

Evangelizing the Western Mindset - Part 8

by Winkie Pratney

Winkie Pratney discusses the importance of addressing pragmatic needs and personal testimonies in evangelism to effectively communicate the gospel in a secular world.

Duration: 55:39

Scripture: Psalm 19:1, Proverbs 11:25, Matthew 6:33, John 4:13-14, Romans 1:20, 1 Corinthians 1:27, Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 3:17, 1 Peter 3:15

Topics: "Christian Apologetics", "Personal Evangelism"

Description

This sermon delves into the areas of Christian evidence, pragmatic needs met by the Christian gospel, witnessing to secular individuals, the importance of personal testimonies in evangelism, the significance of surrendering to God's provision, and the exploration of cosmic apologetics focusing on the design and uniqueness of Earth in the universe.

Transcript

Father, thank you for your love for us, bless you for the wisdom that you promised to give us and again we ask for your help, your direction, your insight in applying the gospel to today's needs in Jesus' name, amen. So far we have looked at one whole area of Christian evidence, Clark Pinnock in his book Reasonable Faith, I think it's called, puts five interlocking circles, I'm not quite sure how he does it, something like this, and these five circles I'll just label for you because we won't go into too much detail in some of them, but we've only looked really at one of these circles and yet it's been a very important one because it is the presuppositional one, it is the premises that people approach life from, and this whole area is what's called the pragmatic, in other words one of the evidences of the Christian gospel is that it really does meet the needs that are there, and we have looked at various needs that people have. We've looked at materialism for instance, I mean do people need fundamental provisions in their life? Do they need food and clothes and shelter? So that is a need, a hedonism makes that the whole of life, and the gospel however, Jesus has come, not that men may make him king of things, do you remember when a whole group of people came after he'd fed the 5,000 and he said you seek me because of the loaves? He didn't want to be king of things, but Christ has promised to meet fundamental needs.

If you want a good way of witnessing to secular people, two things freak them out, number one that God can speak to you, they don't mind you speaking to God, you can speak to anything you want to, whatever you're into, but God speaking to you that bothers them, because if God really does speak that means that he might be able to speak to them, and that's a scary thought. Second one is that God can provide

practically for needs, and here you want to have testimonies, you ought to simply be able to say look God can meet needs, here's my story, here's how he's met my needs. Laubrie, Francis Schaeffer's work in Switzerland has a whole philosophical discussion thinking type side, but the second side of it is equally important, and they bring that out in their little biographical study on the work, that there is a whole side of trusting God and believing in not only an objective reality of God and the scriptures which can be discussed and analyzed in terms of thinking, but also very practically God has come to meet needs, and one of the great, I think great excitements of my Christian life is that God can speak, he can show me what to say, what to do, he can provide practically for me.

When I first became a Christian I made five covenants with God that I would never ask for money, food, transportation, a place to stay, or a chance to minister, and I've kept those five covenants 21 years now. God has met every single need, including even things that weren't needs. He not only provides bread, he throws in chocolate cakes quite often.

So the pragmatic test, we looked at communism, at do we have needs in society, do people have needs to have a sense of destiny, a sense of going someplace, a sense of power to change what is going on in society. There is a great need there too, and Marxism has been offered as a way to give people a sense of history and destiny and also pragmatically meeting needs in the economics world. Is there an answer to that? The answer again is if we do not divorce Christianity from its world elements, which is what evangelicals have done the last hundred years, they've divided the individual gospel from the gospel in society and split it away.

It was not always so. As a matter of fact in the 1847-48 revival, one whole division and dimension of the spiritual awakening was social change. Out of that came all kinds of powerful things, the Bernardo homes for the orphans.

We had men like George Muller, who at one stage kept alive 10,000 orphans by prayer alone. We have ministries like the Salvation Army. We have street meetings beginning at that time.

Work among the poor, work among the blacks, work among the outcasts of society, the orphan homes, the adoption hospitals. Many, many of these things flowed out of spiritual awakenings. And then also the need for experience.

We talked about one whole third division, the existentialists, the mystics, those who want something to give them meaning and a sense of purpose and value and individual. Does the gospel meet individual needs for personhood and self-worth and love and meaning? All of those things, these are what we could call presuppositional apologetics in a sense. If the gospel is true, then these things are really meant.

If you change the premise or the presupposition, you'll see it doesn't really meet all the needs. It meets some of them, but not all of them. So though in one sense presuppositional stuff is not a regular orthodox apologetic, it is a real one.

It works by simply saying, if this thing is true, then these are the things that follow. And man and the universe fits into that better than anything else. That's what our claim is, that if you follow what Jesus says about you and about your world, all your needs, seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, Matthew 6.33, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Not just spiritual things, not just religious things, but fundamental needs in all levels of life. We've looked at all of those. Let's give you now very quickly these other five circles, and we will come back and touch on a few of these.

