

CRU PRESS

GREEN



EVANGELISTIC WEEKLY MEETINGS

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One of the most effective means of evangelism on campus is for students to invite their friends to an evangelistic talk or event—provided, of course, that the event is done well. The problem is that it's typically not in the campus budget to bring in an evangelistic speaker. The solution is to do it yourself. Take the points, content, and approaches used by evangelistic speakers and do the talk yourself. Show some interesting video clips, hijack their data and research, and follow the outline of their presentation. No, it will probably not be as good, but it is both cheap and effective.

Here are a handful of my evangelistic talk outlines, feel free to pillage. But if you don't use these, still think in terms of doing a low-cost version of existing outreach topics and talks.

While this will save you some money, the bigger reason for this approach is so that you can have multiple evangelistic meetings over the course of the year. Ideally, every six weeks or so your meeting should be something that students can invite their non-Christian friends to.

As you'll see from the following outlines, events on the calendar provide great opportunities for outreach topics.



VALENTINES DAY

SEX GOD.

Valentines Day provides an opportunity to reach out to the campus on the topic of relationship/sex/dating. What follows is an interesting way to get at that subject matter and go from that subject matter to the gospel.

INTRODUCTION

Begin with some great clip from a romantic comedy.

Explain you are far from an expert and back that up by sharing a humiliating dating/marriage story.

PREMISE OF TALK

Read Ephesians 5:25-32

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church — for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church.”

The Apostle Paul makes a profound analogy that can get lost in his treatment of marriage. He likens a relationship with how we eat. I would suggest that what’s wrong with relationships can be best seen by surveying what’s wrong with how we eat.

BULIMIC RELATIONSHIPS

In the disease of bulimia the person longs for the taste of food, but they don’t want what comes with it, weight, nutrition, and calories. So they have developed a gag reflex that allows them to taste the food while avoiding a commitment to its digestion.

Example: have you ever known someone that enjoys relationships, but when the conversation turns to talk of marriage and long term commitment, they say, “excuse me, I need to go to the bathroom, blechhhh.” They have a gag reflex to commitment. They love the taste of a relationship but there’s no way they’re going to swallow it.

Story: If you can think of one..

ANOREXIC RELATIONSHIPS

This is a serious illness where the person literally starves themselves, depriving themselves of all needed nutrition, to drain all life from the body.

Example: There are people, bless their souls, who were never loved as children, or whatever the reason, who are emotional black holes. They suck all light and life from the other person in the relationship. They manipulate the other person to sever their other close relational ties, and then once isolated, like a vampire suck all the life out of their partner. They are pathologically narcissistic.

Story: I had a friend in one of these relationships and you could see she had lost all her creativity, excitement, and life...



VEGANS

Vegans are vegetarians but when they eat they are also making a political statement by their diet. Their eating has a social agenda.

Example: Some people date their way up the food chain, always thinking about how dating a particular person will change their social status.

Example: The show *Hoe Millionaire*. Marrying for money, these vegans are exposed.

JUNK FOOD EATERS

Humor: I'm trying to eat healthier. Yesterday I had a salad for lunch. But I had bacon on it, cheese, and mounds of Thousand Island dressing. When I looked down on my plate I realized I had actually made a Whopper.

Junk food eater don't care about nutrition, they simply want the taste. And there are increasing numbers of people who are only interested in sex. They are looking for taste, not nutrition.

Statistics: those engaged in sex. When they do get married it's difficult to change and can often lead to cheating within marriage.

SMOTHERERS, AND COMFORT FOOD EATERS

Have you ever noticed how some people smother their food—let's put some gravy over that grilled cheese sandwich.

Have you ever had a date with a smotherer? On your first date they begin to tell you, "they were abused as children, and ran away to join the circus..." Inappropriate levels of disclosure. Wanting to immediately get to intense levels of intimacy to fill a void in their lives. Beware of such people.

Segway: A brief segway on relational boundaries

Or there are the comfort food eaters: beware people who are always eating mashed potatoes. Again, looking to meet enormous vacancies in their own lives, with no healthy set of boundaries.

HEALTHY EATERS

Last there are the small minority who have a healthy diet: form and function working together. The relationship tastes good, but it's also healthy, there is

emotional, mental and spiritual nutrition.

What's telling about today's relationships is to look at how few people eat well. The percentage of balanced eaters is probably akin to the percentage of healthy marriages.

POWERFUL SUMMARY

I wish I could tell you good news on the relational front. But the sad reality is this. There are some of you in here who will never be married. There are some in here who will be married and wish they weren't. And statistics would say, that the majority of this room will experience a divorce. A marriage that failed

TRANSITION TO GOSPEL

I can offer hope to you in three different ways.

1. One is this. Let's go back to our verse.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

What does it mean that Christ died for you?

Explain the gospel

No matter what happens in life, you can have a relationship with God that will be the highlight of your life.

2. Second. God does have a plan for your life and can lead you and guide you in selecting the right mate.

Example:

3. Third. A marriage based on two people of solid faith has very good chances of being successful. Share same values. Believe cheating is wrong and guard against it. And both seek strength and guidance from God.



THE REAL EXORCIST

HALLOWEEN OUTREACH.

This is a fairly standard Evidence for the Resurrection talk with a few added nuances. It's a good structure for presenting the content.

