

PRACTICAL EVANGELISM

CITYLIGHT CHURCH, FEB 2020

▶ citylightphilly.com/evangelism (slides; video)



*Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be
made low (Isa 40:4)*

It's all about the gospel.

It's all about Jesus.

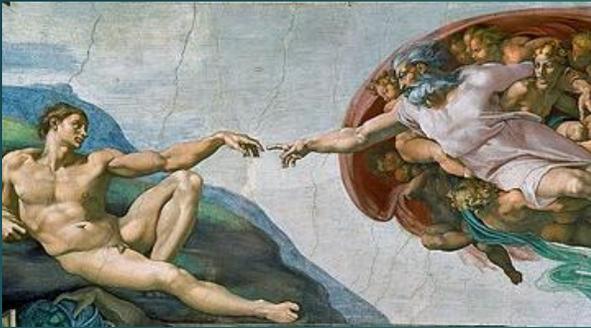
PART 2: LOVING OBJECTORS & HANDLING OBJECTIONS

- ▶ *But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15)*

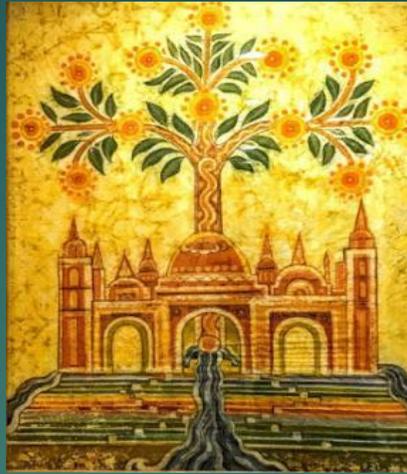
1. LOVING “OBJECTORS”

- ▶ **let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (James 1:19)**

Framework 1



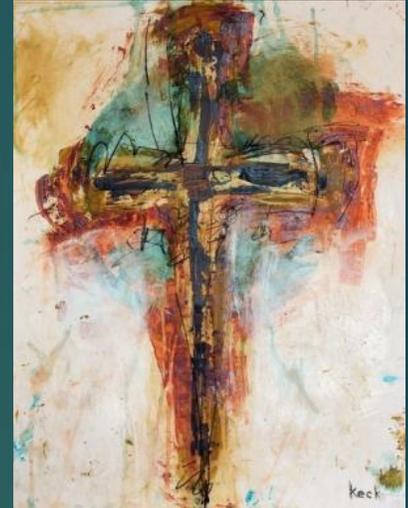
Creation (Gen 1-2)



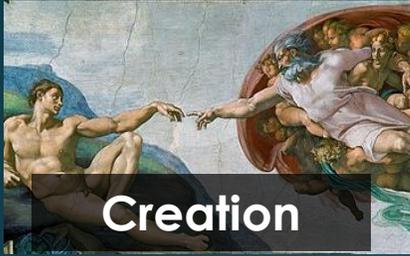
New Creation
(Rev 21-22)



Fall (Gen 3-11)



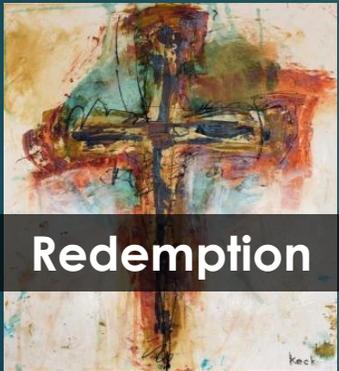
Redemption
(Gen 12-Rev 20)



- ▶ **CREATION:** What gives me **identity**? **Meaning**? **Purpose**?



- ▶ **FALL:** What has gone **wrong**? Who or what has led to the **problems** I have?



- ▶ **REDEMPTION:** How can it be made **right**? Who or what is my **savior**?



- ▶ **NEW CREATION:** What is my ultimate **hope** for the future? What does **transformation** look like?

SAINT / SINNER / SUFFERER



SINNER

▶ Feelings of **guilt**, etc.

SUFFERER

▶ Personal **pain**

“SAINT”

▶ **Identity**: where does the person get meaning and purpose?

2. HANDLING OBJECTIONS

- ▶ **“Apologetics,”** def: *defending the Christian faith.*
 - ▶ From Greek *apologia* “defense”
 - ▶ Can be “positive” or “negative”

SOME COMMON OBJECTIONS

HANDLING SOME COMMON OBJECTIONS

1. **Science & the Bible**
2. **Problem of evil**
3. **“Lifestyle” Objections**
4. **Apathy**
5. **Exclusivity (Christianity the only way)**

1. Science and the Bible

“I’d rather live by science (fact) than religion (faith)”

- 1. All “worldviews” require faith in *something***
 1. “Scientific” worldview: faith in reason; sense experience
- 2. Christians can accept *much* of what science affirms**

▶ <https://citylightphilly.com/science-scripture-origins-mnyk/>
- 3. “Scientific” worldview doesn’t give a basis for things like ethics, truth, beauty, love**

2. Problem of Evil

“How can this be true if there’s so much evil in the world?”

- 1. Evil is only a “problem” if there’s a God like the God of the Bible. If there’s no God, there’s no “evil” and no “problem.”**
- 2. An all-knowing and wise God *could* have reasons for evil we don’t know about.**
- 3. God, in Christ, entered into evil & suffering. He has not stayed aloof and unaffected.**

3. “Lifestyle” Objections

“You’re saying that God is opposed to who I am and that is offensive”

1. Listen for false beliefs about God

1. E.g., that God is “opposed to who we are” or doesn’t want good for us

2. Don’t apologize for what the Bible says

3. We are ALL sinners; therefore, we are ALL opposed to God!

1. (it’s not “us vs. them”)

4. If God gave His only Son for us, can’t we trust that what he wants for us is actually good?

4. Apathy

“That’s very interesting & I agree with you; I just don’t see why this matters to me.”

Approach 1:

- 1. What DOES matter to you? (try to draw out the heart & connect to the gospel)**

Approach 2:

- 1. What we believe determines what we do**
- 2. It does matter! (in light of Eternity)**
- 3. It does matter! (in light of what Jesus has done)**

5. Exclusivity

1. (Tim Keller & D. A. Carson, YouTube video from Jan 2020 on the most common objections against Christianity)

5. Exclusivity (Hell)

5a. “How could God send people to Hell because they believe the wrong thing?”

- 1. No one goes to Hell because they “believe the wrong thing.” We ALL deserve Hell because of sin!**
- 2. Does ANYONE go to hell?**
 1. (If NO – there’s no justice! If YES – What is the *standard*?)
- 3. If some people go to Hell, what about us bad people?**
- 4. The Gospel is open to everyone who calls on the name of the Lord!**

5. Exclusivity (Only 1 way)

5a. “How can there be only one true faith?”



Resources

- ▶ Jeff Vanderstelt, *Gospel Fluency: Speaking the Truths of Jesus into the Everyday Stuff of Life* (2017)
- ▶ Rebecca McLaughlin, *Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World's Largest Religion* (2019)
- ▶ Tim Keller, *Making Sense of God* (2018)
- ▶ Tim Keller, *The Reason for God* (2009)
- ▶ Craig Blomberg, *Can We Still Believe the Bible?* (2014)

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