patterns that determine how life is lived. a) To live within the same region, people need to get along with each other. If they do not have anything in common, they will drift apart or kill each other. At Babel the LORD caused confusion among the people by diversifying their language (Genesis 11:5-9). b) Common social constructs are forms of governments, types of fashions, official language, highway regulations, and social organizations. We must accept the will of the LORD when He sets the rules.

2. God's constructs. a) Some constructs are imposed by God. People are forced to live with constructs that God has placed on them through His creation of the world. The physical laws of nature restrict the behavior of people. Genetics impose gender and numerous biological and psychological patterns on people. b) God has also established marriage and other types of social constructs among people that society would be well-advised not to attempt to reengineer.

E. Patriarchalism

1. The history. a) In the past in many areas of the world, survival was difficult. This could be the case due to limited natural resources or a hostility with other people or both. Members of a family or a group of families (i.e., a clan) needed to act as a unit. To prevent infighting, they developed a system of selecting an elder to act as their leader, i.e., their "patriarch." Respect for the patriarch held groups together. b) The role of a governing patriarch is still used in numerous areas of the

world today due to tradition or to a continuing need to hold communities together. This form of government still exists. How well it works depends on the people involved.

2. The patriarchal family. Stereotypes can be useful or harmful. a) Through the eyes of the feminist, the patriarchal family is stereotyped as being led by a husband who has the manliness of John Wayne and the bigotry of Archie Bunker, with a wife more mild-mannered than Harriet Nelson. The children are to be seen but not heard. b) God certainly does expect that children will honor their parents. He said, "Honor your father and your mother so that you may spend many days on the land that the LORD your God is giving to you" (Exodus 20:12). Children lack the understanding of situations that adults have. c) God also does call on men to manage their households but not to be tyrannical. Concerning pastors, St. Paul wrote, "It is necessary that he manage his own household well, with all dignity making sure that his children obey him" (1 Timothy 3:4). Manage doesn't mean tyrannize.

F. The matter of gender

1. Why does gender exist? This is God's plan. a) The biblical explanation is that God created humans with two genders. Moses recorded, "God created the man in his own image. In the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). b) Humans have 46 chromosomes. Two are involved in establishing gender. A female has 2 X chromosomes, and a male has one X and one Y chromosome. A person receives these at conception, and they appear in each nucleated cell in the body (~30 trillion in an adult). Note: This is a simplified explanation; things are much more complex.

2. Why does gender confusion occur? a) Gender confusion is not caused by genetics. It is a psychological addiction that develops due to events people experience during their lives. Biochemistry in the womb can contribute to it, as can social environment, expectations by others, and confused biofeedback mechanisms. At some point the non-conscious concludes claiming to be transgender is the best solution to the current situation and begins a feedback mechanism to sustain the idea. The conscious mind rationalizes the decision. b) It is impossible to change gender because the reproductive biology mechanism develops while the child is still in the womb. Reproductive organs of offsprings develop in the womb of the mother before birth. Cells in the body continue to produce biochemicals based on the gender established at conception, regardless of subsequent treatments.

G. Masculine vs. Feminine Characteristics

1. The historical basis of these characteristics. a) Masculine characteristics are regarded as confidence, competitiveness, forcefulness, heroism, sacrificing, and defending. During much of history male characteristics were needed for survival. These are necessary in environments where food must be obtained and where obstacles must be overcome by physical force. b) Feminine characteristics are regarded as affection, nurturing, sharing, tenderness, and patience. These are necessary to raise children and arbitrate an active household and to promote civilized behavior.

2. The concept of gender homogenization. a) Different traits are no longer necessary. The feminist movement has argued that the traits of each gender that had merit in the past are no longer essential to be separated but that society should strive to spread these characteristics uniformly across both genders so there will be equality. b) The problem with this theory is the difference in the types and amounts of the various biochemicals produced within males and females. These chemicals affect the body and the brain, causing inherently different reactions to occur in males and females, even after extensive training to develop a common behavior. Genetics and biochemistry do not change based on philosophical considerations.

XXIII. Our Reaction

Q2. Does Galatians 3:27-28 support the abolishment of gender? A: No. It says that there is no spiritual difference.

Q3. Does Ephesians 5:21-23 support an oppressive male-dominated structure in marriage? A: No. Submission is an act of love to allow people to work well together.

Q4. How is the Good Shepherd portrayed in John 10:10-18? A: As caring and tender, but also as brave and steadfast to protect the sheep.