INTRODUCTION

Nanking, China. For one week the police had been looking for Thomas Wu. The charge: murder of at least 5 men and two women, and cannibalism. At the end of a week of fruitless searching, Father Michael Strong, the parish priest who had baptized Thomas Wu, sent word to the police "I am conducting an exorcism. Please give me some time." When the police arrived they could see the Priest standing by a naked young man with a long knife in his hands. On the shelves around the vacant storehouse were rows of naked corpses.

"In the name of Jesus," Michael began

"Get the hell outa here you filthy eunuch," cried Thomas in an unhuman voice.

"You will release Thomas Wu evil spirit..."

"I'm taking him with me, pigmy," came the voice from Thomas Wu.

"We are as strong as death and he wants to come! You hear? He wants to!"

A sudden roaring interrupted the priest. No one there could say later how the fire began. The police captain gripped Father Michael by the arm, pulling him out of the storehouse. Outside they could hear the voice from Thomas Wu amidst the blaze shouting, "There's only one of us."

The voice was drowned in a sudden burst of flames. Father Michael peered into the storehouse through a window. He could see Thomas' face plastered to the window grinning in agony. Then the appearance of his face seemed replaced by another face with a similar grin. At the top speed of a kaleidoscope, a long succession of faces came and went all grinning. Now the window was completely black as the priest looked in. Then came a hiss in his inner ear: 'wrong again fool! I am Cain's father. The Cosmic Father of Lies and the Cosmic Lord of Death. From the beginning of the beginning. I...I...I...I.'" Then came a dazzling flash of light and the priest slumped to the ground.

Three days later the Japanese high Command let loose 50,000 soldiers to slaughter every living person in Nanking. The account of the slaughter is too grizzly to recount. It was as if the spirit that had taken hold of Thomas Wu had been let loose to cover the entire land. Father Michael Strong returned to Ireland where he continued his duties as priest, performing the mass weekly, until his death seventeen years later. Taken from a series of interviews with Father Michael Strong conducted by Malachi Martin professor at the Vatican's Pontifical Biblical Institute.

IN SEARCH OF SATAN

When the Exorcist was first released I was young a teenager; unlike other horror movies I remember the terror of this film, for me and many others, lay in the possibility that such things might actually happen. That was many years ago, since then I've gone to seminary and am now in the ministry. I recently



read that the Exorcist was re-released with added footage: with theological training behind me there sparked a desire to finally research this topic for myself. In my years in ministry I must admit that I have never witnessed anything resembling that which was portrayed in the Exorcist. So, with a little bit of cynicism I decided to research the topic. What follows is a brief summary of my investigation and conclusions.

THE REAL EXORCIST

In 1994 Thomas Allen published a book entitled *Possessed* which chronicles his research of the documented 1949 exorcism that inspired the movie *The Exorcist*. The possessed child was actually a boy (his name remains anonymous), changed to a young girl named Reagen in the movie, to protect the privacy of the individual.)

Apparently the boy, as in the movie, and his aunt, a medium, had been regularly playing with a Ouija board, which soon brought an unwanted presence and total change of the child's personality.

One night while his parents entertained company the boy got out of bed and came down to the living room. A vase began to levitate and was sent hurling toward a wall along with a piece of heavy furniture. That night as the boy slept his parents checked on him. They watched, as the appearance of scratches seemed to welt up on his body. They watched as a bloody scratch wrote on the boys' stomach the word HELL.

He was taken to Georgetown hospital where a pediatrician told the parents "I can't give you a natural explanation for this." Eventually several Jesuits priests (6 in all) were sought in St. Louis to perform the exorcism which apparently lasted about 20 days. Allen, the author of *Possessed*, obtained the diary of Father Bowdern, one of the exorcists. You can read the first hand account yourself as Allen includes the diary in the appendix. The following are excerpts:

- *March 14:* A stool flew across the room and landed with a loud crash, but no one was injured. The mattress of the bed shook, as on many occasions. The shaking continued for two hours.
- *March 16:* Three large bars were observed to be scratched on the boys' stomach. The marks were sharply painful and raised above the skin similar to an engraving. The most distinctive markings were a picture of the devil imprinted on the right

leg and the word HELL imprinted on his chest. They would appear as we read through the rite of exorcism.

- *March 17:* The new phase of the case emphasized diabolical spitting. He spit at Father Bowdern and tore his shirt. He spit directly in the faces of his father, mother and uncle. He fell exhausted after the ordeal.
- *April 7:* During the praying at least 20 scratches or brands appeared on the boys' body, usually at the mention of Jesus. The first mark was clearly a 4; several times four strokes or claw marks of various lengths appeared on his belly and legs. Filthy talk concerning masturbation and sexual relations with priests and nuns.

The diary recounts many other inexplicable phenomenon, such as the levitating, shaking and breaking of objects; and apparently the boy was able to curse and speak in Aramaic, a dead language spoken in the time of Christ, which he had no prior knowledge of.

Allen notes that the movie does a great deal of embellishing in the story line and occasionally adds events from other documented exorcism accounts. For example the new footage of Linda Blair spidering up the wall comes from a documented exorcism in Earling, Iowa in 1928 by a Franciscan friar named Father Reisinger. The girl, in the course of exorcism, hurled her exorcists and sprang into the air landing high above the doorframe, clinging to the wall with a tenacious grip. Only applied force could peel her off of the wall.

