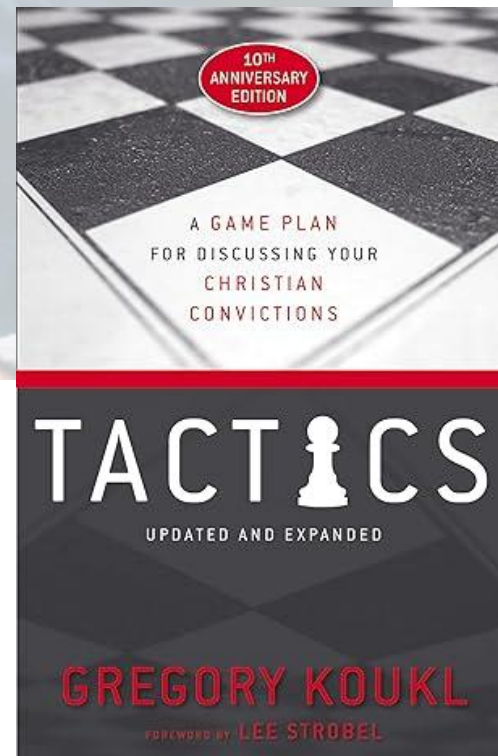




TACTICS

Skills for Spiritual Conversations

Session 1



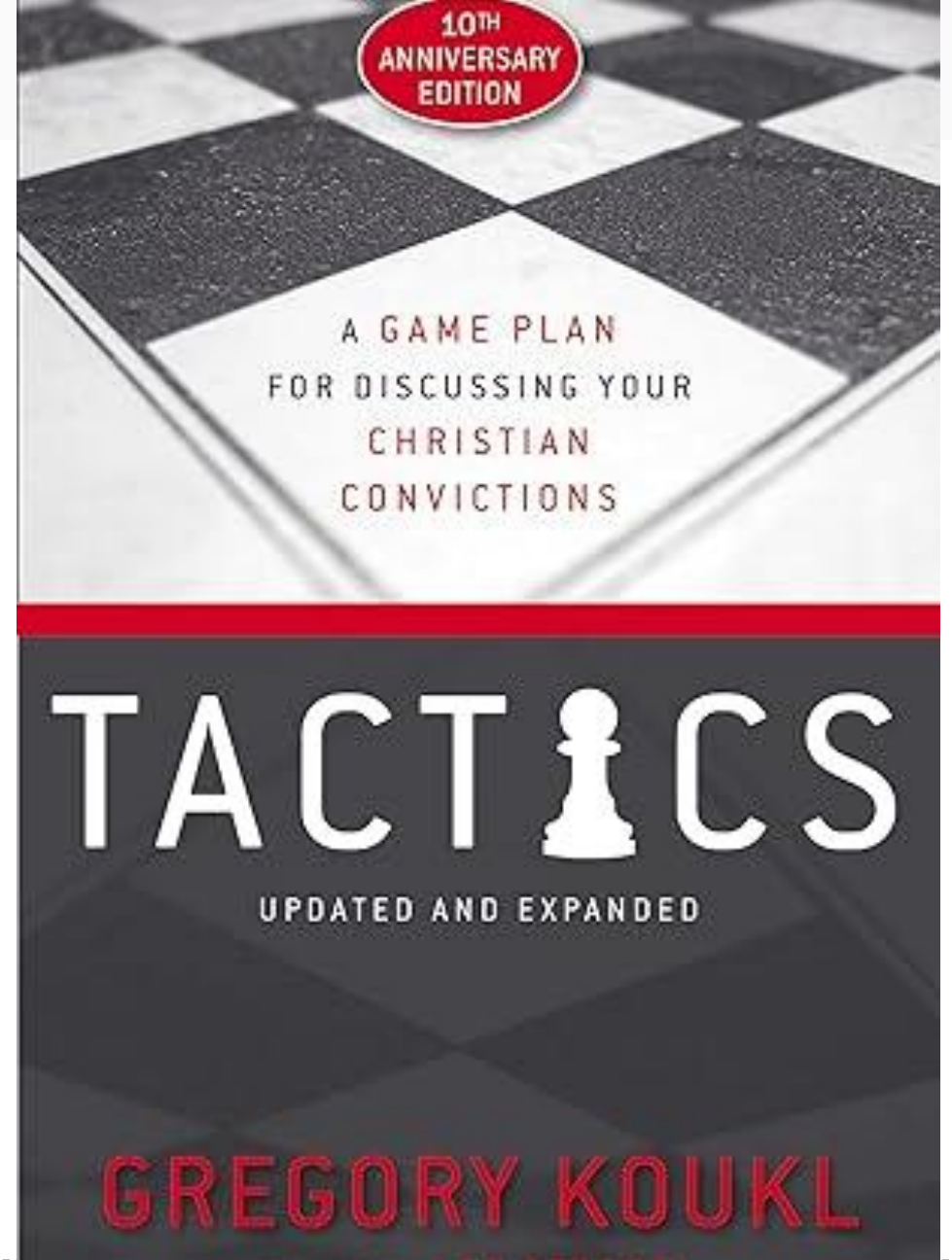
Agenda

- Lunch – 11:45am – 12:00pm
- Prayer and Course Overview
- Tactics and Evangelism Approach
- Tactic #1 and #2
- Wrap-Up by 1:15pm



Course Overview

Build confidence by staying in the driver's seat in spiritual conversations



Overall Evangelism Approach

Attitudes and Mind Set:

- ✓ Prayerfulness
- ✓ Kindness
- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Gardeners not Harvesters (John 4:35-38)

Scriptural Reference:

- The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20)
- Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15)
- Give defense for the hope that is in you (1 Peter 3:15)
- Be Innocent but Shrewd (Matthew 10:16)



Strategy vs. Tactics

Strategy is big-picture, large scale operations, usually worked out in advance

Tactics is the 'art of arranging' – knowledge, responses to objections, addressing attacks with sound reasoning and clear thinking

Characteristics of Tactics:

- Manage, not manipulate
- Control, not coerce
- Finesse, not fight
- Stay in the “driver’s seat”
- Exploit the other’s incorrect thinking to guide them to the Truth

Scriptural reference – Colossians 4:5-6

Contemporary Challenges / Skepticism

- ♦ No objective truth, only 'personal' truth
- ♦ Moral relativism
- ♦ Religious pluralism
- ♦ Other examples?



Tactic #1:

Who is this man and how did he succeed at his work?



Columbo Tactic #1 - Outline



- Use **questions** to productively advance the conversation
- Keep the conversation interactive to invite participation
- Avoid stating your case and push the 'Burden of Proof' on the other person

Columbo Tactic #1 - Questions



- “What do you mean by that?”
- “Do you mind if I ask you a question?”
- “Let me see if I understand you on this...[restate the claim]. Is there more to it?”

Columbo Tactic #1 - Advantages