One I want to look at Pinnock calls experiential, and this actually is a major apologetic, though we don't think of it in terms of an apologetic. We'll simply call it the witness of the church. Your personal testimony is an apologetic.

It has its limits, of course, but when you combine it with the witnesses of many, many others down through the centuries, it becomes a very powerful apologetic. As a matter of fact, it is this which is most often used by the early Christians. They said, look, we tasted and we saw, and that was it.

And it is in its own right the simple declaration of testimony. Paul used it all the time. Wherever he stood before people, he said, let me tell you my story.

This is what happened to me. I noticed in Josh McDowell's confrontation with Ahmed Dede, though the first 30 minutes which each one of them had to present their case was more facts and figures, in the second, I think it was 15 minutes or whatever it is, they had for replies. Josh spent almost no time at all on the content of the thing.

He basically gave his testimony and his prayer would be that he had a chance to witness. And so he just simply shared how he started off by saying, I attempted to disprove Christianity. It was a testimony.

He said, I intellectually tried to destroy it and instead I wound up becoming a Christian. Then he added his facts. And then in the reply, this 15 minute reply, he basically shared how his life had been like hell, how his dad was a drunk, how his father's life had actually killed his mother.

He just shared this and then said, in effect, the reason why I'm able to stand before you and share this is because the gospel works. Jesus changed my life. He made me a man.

He dealt with his temper. He talked about what a rotten temper he had and then how in the last 15 years he'd only lost his temper once and that difference had been Jesus. And that's 15 minutes.

That's an apologetic. It's a real one and it's an important one. Now there are a number of people who have spent time in analyzing this whole apologetic.

You might not think of them as apologeticists but they nevertheless are. Here's one of my all-time favorites and that's Arthur Blissett. And all of you should have a copy of this or get hold of a copy of it.

It's just called Street University. And there's a desk in the middle of it. Arthur Blissett, some of you may not know him but he's probably one of the most well-known street evangelists in the world today, if not the best known one.

Picture of him on the back there. He's the guy that had the big cross that carries it all around the world and it's got a wheel on it, you know, it's not that rough but it's still a big cross. You could nail a man up on that thing.

And he has gone about everywhere you can go to witness. He's gone in the demilitarized zones from one place witnessing to the other place. He's gone into the central headquarters of some of the most dangerous men alive to witness to them, giving out his little stickers with Jesus loves you, sticking them on

everything.

And one of the great blessings, I think, of Arthur's life is that he has been exceptionally bold in proclaiming the gospel. Last time I was here I mentioned how he saw this porno movie house. So he thought, boy, that would be a good place.

There's a lot of people to preach and he went and talked to the lady, said, in between movies do you have any, you know, could I have some time in between these two movies? So he goes in and it was Maid of Sweden or something XXX. And so she said, well, you had four minutes between show changes, you know, and you can say whatever you want. You can fit in these four minutes.

So here's this Maid of Sweden XXX movie and at the end of it he jumps up on stage, the spotlight comes on him, but he thinks he's some kind of stand-up comedian or something. And he says, you've just seen the Maid of Sweden, now I want to tell you about the maid at the well. And talking about this woman who was a hooker and she finally met this guy and he asked her for a drink.

And they're all getting ready for the punchline and he said the man's name was Jesus and he's here today. I mean, he goes into the wildest places to minister. And blessed, of course, his early life, he grew up in bars and stuff like that, so he feels a lot more comfortable than, you know.

He has some guidelines here, I want to share a couple of them with you. And one particularly good thing, he says, he talks about getting the feel of a place before you witness, that you can't go on with a presupposition as to your methodology, that you must match the place that you're witnessing to, to your own attitude when you minister. He said, when I go to Sunset Strip, I like to turn my car radio to a rock station quite loud.

I go rocking down Sunset Strip to get my mind and ears tuned into what I'm going to experience. Sunset Strip people are groovers, they're into themselves. Every girl down there thinks she's the grooviest thing in Hollywood.

Now they don't know that the people who are down on Hollywood Boulevard in Weston don't feel that way. They have a more realistic evaluation of themselves, bordering on despising themselves. The crowd that is now on Sunset will be on Hollywood and Weston a year or two later.

It's the dive area. But for the time being, they're kind of grooving down there. Everybody's moving and shaking, see.

So when I go into a rock and roll place, I step inside and get my ears in tune with the music. I slowly take in the whole scene. I don't just go diving in.