According to the report the boy was finally exorcised. Allen found that he is still alive but chooses to remain silent on the events. Unlike the movie, the 6 Jesuit priests came away unscathed. The case was witnessed, signed and verified by 46 Jesuit Priests (Jesuit priests are the most rigorously trained academically, going through a 15-year post college education before final "formation" and ordination). On a creepy endnote, prior to its demolition, the abandoned wing of the hospital where the exorcism was performed had been secretly utilized in recent years by a satanic group for rituals-however they found out its location. Allen's research on the real "Exorcist" account was recently transformed into a movie for ShowTime.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS



It seems that in most of the horror movies that I've watched, someone uncovers some dusty old scroll that contains the secrets of possession and the hidden art of exorcism, apparently cloistered in some monastery for a millennia or two. So I surveyed some of the ancient literature of the early Christian Church (c.100-400 AD) to see what I might uncover on the subject of demonic possession.

Methodius (c. 260 AD) seems to be the first to mention the practice of ongoing exorcisms by the Church. Tertullian (c. early third century) indicates that the "power (of exorcism) should be taken seriously and not exercised indiscriminately." Saint Augustine notes that the binding of Satan was accomplished through Jesus' invasion of Satan's territory on earth, but that there were "continuing acts of binding (exorcism) that were still taking place."

In summary the creepy old scrolls (actually they're available in most libraries) tell us very little and give us no eyewitness accounts of possession or exorcism. What I did find of interest was that the practice of exorcism has changed very little in the last two thousand years, at least within the Catholic Church. The Roman Exorcism Ritual that is still used today, dates back to the second century and has not been significantly altered in 1,600 years. I guess the position of the Church is "if it works don't mess with it."

HOSTAGE TO THE DEVIL

My next stop in my research took me to Malachi Martin's book *Hostage to the Devil*. This is a landmark book on the subject, written by Catholic theologian Malachi Martin- author of the New York Times Bestseller *The Jesuits*. Martin himself is a former Jesuit priest who was for many years a professor at the Vatican Biblical Institute. Martin presents 5 thoroughly documented recent cases of demon possession-which he transcribes in full-uncensored color. One account is of a college student in New York City named Marianne (no last names). Here is a brief outtake from the transcript of her exorcism by Father Peter (no last names):

Marianne: lechah venichretha verith (speaking in Hebrew fluently though she had no prior knowledge of the language). Just you Father Peter and me. Peter the Eater. Let's make a deal Peter!

Marianne: Let's talk of the Un in the All-Holy. Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Dalet, Shin (Speaking in Hebrew). Forget your Hebrew in all that hair and skin Father? What's a little Hebrew between you and me?

Father Peter: In the name of Jesus, I command you, Marianne, to answer!

Marianne: (In a throaty voice neither male nor female) Wrong, Peter pet, pet Peter. I know your fuddy-duddy medieval Principle of Contradiction. Esse et non-esse non possunt identificari. (Now speaking in fluent Latin)

Father Peter: Jesus, say the name Jesus.

Marianne: (howling) Jeebum! Jesusass! Jeebum! Jesusass! Jeebum! (Bearing her teeth and gums a grayish foam bubbled and seeped over her lower lip and down her chin)

Marianne: (screaming in a chain of words) updown-fatthin-highlow-hardsoft-longshort-lightdark-topbottom-insideoutside-alleach-eachall-all-each-each-all-each-all-each-all-eachchchchchch

Father Peter: By the authority of the Church and the name of Jesus I command you tell me your name.

Marianne: (amused) You command! I am us. We are me. Isn't is? Aren't are? What we are called is beyond human mind. Shut your miserably mouth (growling). Close it! Shut it! Lock it! F--- it!

In a second exorcism Martin introduces us to a young priest named Father Mark serving in a parish in New York City. This was his first exorcism with a young man named Jamsie. Here is an excerpt:

Father Mark: (addressing the evil spirit) You are a Traitor and the Father of Lies.

Jamsie: (His eyes turned upwards until only the whites showed) Clot of mud. Talking beast. Praying with one end and excreting with the other. Smelling like a dunghill. Rotting into a juicy cadaver. Be silent! Leave this animal to us, the Most Hi-g-g-g-g-gh.

Father Mark: Declare yourself in the name of



Jesus!

Jamsie: We have never yielded to any power and we never will.

Father Mark: In Jesus name, what name will you obey?

Jamsie: Multus-a-um. Magus-a-um. Gross-grosser-grossessesste. Seventy times. Seventy-seven Legion. Alllll. (At this point the evil spirit begins describing every sexual encounter Father Mark had ever had).

Remember Priest? We do and so do you. Don't you think a bit of you already belongs to us?

Father Mark: (temporarily stunned and beaten staggers back and looks at Jamsie).

Jamsie: (both eyes open, his mouth split into a wide, full toothed grin)

Hostage to the Devil is clearly distinguished from other literature for it's research, first-hand interviews and thorough scholarship. Most other books and articles, some that I found on the Web, lack credibility, research or any thoughtful analysis. I must say that the phenomenon displayed in these accounts defy rational explanation and are a strong argument for the reality of demon possession.

EVIL ALIVE AND WELL

With the advent of modern science, medicine and psychology I think most of us would have assumed that incidents of possession would have evaporated and would now be more accurately diagnosed or treated through medicine or psychology. This, however, does not seem to be the case.

