

1. What are some other alternative gospels you encounter as you interact with people in your circle of influence?
2. What are some alternative gospels that you are susceptible to?
3. How does recognizing alternative gospels open the door for sharing the biblical story?

CULTIVATING GOSPEL FLUENCY

Cultivating gospel fluency is a matter of time and practice. Here are our suggestions for making the gospel a part of your everyday conversations.

1. First we need to allow the gospel to expose our false narratives and deepest heart idolatries. We need to confess our sin, and reaffirm our faith in the heart and character of God.
2. Second we need to continually preach the gospel to ourselves. Chester and Timmis suggest we do so by constantly reminding ourselves of God's heart and character.
 - a. God is Sovereign, so I don't have to be in control (control idolatries).
 - b. God is Loving, so I don't have to fear others (approval idolatries).
 - c. God is Good, so I don't have to look elsewhere (heart idolatries).
 - d. God is Gracious, so I don't have to prove myself (performance idolatries).
3. Third, we need to be a part of gospel community that regularly encourages one another with the hope of the gospel.
4. We need to learn how to discern alternative gospels in others and gently guide them into the biblical story.



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EVERYDAY EVANGELISM



As we continually allow the gospel to transform our heart and character, encourage one another with the hope of the gospel and live out the realities of the gospel in the ordinary events of our everyday life, we will increasingly have opportunities to share the gospel with others.

Peter's vision of everyday evangelism, grows out of his vision of "everyday community," "everyday care" and "everyday mission." Since we are the church, we never stop being the church.

His prescription for sharing the gospel is both elegant and simple.

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (1 PETER 3:15-16)

Let's take the time to identify Peter's operating assumptions, make sure we understand the heart of the gospel and identify some ways we can become more fluent in speaking the gospel to ourselves, each other and those around us who do not know Christ.

PETER'S OPERATION ASSUMPTIONS

READ 1 PETER 3:15-16

Peter's model of everyday evangelism is built on three operating assumptions: (a) He assumes we will be engaged with the gospel on a deeply personal level before we ever attempt to communicate it to others. (b) He assumes the gospel transformation that is taking place in our lives will open the door for us to share the gospel with others. (c) He assumes that when we will talk about the gospel we will do it in a manner that is consistent with the nature of the gospel.

1. Where are each of these ideas found in the text?
2. Why are each of these important if we are going to be effective in sharing the gospel.

THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

The gospel as the narrative arc of the biblical story revealed in the drama of CREATION, FALL, REDEMPTION & CONSUMMATION. It tells us who we are and what we were created for; what went wrong and why nothing seems to work; what God has done to rescue us and restore us to a right relationship with Him and when and how our ultimate longings will be fulfilled.

1. CREATION: What does the bible tell us about who we are and what we were created for?
2. FALL: What does it tell us about what went wrong and why things don't work (THE FALL)?
3. REDEMPTION: What does it tell us about what God has done to rescue and restore us?
4. CONSUMMATION: What does it tell us about when and how our ultimate longings will be fulfilled?
5. How do we shortchange the gospel when we simply view it as the plan of salvation—or how we can go to heaven when we die?

ALTERNATIVE GOSPELS

While not everyone embraces the biblical narrative, everyone has their own gospel story or an alternate explanation of who we are and what we are created for; what went wrong and why nothing seems to work; how we can fix what is wrong; and when and how our ultimate longings will be fulfilled. Here are some examples.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO EVE

CREATION: I am the only one qualified to decide what is right and wrong for me.

FALL: God is only holding me back with his archaic ideas of right and wrong.

REDEMPTION: I need to reject God and make my own decisions.

CONSUMMATION: I will experience a level of freedom and autonomy I could never experience with God.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE RICH YOUNG RULER

CREATION: I deserve the good things of this life and the life to come.

FALL: While I have a lot of the good things this life has to offer, I might be falling a bit short in securing the good things of the life to come.

REDEMPTION: If someone will tell me what to do, I am sure I will be just as skilled in securing the blessings of the next life as I have been in securing the blessings of this one.

CONSUMMATION: I will be someone who really does have it all.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

CREATION: I am a sexual being who deserves to be desired and loved by men.

FALL: While I have had a few lovers, I haven't found the right one yet.

REDEMPTION: When I find the right man, he will love me the way I deserve to be loved.

CONSUMMATION: Once I am loved the way I deserve to be loved, I will be happy.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JENNY CRAIG

CREATION: I deserve to be happy and valued.

FALL: I am not attractive enough to be happy and valued because I am overweight.

REDEMPTION: If I find the right diet and exercise program I will be able to lose weight and be more attractive.

CONSUMMATION: After I have lost weight, people will value me and I will be loved.