I ease in and stand there for a while until I kind of get the beat of a place. If there are a whole bunch of dudes standing around with dark glasses, kind of grooving, I might say, hey man, let me turn you on. I develop an attitude that I'm a dealer for Jesus.

But if I'm in a piano bar late at night down at Melrose or in the Hollywood area and there's a little quiet piano playing and a lot of people gather around, I won't go and say, well man, how's it going? That wouldn't fit in. I'd be totally out. People go to kinds of places that fit their personalities.

Personally, at this kind of piano bar, I want to be quiet. I don't want to bam, bam, bam music. I don't want to be around a bunch of teenyboppers.

Piano bar fits a certain mood. In a place like that, I just quietly go over to someone sitting on the backstool. I sort of half sit down and say, I'd like to give you one of these handbills.

How's it going tonight? Not too good? I'm a Christian. I'd just like to give you one of these turn on to Jesus stickers. Manager may ask, what are you doing giving this stuff out here? So I'm just a Christian sharing about the Lord.

One night I prayed and invited Jesus to come into my heart and just in. See that relaxed? You get the feel of the place. It's quite true.

If you're on the streets and it's a hustling, moving thing and there's a bunch of stuff, it's kind of hard to give a reasoned apologetic when a guy is playing a ghetto blast of 900 DB in your ear. You're not going to be able to say, well, actually presuppositionally and all this kind of stuff. Well worth getting.

I'm not going to take the time to go through some of the things. There are two or three books like this. Don and David Wilkerson did one, one time on street ministry and that kind of thing.

When I first became a Christian, we did street meetings for almost nine years. Every Saturday night we built a little trailer. We built a little, it was kind of a funny little thing, but in New Zealand there was a large parking lot area where main streets all intersected.

There's a whole bunch of main streets. Right where the lights cross now, sometimes it would take five minutes before those lights would change because of the major intersections there. There was quite a wide area with a parking lot behind it.

We built this little trailer. It had a PA system in it. It had car headlights.

It did this. It sort of opened up like that. We just took these boxes off the back and the boxes had, they were built like this.

The back of the boxes had these car headlights in them. Then there was a little space in here and one we had a portable sound system. Then the bottom we had the loudspeakers.

These things just pulled off the back of the things, sat there on each side so that the stage looked kind of like this. Then these boxes sitting there. Then just a little portable microphone stand here.

Plugged it in. We stuffed tracks in the other one. We could set that thing up in about five minutes.

It had little, what's it, an actual trailer you pull behind thing with fairly thick tires on so you can put it on the sand. Little things drop down from the back to support it. Then some little clips there that held the back up.

We had a guy who was an artist. He would draw pictures up on the side. People hang around when they're seeing an artist work.

He wouldn't fill in the final details until the last few seconds. Then it'd be these mazes of colors and people would be looking. We'd be preaching and singing while they're watching.

Then he'd get up and he'd put the final lines in the thing and he'd say, I've just drawn the end of the world. Are you ready for it? Then preach. Nothing in street meetings went longer than, it's different with drama because you've got an ongoing continual change, but no single thing I think went more than five to seven minutes max.

We're talking messages and everything. It was a very fast moving thing because the crowds were fast moving. We figured we had about five minutes from the time a person first heard it to the time they're out of earshot.

Within that time they should hear the gospel more or less. With music, not 4,000 verses of Just As I Am. Then we did a people net.

There's a thing in crowds. If you see a big crowd of people you always come. What most Christians do when they do this street thing is that they put all the Christians are in a line like this, either up here or up here.

It's like a gauntlet. I don't say people go through the middle of the gauntlet. What we did is we had a people net.

We scattered our people out like this. They're not blocking the sidewalk because that's illegal, but enough blocking. People would come along and there'd be a crowd of people all over the place and then they'd plug in here and stand around there.

Then in the middle of it people would say what do you think of this? Turn around and it could start witnessing off like that. I think personally the best training I know in evangelism is two things. This street meeting because it teaches you to think on your feet.

It teaches you to be short. It knocks all the religious language out of you because you can't afford to speak in religious terms. It teaches you to hold an audience because these aren't polite.

They'll just leave if they're bored. It's a whole different way of thinking. The second thing would be to take a group of little kids for a good three to six months at least to teach a bunch of little kids because little kids are also bored very quickly.

If you get your profound, you know, today we're going to begin in the autonomy of man. There'll be a very fast checking out. I think if you can hold a street audience in a group little kids you can hold anybody in the world.

That's what I believe. If I was training people for ministry I would give them a year of each at least. Now the two different kinds of things, street preaching and church stuff is really different but very, very important.

We had an emcee, you know, a kind of a guy. He just kept things moving because it was not to be dead spots, you know, three minute pause while somebody looked for the music or something. He got up there.