I do not mean there aren't thousands of cases that would have been thought to be demonic possession in previous centuries. For instance, Tourettes Syndrome or Schizophrenia may have been labeled in the past as demonic possession, but we now know that their causes are physiological, not spiritual. What I mean is that there have been a persistent number of cases of individuals who manifest behavior and observable phenomenon where the label "possession" seems to be an accurate description. The number of cases reported has actually continued to rise not only in more primitive countries but in the United States as well. The Catholic Church reports anywhere from 800

to 1,300 major exorcisms each year and thousands of minor exorcisms. Protestant Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have numbers much higher.

Just last year Pope John himself was involved with an exorcism at the Vatican. The following is an excerpt from the news clipping:

VATICAN CITY, SEPT 10, 2000 (ZENIT.org).- Last Wednesday, John Paul II came face to face with the devil's power. This was confirmed to the newspaper "Il Messagero,"

When John Paul II imparted his blessing during the September 6 general audience, a pretty 19-year-old girl from a small town near Monza, Italy, began to shout uncontrollably. She was in one of the front rows, as her parents had requested that she be seated with the sick. Italian police came immediately to the scene and tried to calm her. However, she showed superhuman strength, and was able to repel the police. She shouted meaningless phrases in a cavernous voice, and insulted Bishop Gianni Danzi, secretary general of the Government of Vatican City.

When the Pope finished his customary "popemobile" tour of St. Peter's Square, greeting pilgrims from close up, he met the possessed girl in a separate area. He exorcized her and prayed for her for half an hour. It seems the exorcism only gave the girl some temporary relief.

Fr. Gabriele Amorth, who perhaps is the most famous exorcist in the world because of his successful books, among which is "An Exorcist Speaks" (Planeta+Testimonio), 1998, said: "the Pope saw her, he called her, patted her, and treated her very affectionately for half an hour. He told her that the next morning, Thursday, he would offer Mass for her. The following day, on Thursday afternoon, I exorcised her again, together with Fr. Giancarlo; it lasted 2 hours.

On this occasion, the diabolic voice alluded to the meeting with the Pope the previous day. Fr. Amorth said. He even had the girl say to me: 'Not even your boss (that is, the Pope) has been able to do anything with me!'" In his ministry as Pontiff, John Paul II has carried out at least two other exorcisms of this type.

SOME OBSERVABLE CHARACTERISTICS

In one documented case in New York City the



parents of a young girl noted that their daughter had ceased to bathe for months. Upon visiting her in her apartment the brother smuggled a crucifix under her mattress. When the girl lied on her bed she went into convulsions. These would obviously be some red flags that something abnormal or paranormal was afoot.

In other cases the following were observed: extreme strength, fragmented personality, voice altered, multiple voices, clairvoyance, knowledge of unknown languages, revulsion of anything related to God and Jesus, extreme rage and profanity, and extremely deviant behavior (often sexual).

Additionally in some of the recorded exorcisms there are reports of objects moving, doors slamming and furniture shaking. There are also strange rumblings, hisses, and other noises with no apparent cause. Often family members report a dramatic drop in temperature in the room and an acrid and distinctive stench accompanies the person.

Catholic theologian Malachi Martin describes the following during the exorcism:

“Doors will bang open and shut uncontrollably...the doorways must be covered, as experience shows or the physical force will affect the immediate vicinity. Windows are closed securely to keep objects from flying out the window. Sometimes the exorcist or assistants will often find themselves propelled toward and open window. It is not rare for the priest to emerge with serious physical wounds.”

It is important to note many of these characteristics, especially taken separately, are often manifestations of medically or psychologically treatable illnesses and are NOT possession. In his New York Times Bestseller *People of the Lie*, psychiatrist M. Scott Peck affirms the possibility of demonic possession but underscores the need for 100% diagnosis or serious psychological damage may occur. True demonic possession is not a regular occurrence. Henri Gesland, a French priest and exorcist who works today in Paris stated that out of 3,000 consultations “there have been only four cases of what I believe to be real demonic possession.”

EVIDENCE FROM THE BIBLE

Having observed several modern case studies it is interesting to look at a case mentioned in the Bible. In

Mark chapter 5 it says that Jesus met a man with an evil spirit. The passage says that he “lived in the tombs (graveyard) and no one could bind him not even with a chain...no one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs...he would cry out and cut himself with stones.”

Notice the fascination with death (living in the tombs), the self-destructive tendencies to “cut himself” and the abnormal strength demonstrated. It is easy to marginalize the Bible writers as uneducated and superstitious but it should be noted that the description fits exactly the behavior observed in modern case studies. There are many records of Jesus healing the sick; it seems that when the Bible writers specifically mention demon possession they had good grounds for doing so.

When the man sees Jesus he shouts, “what do you want with us Son of God? Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time”

Jesus asks the evil spirit to identify itself to which it responds “legion, for we are many.”

Jesus, without ceremony says simply “Go!” and the spirit leaves, apparently inhabiting a local herd of pigs that proceed to run into the water and are drown. Interestingly, in several modern exorcisms the evil spirit demanded that the exorcist not send it away saying, “even the Anointed One allowed us a place with the swine.” The name “legion” is also a title that recurs in several modern exorcisms. In all honesty I’m not sure if the words or testimony of an evil spirit are credible, but they certainly do give support to the biblical story.