Q5. Do these verses shed light on the Femininized Jesus? A: He does not represent the full picture of Jesus given in the Scriptures.

A. Responding to the Feminist - Eva

1. Third-wave feminism. a) While the first two waves of feminism were intended to get women on the playing field and then to level the playing field to give women an equal chance, third-wave feminism has concluded that there never will be equality as long as masculine ideas exist. Third-wave feminism is anti-masculine. b) Third-wave feminism wants to destroy all masculine social and business structures, but really has nothing with which to replace them. Dreams need substance and the willing participation of women and men, or they will be a catastrophic flop. Finding a replacement is a pipedream.

Q6. How would you discuss the real Jesus with someone who has feminized him? A: Talk about why masculinity is regarded only as a threat and not as protection and support.

2. What to say? a) Why are men bad? We must ask why masculinity is bad. Is it because it can be used to oppress? b) We must ask, “Can power be used in other ways than to oppress?” We must ask whether the biblical Jesus ever oppressed people, particularly women. How did Jesus really behave? Did he not heal women who came to him? Did he not sacrifice himself for the sins of all people? Would it have been better if Jesus had been weaker and not carried out his mission of salvation? c) Feminists have become obsessed with avoiding the feeling of being weak or of being submissive. This is a very stereotyped view of the world. They fail to see that power can be used to protect and support. Instead, they think they need to make a preemptive strike against anything that might threaten them.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Feminized Jesus. a) The Feminized Jesus is viewed as friendlier and more comforting than the real Jesus. An agreeable idol. He makes no demands but can always be brought to see it the feminist's way. b) This Jesus will run for cover at the first sign of danger. No braver than its creators. Because he is only the compilation of the hopes and fears of his believers, he has no ability to give a helping hand, much less to be a strong arm on which to lean. He is often only a Jesus who is continually remodeled as new needs and fears arise.

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus is manly enough to deal with all the powers of hell, but he also comforts and sustains. He was both strong and compassionate. Isaiah wrote, "Surely he was taking up our weaknesses, and he was carrying our sufferings…The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4). Matthew recorded, "He [Jesus] had compassion on them and healed their sick" (Matthew 14:14). b) The real Jesus is the real God who created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1). As such, he has the power to give us everything we need and protect us against all danger. He has the power to do it all. "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of the divine nature. He sustains all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3).

12. The Teddy Bear & Conclusion

XXIV. Encountering the Glory Theologians

A. The theology of glory

1. Its focus is on this life. Making this life pleasant. a) The theology of glory is a here-and-now religion. If humans are God's special creatures, then God will certainly want to bless them abundantly. They merely need to ask God for what they want. b) The theology of glory is always seeking a better situation. It may be more material goods, it may be a better social environment, it may be more political influence. Whatever it is, it is about this life. Heaven will come, but one can have the good things now. Heaven can wait.

2. Being upbeat. (You got to accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on to the affirmative, and don't mess with Mister In-between.) a) The theology of glory requires being upbeat. If one remains positive, then God will work off that energy to make your life better. Good things happen to those who expect them. b) Ignore the reality of the world. Thinking about negative things makes one's life become negative, and all the good feelings are lost. Negativity sows weeds in one's life and makes one lose the good feeling necessary to have a happy life.

B. The theology of the cross

1. Its focus is on the cross. Our salvation depends on the cross. a) Jesus Christ needed to live in this sinful world where evil things and injustices frequently occur. He had to suffer and die to atone

for the guilt of our sins. Our salvation depends on his cross, so we need to focus on it. b) We focus on his cross by studying the Scriptures. Many things in the Scriptures are not pleasant. There is idolatry, murder, scandalous living, mistreatment of the helpless, and a lot of self-centeredness. They are the reality of what sinful people do. Life in the sinful world can be very negative.

2. Enduring the cross. Life in the sinful world will be unpleasant even for Christians. a) While Jesus removed the guilt of our sins, he did not end our suffering in this life. God told Adam, "You will eat from it [the soil] with painful labor all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles will spring up from the ground for you, but you will eat the crops of the field. By the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the soil, for out of it you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:17–19). b) Satan works to torment Christians. Christians should expect to suffer specifically for their faith. Jesus said, "Then they will hand you over to be persecuted, and they will put you to death. You will be hated by all nations because of my name" (Matthew 24:9). c) God allows evil to trouble us for our own good, even though we often do not understand why at the time. The writer to the Hebrews counselled, "My son, do not regard the Lord's discipline lightly, and do not become weary of his correction. For the Lord disciplines the one whom he loves, and he corrects every son he accepts" (Hebrews 12:5,6).