He held it all together. He just simply had a list of people who could give testimonies of people who, you know, maybe could speak and people who could sing or do something and he just, he played by ear. If there was not a big crowd he'd use the music and stuff to draw them and then when they got a crowd there he'd bang on a couple of testimonies and if the native got restless throw in a couple more songs and then

bring somebody up for a quick message when the crowd was there.

Now those are valuable. You've got to put this where the people are. It's no good putting it out in the middle of a field with, you know, when nobody comes except a grandmother on the way back from work.

I went to one place here in British Isles and they said, oh we're going to do a street meeting. I said, where is it? They said, it's downtown at lunchtime. I said, well that's nice.

I said, who are you trying to reach? They said, kids. I said, are there any kids downtown at lunchtime except the ones pushed in strollers by their mothers? And they said, oh no. I said, have you been very successful in reaching kids? They said, no but we've got a great program and I said, well where are the kids? They said, well they're not out in the streets until about 11 o'clock at night but that's past our bedtime.

I said, why don't you sleep in the day and then set your open air up at night? I went out there at 11 o'clock and the picture theaters had come out and there were kids sitting around for an hour waiting for a bus. There's nothing to do at all. I said, there's where you want to be out.

There's 80 kids out there doing nothing, just looking at each other waiting for a riot to start. I said, why don't you go out and provide one? Just get out there and see, you've got to go where the people are. That is fundamental.

When I first taught witnessing, I was supposed to teach it in this CA convention, church convention in the US. I was praying, how do you get through this? I was in a pastor's study and I saw a fishing pole. He had a fishing pole, he liked fishing.

There was a bowl of fruit on his table and I borrowed a banana and a fishing rod and a rubbish tin that he had there, a little little throwaway thing. So I took these three with me to the stage. I tied the banana on the end of the fishing pole and stood up on a chair and lowered the banana carefully into this little rubbish tin.

I said, I come in a pack and I see a guy doing this and I asked him kindly, excuse me, what are you doing? He looks at me and says, what do you think I'm doing? I'm fishing. And I look inside, there's nothing in there. And I say, yeah, kindly, have you caught anything? And he says, no, but I know what the problem is.

And I think to myself, I know what the problem is too. And he says, the problem is I've been using the wrong bait. But I got this new bait I'm trying.

And I said, as I walk away, I know two things. Number one, there's something very wrong with this dude. And number two, he is never going to catch any fish because there aren't any fish where he's catching.

He's fishing in the wrong place. So to catch fish, you've got to be right yourself. That's the first condition of witnessing.

If you've got nothing to say because your own life hasn't been transformed, you don't witness. Jesus didn't say you shall do witnessing for me. He said, you shall be my witnesses.

And a witness is somebody who is something. Most effective witnesses I know are people who are as real and as honest as they can be. Ann Kimmel is not a high level theologian.

But her funny little ways of witnessing are so powerful. I have grown men who are lawyers and doctors and scientists weeping because she's just so, well, I could sing you a little song, God loves you and I, you know, it's just a weird thing how that she gets on a plane one time and it's delayed about three hours. And so she misses this meeting and she's really ticked off with the airlines.

They always get you out on the runway. They never say, you know, I'm sorry, but this plane's delayed. Why don't you catch another flight? They get you out in the runway and then they tell you, sorry, we think we have a problem, but it'll be taken care of soon.

And three hours later, you're still sitting out in the runway and missed every possibility because they don't want to lose their passengers. Anyway, she is ticked off. She's in this plane, got a bad attitude and she, she looked glares at the stewardess and stuff and then she feels horribly convicted.

So she stands up in the plane and says, excuse me, everybody, I just want to apologize. I'm a Christian and I have a terrible bad attitude. And I'm just really sorry that I've given you such a bad testimony, but if you like, I could sing you a little song.

And then witnessing to the whole plane. Another person that you should really get hold of. This is a great book.

Rebecca Manley Pippett, Becky Pippett's book. Becky, I've mentioned already as a university fellowship evangelist. And this book, *Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World*, is one of the best books I know of on personal witnessing.

This is the 1980s equivalent of Rosalind Rinker's *A Witness with Confidence*, which was a book done in the 1960s on the same subject. And she does, again, a lot of times she will, she will carry Bible studies on a campus, set those kinds of things up, like a little bit like what Don's doing with, with his team of guys. But a few years ago, she says, I was invited as part of a team to Stanford University to teach a week on evangelism.

I lived in a dorm with the students. The first day I met Lois. She was bright and sensitive and skeptical about the existence of God.

After we had several talks about God, I told her I was having a Bible study for the floor to look at the person of Jesus. She could come and examine the primary source material as critically as she would a Marxist manifesto. Okay, I'll come, she said, but the Bible won't have anything relevant to say to me.