Having read through much of the current material on this topic I was amazed in rereading this account as well as others biblical examples, because of their consistency and conformity to modern case studies. I found only one point of variance. The apparent unrivaled authority of Jesus. Exorcism was not uncommon in the first century and something the disciples of Jesus would have been familiar with. The reason the disciple’s record this episode was the demonic recognition of the identity of Jesus, and their amazement that without ritual or wrestling Jesus simply says, “Go” and it does.

SOME CAUSES

From my investigation it does not seem that a person



simply wakes up and finds themselves possessed. It would seem that an abundance of verified cases have the following root causes.

1. Involvement in the occult. Usually there seems to be voluntary involvement or participation with the supernatural. For example the true historical case that was the basis for *The Exorcist* began with a young boy's obsession with a Ouija Board.
2. Extreme drug use. It is not an accident that the Greek word for sorcery is *pharmakeia* from which we get the word *pharmacy*. Drugs have been historically used in many forms of sorcery or magic to commune with the spirits. Perhaps certain drugs let down cognitive guards of the mind and provide more open access to the soul-I just don't know.
3. Ancestral involvement with the occult can also be traced as an efficient cause.

Besides these major gateways it is also observable that phenomenon associated with "possession" has occurred in individuals through involvement in particularly gross immorality, perversion or deviancy. For example there is an abnormally high proportion of individuals involved in incest or prostitution.

A CURE

As I have investigated the topic I have had some questions answered, but I must admit I leave my inquiry with even more questions than when I started. To quote what I consider to be profound words from *Sympathy for the Devil*, "Please to meet me you hope you guess my name, but what's puzzling you is the nature of my game."

There are some facts that I hold more firmly than ever before that I will share in closing. Most every author that I have read, who has investigated this phenomenon, would affirm them. The first is found in Psalm 62, which states, "you, O God, are strong, and that you, O Lord, are loving." God is real, he is powerful, and he is good-truly good. His goodness and power, particularly over evil, I believe is foundational truth.

Second, there is a very real intelligent power of evil which can not be relegated to a mood, fear, ignorance, psychological projections, altered state of consciousness or simply mental illness. Malachi Martin summarizes that in all of the case studies he examined, the evil spirit, always acknowledged that

there was a Prince of evil to whom even they were subservient. By which Martin is saying that none of the exorcisms were direct confrontations with Satan though he believed strongly such a spirit existed.

Third, is clearly the significance of Jesus. In few exorcisms could an evil spirit be brought to say his name. In the true story on which *The Exorcist* was based the final deliverance of the boy came when he uttered *Dominus*, which is Latin for Lord or Christ.

I went into ministry believing in the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. My research into exorcism has affirmed this belief. Here is how I believe it works.

It is only through our evil that any evil spirit gains access into a life. Everyone has evil; therefore no one is completely exempt. Yet, Jesus' death for our sins and evil provides us with God's complete forgiveness, thus destroying evil's gateway, for those who receive it. That is why Jesus makes the following statement, "The thief (Satan) comes only to steal kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life." It is therefore only through Jesus, and the forgiveness he offers, that one is guaranteed protection from evil on this earth, and when we leave this earth. That is why in every exorcism Jesus was the cure. It was not the power of a crucifix that was the cure, that is superstition, but what the crucifix means-the pardon of all sin through faith in Christ.

Whether knowingly or unknowingly the individuals described in this article and the books which I mentioned opened up the door to their souls to evil-and it came in. Interestingly, the Bible teaches the alternative. Jesus states, "Behold I stand at the door (of your soul) and knock, if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in (Rev. 3:20)

The invitation provides the cure, and protection from all evil; you can invite Jesus into your heart/soul right now, privately, in prayer. He will enter, forgive your sins, reside within you, give you eternal life, fill your life with joy, love and peace; and protect you from evil. This is the cure

A fitting prayer is found in the end of the Book of Revelation, which is the end of the Bible, "Come Lord Jesus." May all be well with your soul!



EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION

EASTER OUTREACH.

This is a fairly standard Evidence for the Resurrection talk with a few added nuances. It's a good structure for presenting the content.

INTRODUCTION

Before we begin, a brief word on the nature of proof. There are two types of proof, scientific and courtroom. Scientific proof we must recreate the results. Which is why, though any idiot should have been able to tell that inhaling tar and noxious fumes is probably bad for your health; you couldn't put a warning on cigarettes for several decades. Courtroom proof is to make a case that persuades that one alternative is more likely than another. This is what I will attempt to do tonight and at the end you will make your own verdict.

Tonight I want to look at the proof for the resurrection. Picture this as a courtroom. I want us to examine the evidence of three separate questions. Was he crucified and killed, was his body missing? and was he, in fact resurrected?

PART I: WAS HE KILLED AND CRUCIFIED? ORGANIZING STATEMENT

OTHER HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS

Unfortunately there were only a few historians who took it upon themselves to provide an over-arching history of the period. Three of which do mention Jesus:

- **Lucian** (125-190): refers to Jesus as a crucified sophist (philosopher)
- **Josephus** (37-?) "At this time there appeared Jesus, a wise man, for he was a doer of amazing

deeds. When Pilate condemned him to the cross, the leading men among us, having accused him, those who loved him did not cease to do so.

- **Tacitus** (55-117) "Christus, from whom the name had it's origin, suffered the extreme penalty...at the hands of our procurator Pontius Pilate.

So from non-biblical sources we have a wise man, doer of miracles, crucified and died under Pontius Pilate. Not bad.