- Asking questions shows genuine interest in the other person's views
- Forces the other person to think more carefully and precisely
- Gives you time to think of a response to move the conversation forward
- If they're quiet, patiently rephrase the question to keep them comfortable
- Keeps you in the driver's seat without you stating your position

Columbo Tactic #1



What is the ‘Burden of Proof’?

- The responsibility someone has to “defend” their own view or claim
- Burden of Proof Rule:
 - The person who makes the “claim” bears the burden!

Burden of Proof Challenges



Consider the following claims:

- “Evolution is the only rational explanation for how we got here. A Christian’s only justification is faith in the Bible”
- “A fetus doesn’t have self-awareness, so it’s not a person”
- “The Gospels are a bunch of made-up stories to get people to join Christianity”

Would you agree that these statements are forcing the Burden of Proof back on you?

Burden of Proof Guidelines



Keep these guidelines in mind:

- The other person still has to give evidence for their claim before you must respond
- Don't get pushed into a defensive position when another person makes a claim
- A Christian doesn't have to refute every story a challenger can make up
- Using a personal opinion isn't presenting evidence ("I feel", "Just imagine", "It's quite possible")
- The evidence must show that it's a more reasonable view than your Christian view
- Basic universal beliefs don't require defense (our existence, reliability of our senses)

A close-up photograph of two hands, one on the left and one on the right, firmly grasping a thick, light-brown rope. The rope is stretched horizontally across the frame. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green field. The lighting is natural, suggesting an outdoor setting. The hands are positioned as if they are about to pull or are in the middle of pulling on the rope.