The next day I discovered Lois was living off campus with her boyfriend Phil. To my great surprise, he came with her to the Bible study. Not knowing her background, I'd already decided to lead the study on the woman in the well in John 4. I began introducing the chapter to the group, noticed Phil and Lois sitting there, and suddenly remembered the passage dealt with a woman who had a sexual problem.

I feared Lois would think I'd planned this just for her. With a step of faith, I frantically tried to think of how to avoid the crunch of the passage, although I was sure God had gotten me into this mess. Lois and Phil were seated close to my left, thinking it would be better if Lois did not read the passage aloud.

I called on Sally, who was immediately to my right, calculating that if each person read a paragraph aloud, we would finish before it was Lois's turn. To my dismay, a girl three seats away from Lois started reading. I discovered later it was Sally's twin sister who happened to be sitting next to me.

Then Lois read the portion. Jesus said to her, you are right in saying I have no husband, for the man you're living with now is not your husband. It was your first experience of reading Scripture, and her eyes grew as big as saucers while I hid behind my Bible.

I must say this is a bit more relevant than I expected, she commented with considerable understatement. And as she saw with what sensitivity and perception Jesus interacted with the lonely woman, Lois's face showed how moved she was. The next day Lois and I talked again.

Is there any reason why you couldn't become a Christian, I asked. No, she said. Well I can think of one, I said.

What will you do about Phil? And we talked directly about how becoming a Christian isn't merely fire insurance, it's a relationship that affects every aspect of her life, values, lifestyle, sexuality. As we talked it became clear God had been pursuing her for a long time. There were tears and struggles followed by an utterly sincere prayer asking Christ to come into her life as Lord.

Immediately she said, Becky, as a young Christian I've got problems. I've got to tell Phil and move out. I have no place to go and it's impossible to get a dorm room this late, and now I'll have to pay this month's rent in two places.

So we prayed again and as she left my room I agonized over how such a young believer could handle so much. After dinner the students who had attended the Bible study stopped me in the hall saying they were fascinated by this study on Jesus. Then we heard a noise and turned to see what it was.

Here came Lois slowly walking down the corridor carrying several suitcases and smiling with tears streaming down her cheeks. I silently thanked God. I too felt the tears slip down.

Seldom have I seen a more graphic picture of what it means to become a Christian. Everyone began asking me why she'd left home. Oh no, I haven't left home.

I finally found my home, she replied. You see, today I became a Christian. One decision had far-reaching effects.

That same night three girls on the floor decided to get right with Christ. Another girl who assumed she was a Christian realized she wanted no part of it if it demanded total commitment. The next day Lois was told she could move into a dorm unheard of at such a late date and discovered a new roommate was a dynamic mature Christian.

Three months later her boyfriend Phil became a Christian and he too grew rapidly. He'd been hostile over a conversion and furious with her for moving out. But after he was converted he told her thanks Lois for loving God enough to put him first instead of me.

Your obedience affected my eternal destiny. Personal witness as it arises naturally out of whatever things God is doing is a very important thing and one other thing I want to share with you and this is very important. When Jesus said except you become converted and become like little children you cannot enter the kingdom of God I've often asked audiences the last couple of years because I've been working on this book on the war on childhood called Devil Take the Youngest which we just got finished.

But one of the questions I've asked him is what do you think Jesus had in mind when he said become like little children? What things? Obviously scripture says you humble yourself like a little child but what characteristics of childhood are there that are like being converted? And we've got a whole blackboard full of stuff. Children, I mentioned one of the things, children are absolutists. They believe in rights and wrongs.

They're black and white people. They're right and wrong, good or evil. They're not in between.

They are full of zeal. When little kids they do everything like that. When they rest they totally pass out unlike adults who look at the ceiling for 24 hours.

They forgive easily. They have heroes. There's a lot of neat things about childhood.

They trust. Maybe 15, 20 things right off the top of an audience's head we get on. But here is one thing children like doing more than anything else.

They play. And that is what Christians have forgotten to do. And that is one of the reasons why we are not effective in our witnessing.

We don't know how to have fun anymore. But children do it all the time. Why do you think children hang around Jesus? Sinners liked being with Jesus.

They didn't like being with Pharisees. That was chief criticism. He hangs around with publicans and sinners.

And what's even worse, they like Him. How can He possibly be really godly if sinners like Him? The point is that Jesus while preserving absolute holiness loved people and He spent time with them. He was fun to be with.

He really was. Not if you wanted to cover your sin up and were religiously hypocritical. He was not fun to eat lunch with.