THE RELIABILITY OF THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS

First what it says does gel with the secular accounts we just read.

Second these texts circulated shortly after his death. If anyone knew of a discrepancy Christianity would never have grown the way it did.

Third. Historians know an account is factual, and not propaganda by two clues.

1. The document has *counterproductive* material. Why else would it be there unless the account was true?
 - Examples: How would it be productive to show Peter, the pillar of the church denying Christ unless it happened?
 - Who is it that finds the body? Women. Their testimony wasn't even accepted in court. It would be like starting a religion in Alabama in the 1930's and saying to African Americans found the body
 - Relatives question Jesus sanity. That's not helpful
 - Disbelief of disciples
 - Jesus last words: "my God, my God why have you forsaken me."



Why record this stuff unless it really happened.

2. The document has irrelevant material.

These are funny Mark 14:50,51 (read it) some guy runs away naked. Irrelevant!

John 20:3 (read it) they race to the tomb and John wants you to know he won!

AN AUTOPSY

John 19:33-34 (read) but when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water." The man who saw it has given this testimony."

John thinks this is kind of spooky and records.

Inadvertently he gives us proof of the death. Blood and water (pericardium fluid) flow out when heart has burst from strain. This fact proves he was dead and that in fact died because his heart burst.

OK. We are on safe ground to say that there was a man named Jesus, miracle worker, healer, wise man that he was crucified by Pontius Pilate, and was in fact dead. The next thing I would like to prove is that the tomb was empty.

PART II: WAS THE TOMB EMPTY

1. THE TOMB OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA

Luke 23:50-54: (read) he was a member of the Council. This is like being a senator. Everyone knew who was on the council.

2. EASY TO FIND TOMB AND VERIFY

Early Christians had great anger toward Sanhedrin. Inexplicable that they would make this up.

HIS ENEMIES ACCEPTED THE TOMB WAS EMPTY

Read Matthew 28:13-15:

Telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day..

Matthew includes this in his gospel to rebut the

circulating argument. The argument assumes what? An empty tomb. Even those who did not agree believed his tomb was empty.

For a variety of reasons historians feel, if nothing else in Acts, Peter's sermons contained in Acts most certainly are. Listen to this:

David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. (Acts 2:25-29)

What is his point? David talked about the messiah, and by the way, we all know where David is buried (hint, hint). Meaning we also all know there is an empty tomb that needs explaining.

So Jesus lived, taught, performed miracles, was crucified by Pontius Pilate and his tomb was empty. This seems indisputable. So was he resurrected?

PART III: WAS HE RESURRECTED?

1. 500 people could not have the same hallucination
2. Isaiah 53: predicts the messiah would not see death
3. By the end of the first century there were nearly a million Jewish Christians. What could explain such growth?
4. The creeds about being Jesus being sinless and the Son of God were written in Aramaic. The church only spoke Aramaic in the first decade after his death. How could this teaching survive and grow, while so many people were still alive who would have known Jesus?
5. What could explain the power of the disciples? Especially if they knew they had hidden the body. Example: If the disciples were wrong about Jesus and they knew it. By their own belief system they would go to hell when they died. They all died horrible deaths. What could explain their martyrdom? While they are getting sawed in two they are thinking "boy I fooled them?"
6. This was not just anyone who said he would rise from the dead. Consider his teaching, the miracles.

CRU PRESS

GREEN



GOSPEL

In closing I want to look at the trial of Jesus by Pontius Pilate in the gospel of John.

Read.

Notice Pilate wants to remain neutral, but history would not allow it. He had to decide. History will not allow you to stay neutral either.

Here is the gospel message. Explain.

What is your verdict?



WAR AND PEACE

IN SEARCH OF SHALOM.

The topic of war is always of interest on a college campus and when a major event happens in the world it becomes more so. It also becomes an opportunity to speak evangelistically on the topic of war and peace.

INTRODUCTION

Definition of shalom: The prophets throughout the history of Israel envisioned a time, and age, when human crookedness would be made straight. The foolish would be made wise, and the wise humble. They dreamed of a time when the desert would bloom and flower, and people would go to sleep without weapons.

For example: they will turn their swords into plowshares is a famous passage as it is on a statues at the United nations.

They dreamed of a time when metaphorically speaking the lion would lie down with the lamb. All nature would be benign, filled wonder upon wonder. All humans would be knit together.

This restoration of all creation in justice, peace, and unity is what the prophets called Shalom.

In Isaiah 48:22, 57:21 Says there is no peace, or Shalom, declares the Lord.

ORGANIZING STATEMENT

And you'd have to be an idiot not to agree with him. For the three components of peace are nowhere to be found. Yet all around us are those saying peace, peace (shalom, shalom) but there is no peace.

POINT ONE: NO SHALOM IN THE WORLD

War: As of last count there are 32 different wars going on somewhere on the planet. Facts about Israel and Palestine and stories.

Stories of great injustice—human trafficking

POINT TWO: NO SHALOM IN OUR HEARTS

Show clip from Dr. Phil

If you watch a show like Oprah you realize that many firmly believe, or are in denial, that if we simply educate people we will have shalom. That's the premise of all these shows, and they've been on for how many years. Are we really different?

Fundamentally the problem is deeper. Our own hearts lack Shalom.