What if you come to an impasse
and the conversation gets stuck?

Columbo Tactic #2:

Reversing the Burden of Proof



Columbo Tactic #2 - Questions

- “Now, **how** did you come to that conclusion?”
- “**Why** do you say that?”
- “What are your **reasons** (or evidence) for holding that view?”
- “**Why** should I believe what you believe?”
- “What makes you think that’s the **right way** to see it?”
- “I’m curious. What makes you think that’s **true**?”



Columbo Tactic #2 - Defenses to Beware

“Professor’s Ploy” (Claim to Authority)

- Forcing burden of proof back to you after making a claim without proof
- Used by someone in authority who can overpower you
- Respond by keeping cool and requesting evidence
- If they’re unmovable, thank them for their answer and let it go



Columbo Tactic #2 - Defenses to Beware

“Dodging the question”

- They try to change the subject or restate their views rather than answer
- Respond to them by ‘narrating the debate’ by replaying the conversation
- Calmly state what’s not being addressed and request a clarification to get the conversation back on track



Columbo Tactic #2 - Defenses to Beware

“Turning the tables” (Moral judgments)

- Labels are used like intolerant, judgmental, bigoted or narrow minded
- The claim may actually be a challenge or accusation
- Respond by asking them if they believe they are tolerant and say you won't be judgmental of their views once they've expressed themselves



Columbo Tactic #2 – De-escalation

Strategies when emotions get involved:

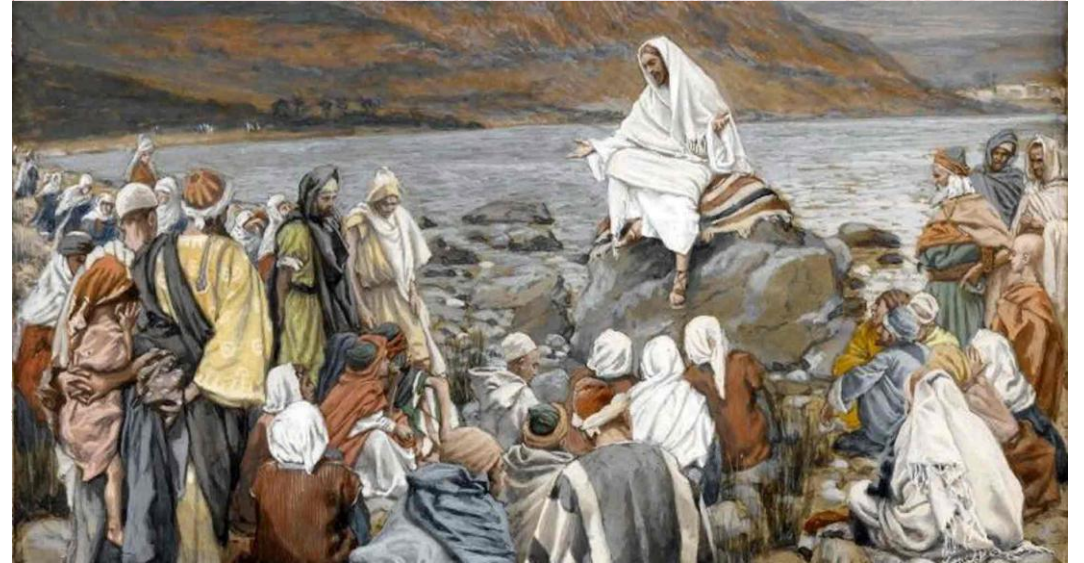
- Keep in mind our initial attitude of Kindness in evangelizing
- Express respect for the other person's knowledge and value to you
- Genuinely ask for them to elaborate to allow you to learn more from them
- If their patience/interest has run out, move on to another topic or respectfully end the conversation



Columbo Tactics Examples in Scripture

New Testament:

- Paying Taxes (Luke 20:22-26)
- Jesus High Priest Trial (John 18:22-23)
- Healing on the Sabbath (Luke 14:1-6)



Columbo Tactics Demonstration (time permitting)

Request volunteers to discuss the following:

- There is no God – it's simply not rational, there is no proof
- All religions are basically the same – all religions are just about love, correct?
- The Bible is written by men so there must be mistakes or errors – so many translations and people are imperfect