In the middle of lunch He could tell you 13 different ways in which you were a hypocrite. Becky talks about how Jesus was not your average rotary speaker. Imagine Him getting up and saying, well it's very nice of you to come.

You are a bunch of snakes. You remind me of dead people that nobody's had a chance to bury yet. And thank you all very much for coming.

This is not your basic lions international speech. People are programs. I remember being with a Christian student on a beach.

Bob and I met several non-Christians and began talking about all sorts of things. Eventually the conversation got around to Christianity and it was a lively and invigorating discussion. We even exchanged addresses before leaving.

I was feeling very good about the conversation but Bob seemed very quiet. When I asked him what was wrong, he said I thought it was an absolute failure. There are four major points to the gospel and you only brought in two of them and they weren't even in the right order.

I said what were the names of the three people we met this afternoon? Oh I don't know. He said what in the world difference does that make? There are two girls and one guy or was it the other way around? I stared at him in disbelief and sadness. He was a young man who genuinely loved God.

He was exceedingly religious and sincere. I doubt he ever missed a daily quiet time and yet he missed the entire point. He was sure his agenda, his four points, was supreme value.

Yet the program was so rigid that real live human beings could not penetrate it. We must beware of this kind of pharisaism for it is so frequently the disease of the devoted. The student was so busy rehearsing his four points of salvation he forgot he was speaking to the very people Christ had come to save.

We must never forget to be a follower of Jesus is to be dominated by love. We may not be well versed in scripture or have a seminary background. We may be timid and unsure of ourselves but we have arms and hearts that were meant to be used.

We must ask ourselves do I treat people as royalty walking the earth? My parents, my spouse, my roommate, the student on the floor that I can't stand. Do I believe that by merely seeing me God would break into a run and embrace me? Does my life reflect only religious activity or does it bear the mark of profound love? When our lives are characterized by the love of Christ we can begin to interest people in the gospel. Two excellent books.

Another man who's done a lot of study on personal witnessing is Robert Coleman. Coleman was the one who did the Master Strategy of Evangelism. This little book is really designed as a study manual but it's on the personal evangelism of Jesus and the contents alone are worth looking at.

He talks about the different groups of people Jesus witnessed to and basically he asks questions. How do you think, how did Jesus approach this? And here's the list. The first disciples, the religious gentry, sinful woman, hated publicans, the proud and the contrite, the sick and the infirm, the blind, little children, demoniacs, condemned criminals, the chief of sinners.

How did he deal with these different people? We need to study them the way Jesus witnessed because this, I mean this is supposed to be the heart of the gospel. We're to tell people the good news. In some of these other things we can be more like prophets.

We can speak about how these things deviate from reality. But in this simple area anyone who's a Christian at all, brand new Christians, have a ready-made apologetic. Once I was blind, now I can see.

That was the testimony of one man and it was laughed at by all the religious people but it happened to be true. I've seen drug addicts who've been saved 24 hours give a more effective testimony than some people who have been in church for 24 years because they've forgotten their first love. You can be forgiven in many, many things in the Christian life but one thing which would be very, very difficult is to lose your first love.

Go out with all the religious language and all the right words and all the right ideas and the right concepts and just fail to love the people you deal with. We're so information-based, aren't we, in the western world. You know, if we say soul winning, take a course, you know, you need a course.

Most of the addicts I worked with in Teen Challenge in five different centers I worked with never had a course. They just rolled their sleeves up and said, see these tracks I used to shoot heroin, you know, for

18 years. Now Jesus made me clean, you show me somebody else who can do that.

It was very simple but it was very powerful. My idea now in witnessing I'm working with kids is to get a whole bunch of kids saved and let them do it. I mean, I can just stand up at the end and say, now here's what you're going to need to do to give your life to Jesus and meet them like these kids have.

I can't give a testimony, I'm, you know, shoot, I'm 41 years old. I can't stand and talk to a 14-year-old and say, when I was your age, you know, I mean, what, that doesn't mean anything to them. But I can take another 14-year-old who's saved, I can put them up in front of them and let them say in their own words, it's what Jesus means to me and said, you want what he's got or what she's got, then do this and live.

William Booth's secret in Salvation Army was get new converts testifying and witnessing straight away, put them right to work. They don't have to be theologians, they don't have to give all the Bible studies, but they ought to testify and that's what the early church did. Okay, that's that circle.

I'm touching on all these and come back and maybe we'll pick up a bit more detail on some of these. Third circle here is what, this one really looks spicy, cosmic. This is, when we mean cosmic, there are various kinds of apologetic that are placed under cosmic.

Teleological evidences, the evidence of creation around us, what the world looks like, its design. Now there are some nice books you can buy. Some of these are beautifully done.