In my own heart is war: personal story

In my own heart is prejudice: personal story

In my own heart is judgement, unfair judgement: story

MESSIANIC EXPECTATIONS

According to the prophets shalom would never be realized through education, technology (horses and armor), but would be found only in a person.

Sandwiched in between the two passages of Isaiah 48:22, 57:21) where it stated "there is no peace," or Shalom, is another passage on Shalom. Let me read it to you.

He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a



root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace (shalom) was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

(Isaiah 53:2-12)

The hopes of Israel for Shalom were bound up in the Messiah. Let me go back to the passages and make some observations.

- One person would take on the sins of many
- The messiah would be pierced for the transgressions of others.
- He would be mistaken for an evil doer and killed
- His death would bring shalom

Does this sound like someone? It is obviously Jesus. No one else would remotely fit the description.

Story of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, whom many Jews thought was the messiah in the 1990's.

Israel still awaits Shalom.

POINT 4: SO WHY STILL NO SHALOM?

Read verses from John:

John 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

John 20:21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

John 20:26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

It is no accident that Jesus repeated the phrase three times. It is the expression still in use today, Shalom alekim. He was declaring that the reign of the messiah and the coming of Shalom had arrived.

So where is the peace?

In Iraq we won a war, but the battle still wages in individual hearts, thus there is still no Shalom.

God has switched the order around. Shalom comes to individuals when they trust Christ. Peace with God is restored. The reinstatement of it at a global level awaits.

Example: Lord of the Rings "Return of the return of the King." The king as it work in a humble state, an individual level. But a day awaits when he will truly reign.

CLOSING

Testimony of how shalom has been experienced in your life.

Gospel

Opportunity to receive Shalom. The gospel



HEAVEN

WHO GOES THERE, AND WHY

With the popularity of books like *90 Minutes in Heaven*, the topic of heaven—and hell for that matter—has some draw. There are a ton of movies dealing with the afterlife and so it could certainly be a media rich presentation.

Below are the rough notes to a talk on heaven. If your gifting is in communication, this will be enough to write your own talk. If your gifts are not in this area then I wouldn't attempt to give the talk from just these notes.

INTRODUCTION

Video. The introduction can be video from some movie like *Lovely Bones*, that show the afterlife. or interviews with students on campus about what they think heaven will be like.

Introduction. In an old episode of the *Twilight Zone* there is a horrible man: he drinks, steals, gambles, treats women like dirt. In the opening minutes of the episode he dies. As he awakens a man, dressed in a white suit is standing over him. His name is PIP. PIP informs him that he is there to serve him: whatever he wants, simply ask. So he does. He asks for women, to always win when he gambles, new cars, alcohol: everything his heart desires.

But then it begins to gnaw at him: "Why do I get to be in this wonderful place, when I had been such a horrible person while I was alive." So, finally the wondering is driving him crazy, so he goes to the great Hall of Records, a surreal library with a huge filing cabinet. As he looks through the records, sure enough, he finds his name. "How can this be," he asks himself. Then all of a sudden PIP appears. He raises his voice, "Why, PIP, why, I don't deserve to be here. I should be

in the other place." PIP looks down with a disgusted look on his face and says, "You are in the other place."

The point. If we were to spill the contents of our imaginations onto the table I think we would find that our thoughts about heaven, and what it may be like, is really more like the other place. From isolated clouds to floating angels with stupid grins on their faces I think all of us have fears about the nature of this place called heaven.

John in his gospel tells us the only person to ever come from heaven, not just gone there, was Jesus.

So we will look at the words of Jesus to get a better understanding of what heaven might be like. And specifically to dispel three fears we probably all share in common. That heaven will be less personal, less logical, less interesting

MORE PERSONAL

"Now this is eternal Life, that they may know you the true God and Jesus Christ whom you've sent." (John 17:3)

(Illustrations from shows or movies about how impersonal heaven is.)

While we tend to think about heaven in terms of its geography (2 bdr. town house, air conditioning, 2 baths, gold driveway. For sale by owner), Jesus primarily defines it in terms of a relationship. Which, when you really think about it is quite profound. Everything else in life, over time, gets "tried" and "old" and loses its shiny coat of varnish. Everything except relationships, it's about the only thing that actually can get better as the years pass. There are three passages that fill out for me the dimensions of



this relationship:

1Cor. 13:12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. Can you imagine what it would like to experience being fully known? Actually, I don't think you can, or anyone for that matter. It would mean the absence of all loneliness. I honestly can't imagine how that must feel.

If you ever go to Arby's at 7:00 a.m. do you know what you'll see? Old people. Lots and lots of old people; the rows of ancient heads looking like the totems of Easter Island. But most peculiar is the fact that they don't speak to each other. I mean nothing, not even a grunt. At some point the relationship stagnated or perhaps a better word would be petrified. Each has learned as much as they could hold of the other.

God on the other hand is infinite. Meaning we will forever continue to grow in our knowledge of Him without ever stagnating. The relationship has the capacity to deepen infinitely. A billion years from now we will still be in awe, and still learning new things about Him.

Rev. 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

Another facet of our relationship with God will be its uniqueness. When I see my wife amongst a group of people sometimes I think to myself, "No one knows Katie like I do." Other times I think, "Hey, not so close to my wife pal, or I'll serve you your face for lunch." My point is that I have a unique knowledge of Katie: nobody knows her the way I do. I think this passage points the fact, that we will have a very personal and unique relationship with God.