C. Spiritual experiences

1. What are these experiences? a) People want to use feelings as a guide to godliness. Sometimes Christians may feel that God has suddenly come very close to them and is trying to communicate with them. This could happen as part of a tragic event that makes them feel they need to rethink their whole life. It could happen in a place of quiet contemplation. An internal impulse that makes something feel good, even godly. b) Through the experience the person feels that he or she has gained a new awareness or understanding of God and truth.

2. The reality of such experiences. a) These experiences can be of several types, and they may have nothing to do with God directly. They are an "earthly" revelation. For example, a person's nonconscious mind might have been contemplating something about God and life, and the thought suddenly breaks into the conscious mind in a full-blown form. b) Such an experience may be the result of hearing or reading a specific passage of the Scriptures and the conscious mind finally sees how this passage fits together with other passages of Scripture to present a clear view of a doctrine which had not previously been understood. A "methodical" revelation. c) Such an experience may be the work of the devil to bring a person's hopes and fears together to reinterpret the Scriptures to justify a false view of God or of His will. A false vision from Satan. d) All such experiences must be judged based on whether what is learned from them is in harmony with the Scriptures. Everything must be viewed through the lens of the Scriptures.

D. What is a religion of the heart?

1. Sources of spiritual truth. a) The only reliable source of spiritual truth is the Holy Scriptures. Scripture and the use of ministerial reason. St. Paul wrote, "All Scripture is God breathed and is

useful for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, well equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16,17). b) The human mind will use reason to analyze a situation and attempt to deduce what is true based on the information available. Reason (the mind) is tempted by logic to go astray. Because the things of God cannot be grasped by the human mind, this will lead to error. St. Paul wrote, "An unspiritual person does not accept the truths taught by God's Spirit, because they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually evaluated" (1 Corinthians 2:14). c) The human heart will try to find the truth through its feelings. It is easily led astray by emotions. If something makes the heart feel good, it must be a message from God. Jeremiah warned, "The heart is more deceitful than anything. It is beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

2. The unreliable heart. a) A religion of the heart is a religion based on feelings. The heart wants to be happy. A person "senses" what is right or wrong, what is God-pleasing and what is not morally acceptable. Yet, the heart is a fallible guide to truth because the image of God was effaced from it by sin. b) Jesus pointed out how our hearts betray us. The heart is prone to evil. He said, "Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, thefts, false testimonies, and blasphemies. These are the things that defile a person" (Matthew 15:19,20). c) The heart is not to be trusted. St. John advised us against trusting our hearts. He wrote, "If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything" (1 John 3:20).

E. The nature of the people – Gary & Amber

Q1. What are the main presuppositions of Gary and Amber that allow them to embrace the Teddy Bear? A: 1) The theology of glory. 2) Anti-intellectualism regarding the matters of faith.

1. The desire for good vibes. a) Want only what is good. God-fearing parents naturally want the best for their children. They want to protect them against those things which they feel the children cannot handle. They therefore carefully review everything that their children are exposed to. b) Children can easily be confused by things in the world which they do not understand or concerning which they have false or conflicting information. Glory theologians are especially watchful against things that might be unsettling to their children. They protest against anything that troubles.

2. The sanitized Jesus. a) The story of the baby Jesus can be very endearing. Happy stories to warm the heart. People, particularly children, find it easy to identify with such a lovable baby. Christmas brings such wonderful carols, which everyone loves to sing, even though many embroider on the biblical account. b) Easter, likewise, gives many people a warm feeling. Enthusiastic, upbeat. The Easter hymns are so upbeat, and the musical accompaniment can be awe-inspiring. c) Thanksgiving is another time when the blessings of God shine forth in all their glory, and people can receive that glory from God they need for their lives. All the good things.

3. The parts omitted. a) Glory theologians sense that the gory parts of the Bible really are not very important. Do not need to hear of hardships. If they need to be learned, that can take place much later when the children are grown, and even then they might be couched in less gruesome terms.

b) Glory theologians do not understand the entire picture of God's plan of salvation. Do not want to hear of all the punishments for sin. Because they look for the good and the loving, they assume that the unpleasant parts are due to someone's overactive imagination. c) In their efforts to sanitize the Bible, they lose the suffering Savior and replace him with a teddy bear that they can more easily love. They do not have the committed love for God.

Q2. In Mark 4:35-41, where was Jesus and what was he doing? A: He was asleep in a boat on a stormy sea.