This one's called The Remarkable Spaceship Earth by Ron Cottrell, God, Creation and Man, a Spiritual Odyssey. It's a pretty kind of book. It's got a lot of nice graphics in it, but what it deals with is all the different aspects of our universe and how beautifully balanced our life is.

It starts, see, it looks at man's search for order in the universe and looks at some of the hugeness and vastness of space. Now remember we talked in an earlier part of the series how the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows handiwork. If you go to the Library of Congress in Washington DC, in the main reading hall there's a whole bunch of little, what do you call them, they're like little archways and in each archway there is a single statement which sums up an entire field of discipline.

For instance, under religion there's a quote from the Scriptures, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to humble yourself to walk with God. So millions of words there on religion, there's a single quote, in this case taken from the Bible. There's a neatest one, here's the one under science and then believe it or not that also is a quote from the Scriptures and it is that quote we just gave you.

The heavens declare the glory of God, that's under science and the firmament shows his handiwork. So we've said earlier the whole world is another apologetic, it is a testimony. When thought about God says in Romans 1 that the world when thought about will tell you some undeniable things about reality and about him.

It talks about his eternal power and Godhead. There are all kinds of areas here that you could get into. Probably it is at this area that the creation evolution studies begin and we need to look just at a few things on there.

Creation evolutionary thought is another one of these apologetics. I mentioned in the field of apologetics it keeps changing. You can't learn apologetics, it's a journey.

It never stays the same. What I've given you now is fundamental in some areas but there'll be all kinds of changes and shifts and it's simply groundwork for you to work out from that and to other things. But we have a unique planet here, earth.

It is at exactly the right distance from the sun. If it was a little closer or a little further away, if it didn't spin like it did. Here we got mercury which has got boiling metals on one side and freezing cold on the other.

Earth spins and it's got ice caps on the top and bottom. It's got a little tilt on it. It's got all kinds of trippy little things.

Water alone is a unique substance. Water has a property that no other property has in chemistry and that is that most things, when they get colder, they get smaller in density. They get hotter, they get bigger.

Water is true of that until it gets down to about four degrees centigrade. So getting close to freezing, instead of getting heavier and heavier, which is what normal things do when they get cold, if at zero degrees water was, ice was heavier than the liquid water, then lakes would freeze from the bottom up and the fish would all die. But water's quite trippy.

There's a certain point, it's called the triple point, where all these meet. At four degrees centigrade, water starts getting lighter. It shifts.

It goes down and then shifts and so ice floats. Ice is lighter than cold water and so the fish don't die. Now that one simple little fact preserves most of the life on this planet from being wiped out and cold.

That's just one of these things. I'd love you to have a look at just a book like this. What has been fun is to watch scientists attempt to find life in other planets and send out very sophisticated things.

They were sure they'd find some on Mars. They didn't find any on Mars. It bothered them intensely.

They were sure maybe Venus might have some. The more they looked, the hairier it gets. It's a very unique planet Earth.

It's almost like it was designed like that and they hope that guys like Sagan and others have tried to work out how many Earth-type worlds there may be in the universe. For the time being, all the romantic dreams at the turn of the century that probably every planet had moon men in it and Martians. When you land there, it's just a bunch of rock.

It just looks like this is all very pretty decoration. There's only one planet around there that really is right for life as we know it. Now we have to postulate other kinds of life that aren't anything like life we think of.

Maybe silicon, maybe rocks, monolith monsters. Even the way the planets spin is weird. They've got moons, some of them spinning this way.

And imagine God putting a universe together saying, well this will freak people out. I'll do two this way and one that way. What in the? How did you spin like that? You get a lovely idea.

It all spun out from one central thing and then you hit one that goes the other direction. It just bothers you tensely. So have a look at this.

See that's what Mars looks like. That's your basic war of the worlds planet. Really exciting.

Here's a big crater on Mars and traces of water and carbon dioxide frost sometimes appear on the surface of Mars. But Mars has no running water and is a land of desolation, a waste place. That was the best shot.

And so on. I don't have time to go through a lot of these things. But that whole area of Christian apologetics, the cosmology one, or teleology, the one of looking at the design of the universe and the design of the thing, is extended and classical apologetic.

It is basically using nature and saying how did we get to be here? How did life arise? In our time, the last hundred and something years, Darwinism has come to answer that question for us. And we're back to our fundamental time and chance and matter equation. There are other books.

Here's one by Alf Rewinkle, *An Exploration of the Splendor and Origins of the Universe*. A lot more detailed than this, but it deals with each day of creation. It goes through each section of the plant life and the wonders of each one of those things.

Snow, friends. Have you ever looked at snow? Have you ever seen snow crystals under a microscope? You've got to do it real fast. But snow is incredible.