C.S. Lewis said this: We were all made to fit a place in the divine contour of God. Each of us will know and forever praise an aspect of the divine beauty better than anyone else. If this were not so it seems strange that God would make more souls than one.

MORE LOGICAL

An illustration of how heaven is made to seem less coherent than earth: In a commercial for milk you

see this horrific boss walking down the street talking on his cell phone. Then you hear him shout into the receiver "you're fired," after which he laughs. Out of nowhere he gets run over by a bus and he finds himself in this surreal room, with angelic elevator music playing, and two-foot chocolate cookies. Apparently he's in heaven. Actually there's no milk so it turns out to be hell, but you see the point. Heaven is made to seem less real, less logical, less beautiful than earth.

What could be more beautiful than the Grand Canyon? Right, grey smoke—a fog bank. That's how heaven is portrayed isn't it?

In John 10:10 Jesus said: "I came that they might have life and have it in abundance."

Literally it means life "supersized." Whatever heaven will be it will be more, not less: more logical, not less, more colorful, more loving, more personal, more intelligent, more emotional, more relational, more time, more of all that is good in this world.

When the Bible speaks of heaven it often uses symbols, not meant to be taken literally. One of the reasons, I think, is that I don't think we would be able to picture it. Our imaginations have a glass ceiling.

Here try this experiment: Right now come up with a new color. Do you have one yet? No, we have hunter green. See your mind has limits. Perhaps there will be new or more vibrant color there, beyond our imagination. Or time. Time here is 2 dimensional. You can't get to tomorrow without going through today. Maybe time will be more 3 dimensional, whatever that may look like.

There is a psalm that alludes to the idea that when we are in heaven we will have the sense that we have woken up from a dream. Aren't dreams incoherent? Yet they seem so logical at the time: I must hide the potatoes, before the wood gnomes turn my feet into grilled cheese sandwiches. Heaven will be more logical not less. Not people floating around having misplaced your celestial file.

C.S. Lewis gives this illustration:

Let us picture a woman thrown into a dungeon. There she bears and raises a son. He grows up seeing nothing but the dungeon walls. This unfortunate woman was an artist

And when they imprisoned her she managed to bring



with her a drawing pad and a box of pencils. As she never loses hope of deliverance she is constantly teaching her son about the outside world. With her pencil she attempts to show him what fields, rivers, mountains, cities and waves on a beach are like. He's a dutiful boy, and does his best to believe her when she tells him that the outside world is far more interesting and glorious than anything in the dungeon. At times he succeeds. One the whole he gets on very well until he says something that causes his mother to pause. Finally it dawns on her that he has, all these years, lived under a misconception. "But," she gasps "you don't think the real world is full of lines drawn in lead pencil?" "What," says the boy. "No pencil marks?" And in an instant his whole notion of the outer world becomes a blank... he has no idea of that which will exclude and dispense with the lines—the waving treetops, light dancing on the water, the colored three dimensional realities which are not enclosed in lines but define their own shapes at every moment.

The child will get the idea that the world is somehow less visible than his mother's pictures. In reality it lacks lines because it is incomparably more visible.

MORE INTERESTING, MORE EXCITING

In the Talking heads song Heaven is the refrain: "heaven is a place, a place where nothing, nothing ever happens," with lyrics that contain this phrase: "the band in heaven plays my favorite song, play it all night long." It paints the picture of a dull monotonous existence.

But think about it for a moment. What are the only things that don't get boring: relationships, children, love, and creativity. The things that are from God are the only things that can actually gain interest over time. Boredom, however, is the physics of sin. You do something wrong and there is a stimulation, but then you must do more of it, in more aberrant ways, to keep that same sensation of life. This is the addictive cycle of sin, and it is predicated on boredom.

Go to an aquarium sometime and look at the fish. There are about a zillion of them: all different. Fish with stripes and spikes, lanterns, fish that look like Richard Nixon. God does not do boring. A zillion trees in the world and none of them are identical.

HEAVEN—HOW DOES ONE GET THERE?

question. How exactly does one get there?

Jesus says I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the father but through me.

How could he make that claim? Well there have been many great moral teachers over the years, but Jesus is different and here's how. As good as a moral teacher may be, he can do nothing for me when I fail to live up to the moral laws or standards. Buddha cannot help me when I fail to live out the 8-fold path to truth, nor can Mohammad help me when I fail to live out the 5 pillars of Islam. I have never had a difficult time imagining the moral life; my problem is that I can't live up to it. But what Jesus offers is to pay the penalty for where I have fallen short of the moral law. This might be a helpful Illustration:

You come into a courtroom convicted of murder; you realize this is serious and if convicted might get the Death Penalty.

But wait, the Judge is your Dad. You run up to the bench and say, "Dad, you love me, right? Let me off!" But your Dad is like, the most just Judge ever. So he says, "I love you but you're guilty. I can't let you go." So, he bangs the gavel down and says, "I'm sorry, but you're guilty, and the jury has decided on the Death Penalty." But, but, because of his love for you, he takes off his judges robe, steps down from the bench and proceeds to go to the electric chair for you, in place of you, to pay your Death Penalty for you.

God has come to down from the judges chair in the person of Jesus Christ and offers to pay the penalty for your sins that's why he can make the statement: "I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the father but through me."

Heaven will be a wonderful place. As I close, if you have never made a decision to place your faith in Christ, I want to give you a chance to do that now...