Q3. What happened when the disciples woke Jesus? A: He calmed the storm and rebuked His disciples.

Q4. How did Jesus' actions in verse 39 catch the disciples off guard? A: They had not expected such a miracle.

Q5. Do these verses shed light on the Teddy Bear? A: The Teddy Bear would have been totally helpless in the situation because simple comfort was inadequate.

XXV. Our Reaction

A. Responding to the Glory Theologians – Gary & Amber

1. Safety and ignorance. The theology of glory is pleasant, safe, and happy. a) When people feel safe, they are happy. Having lots of pleasant things around makes a person feel safe. It is reminiscent of when one was a child and could rely on one's strong and wise parents to handle any problem. This is the view of glory theologians. b) Glory theologians also do not want to know too much because that might force them to think. Ignorance is bliss; they don't want to know. They crave a simple faith which allows them to ignore the ugly in the world and see only what makes them feel good.

   Q6. How would you discuss the real Jesus with someone who is hung up on the Teddy Bear? A: There is no place to hide from the evil in this world. You need a God who can handle it.

2. What to say? a) There is no place to hide in this sinful world. We must challenge their safe world. Do they really feel safe in the world? How safe will their children be when they go off to college and face all the harmful things that the parents have been trying to protect them from? Will they not need to have been prepared? b) Walk them into the real world. We must bring the real world into the childlike world that the glory theologians are trying to perpetuate. They want the feeling of wellbeing that they had as children. They do not want to grow up or have their children grow up. c) It is hard for people to give up their glory theology just as it is hard for a child to give up his or her teddy bear or other toy which he or she clings to for security (blanket), their protective curtain against the real world. This topic of false security may have to be approached in several ways.

B. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Teddy Bear. a) The Teddy Bear Jesus is a creature of only positives. A phony Pollyanna. He has only pleasant things associated with him which remind people of how they felt when they were tucked into bed by their mommies. He cannot handle the tough times. b) This Jesus, however, will be useless in facing the hard things that life throws at people. Just as people outgrow their teddy bears, they will outgrow their Teddy Bear Jesus when he cannot help them in life's troubling situations, and then they will have nothing. What happens when things go bad?

2. The Real Jesus. a) The real Jesus is indeed someone who can give comfort in distress. He comforts and gives a real sense of security. He said, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28,29). b) Moreover, the real Jesus could also handle everything that the forces of evil threw at him. He actively accomplished our Salvation. Isaiah wrote, "It was because of our rebellion that he was pierced. He was crushed for the guilt our sins deserved. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

XXVI. Conclusion

A. The importance of creeds and church confessions

1. Creeds and church confessions are not quoted directly out of the Scriptures. And certainly, it is the Scriptures themselves that are the source of all doctrines that we teach. We should all read the Bible, but we all do not have the training to get deep insight from the Bible. They present matters so they can be understood as units of information.

2. The creeds and church confessions organize the material from the Scriptures so that it can more easily be understood and digested by the average Christian. Creeds list the critical teachings that must be believed, and confessions explain them in more detail. Creeds deal with summary items; confessions with doctrinal details.

B. Spotting a false Jesus

1. A false Jesus puts the emphasis on you, but he gives you a program that will lead you astray. He is there to help you accomplish what you want or need to do. He implies that he will help you to the extent that you are willing to follow his program and work hard at it.

2. The real Jesus "ran the verbs." He did everything for you. He was active in our Salvation. He took your place under God's Law. He kept it perfectly for you. He suffered and died for you. He rose again and now sits at right hand of God's power for you. He will give you everything that you need to be his follower.

C. Magnitude of sin Magnitude of Savior

1. Pretty good people don't think they need much of a savior. Little sins need a little savior. In fact, they might be able to save themselves. They can set up their own rules to guide their behavior. They can fight injustice. They can look to the good teaching of Jesus as an example to try to follow.

2. Totally depraved sinners see no hope within themselves. Big sins require a Savior who does everything. They desperately seek a Jesus who can do everything for them, and he finds them lost in the morass of life. They realize how useless their efforts are at affecting their salvation.

D. Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?

1. The Real Jesus is not the projection of our hopes, our fears, our dreams, and/or our good intentions into some quasi-deity that will be an idol which we can serve and feel pious about serving. Such a Jesus is our creation, not the Messiah sent by God. The Real Jesus is not man-made or man-limited.

2. The Real Jesus is the God-man (really God and really man) who came to save us, the totally depraved, out of pure grace. The Real Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16). He saved us out of grace from our real sins.