I've never found one snowflake alike. Do you know how many snowflakes fall? Each one is unique. It is a mind-blowing thing to think of how much snow falls in a single thing and not one flake alike.

There's this unity and diversity through the universe. There are things that are so different and there's a sameness about it. There's like a pattern on the universe.

Philosophers have asked for many years, why are things different? And then they've also asked, why are things the same? The classic philosophical question is, is the water or the river you crossed yesterday the same river you crossed this morning? And the answer is, well, yes and no. How many of you know what a dog looks like? You know what a dog looks like? Everybody knows what a dog looks like, okay? What does a dog look like? That's called the concept of dogginess. You all know what a dog is, okay? What does a dog look like? Yes, what does a dog look like? Describe a dog to me.

You can describe a dog, but everybody knows what a dog is. That's a concept of dogginess. That's unity.

He barks, yes. When you find describing a dog, you'll think of one dog. You'll think of Snoopy or you'll see again an image of Rin Tin Tin or Lassie or, you know, Benji.

You begin to think of a dog. That's the diversity. So people have asked, why are things the same and why are things different? Well, the East has an answer for unity.

Why are things the same? What is that answer? Because it's all God or the dream of God. Everything you see is either God or His dream. One.

All is one. That's why you might laugh at a Krishna consciousness person for worshipping this wooden idol, but he would say, well, you don't understand. To the real believer, the whole world is a manifestation of God.

So this idol is not just representing God, it actually is. The guru who teaches you may know that he is one with God. So you can worship him just as easily as you can worship the invisible because he is part of that same thing.

So the East's answer is an answer for unity, but it has no real answer for diversity. If all is God and all is one, then is there any difference between right and wrong, between good and evil? We're back to our early problem. Now what's the West's answer for diversity? If I was to ask you why the West thinks that everything's different, what is the West's answer for difference? What is our fundamental factor that we say that's why things are so different? We always apply it in evolution.

Yes, chance. It's chaos. It's randomness.

That's the reason why everything's different. That's why you got Snoopy and that's why you got Benji. It's randomness.

The West has great answers for diversity. We can tell you why things are different. What we can't tell you is why things are the same.

We don't know why there are laws in the universe. We thought we had it all down and that everything was fixed and then we found out Heisenberg uncertainty principle and that the electron wasn't necessarily there. It could be there or somewhere else and who knows.

We found that everything wasn't just a machine. There was a freedom even down in electronic levels, sub-molecular levels, sub-atomic levels. Now why does, was there an answer to this thing? Why is things like that? What a weird world we live in.

What a strange universe. Here's God's answer. The reason why the universe is the way it is is because that's the way the designer is.

That he made a world of, a universe of unity and diversity because that's what he is. That is one of our absolutes. That's one of the fundamental statements about God.

He is himself unity and diversity. So he stamped his image on the universe. I wish we had time to get into that.

That is so much fun to look at the trinity in the universe. The patterns of reality all take on a triune form. You could touch on it.

We mentioned water. This is a simple one, a Mickey Mouse one. Water is actually, that stuff which we call H₂O is, exists in three forms.

That's that triple point dimension. Steam is a hot vapor and water which is a tepid liquid and ice which is a hard solid. Now we all know that you can't dive into ice from a thousand feet and that one does not press one's shirt with water but with steam.

These are quite different. They're distinct but they're not different. They're the same stuff but there's distinction in them.

Each, though this is not that, this is that, this is that and this is that. Space, length and breadth and height equals space. Time is past, present, future.

The present is not the past. Past, they're all distinct. There's distinction there.

But you can't pull any of these out without losing the whole. So biblical theology does not say one plus one plus one equals one. That is terrible theology and worse mathematics.

But this is true. And so is this, that if you lose one you lose them all. And I believe that any ultimate reality, any fundamental reality in the universe, whether it be in sociology or in psychology or in anthropology or in science or in the space-time universe around us or in the spiritual world, can be expressed like that.

Those of you interested, get a little cheat on that I can show you afterwards. Let's quit at this point and we will pick this up next session. Everything is three dimension.

I'm saying is that Einstein is half right. He makes time fourth dimension of space. But it is possible that there are deeper dimensions of space.

Though time and space and matter are all interconnected, I do not believe that time is the fourth dimension of space. I think it's related to length by breadth by height equals space. I have a hard time in Genesis 1 where it says apparently the earth is older than the sun and moon and grass on the earth before the sun was created and then the sun and moon was created before the stars.

And that's a problem in the first account. There's also problems in the first account and the second account don't match up where man's created at the end in the first and then before everything else in the second. Do you have a specific answer to those questions? Well, the second one, starting with the second one working back.

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