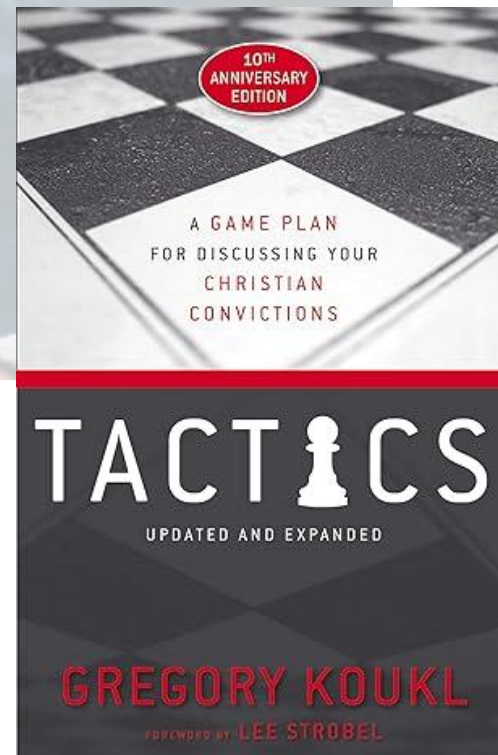




TACTICS

Skills for Spiritual Conversations

Session 3



Agenda

- Lunch – 11:40am – 12:00pm
- Prayer and Review of Week 2
- ‘Tear The Roof Off’ Tactic
- ‘Steamroller’ Tactic
- Wrap-Up by 1:15pm



Week 2 Review

Columbo Tactic #3:

Use questions to make a _____

Listen closely to exploit a _____ in the other person's view

Name one of the 3 ways we can practice

Columbo #3 A_____, R_____, P_____

Self-Destruction Tactic:

Self-destructive views tend to _____ each other

Multiple views that cancel each other out are called a _____ rivalry



Tactic # 5 - Taking-The-Roof-Off

Show the logical and absurd consequences of the person's view



Tearing-The-Roof-Off - Outline



- First, adopt the other person's viewpoint for the sake of argument
- Next, press them to the logical and absurd consequences of their view
- Also known as 'reductio ad absurdum' (reducing to absurdity)
- Can the other person live with the moral or intellectual consequences of their beliefs when taken seriously and consistently?

Tearing-The-Roof-Off - Steps



- Reduce the point of view to its basic premise or moral rule
- Ask if we apply this view or rule consistently, what would be the result?
- Would this view or rule have other unintended consequences that seem counterintuitive?
- Ask the other person about these implications if the view or rule were really true

Taking-The-Roof-Off Tactic Example in Scripture

New Testament:

- Jesus driving out demons (Matt 12:22-26)
 - A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand



Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - Homosexuality



Premise: Homosexuality is a natural tendency so it's morally acceptable

Reductio: If gay bashing is 'natural' for me, then it is okay

Truth: Just because it's natural doesn't mean it is moral

Additionally – the point of morality is to curb natural impulses that are wrong. Note that animals always do what comes naturally, but humans don't (or shouldn't do it). The difference between doing what comes naturally and principled self-restraint is called 'civilization'

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - Minimalist Ethics



Premise: Any behavior is okay as long as I'm not hurting anyone

Reductio: Peeping Toms, sexual assault while someone is unconscious survive this test but are clearly immoral

Truth: Peeping Toms, sexual assault while someone is unconscious survive this test but are clearly immoral

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - Moral Relativism



Premise: There are no objective moral obligations

Reductio: Stealing (or any other behavior) is not objectively wrong

Truth: There must be some moral absolutes (and therefore a moral lawgiver = God)

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - Atheistic Evolution



Premise: We are governed only by the natural process of evolution

Reductio: The strong are permitted to oppress the weak (human behavior is subject to man's evil/sin nature)

Truth: Evolution is not an adequate explanation for morality. God must exist to ground obvious ethical duties.

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - “Modified Pro-choice” Abortion Stance



Premise: Abortion should be legal, even though the politician personally believes it kills an innocent baby

Reductio: Mothers should be allowed to kill their children, even if some of us disapprove

Truth: The modified pro-choice position is barbaric. What kind of person champions the right to kill what he/she actually believes is an innocent human child?

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - Capital Punishment



Premise: If Jesus would forgive, then we have no right to execute murderers

Reductio: Then no punishment of any kind would be justified

Truth: The fact that Jesus would forgive does not mean that governments should not punish

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - The Claim That There Is No Truth



Premise: There is no truth

Reductio: There is no reason to go to college or trust any knowledge. There is no obligation to be tolerant of those who disagree.

Truth: If we have an obligation to be tolerant, then objective truth must exist

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - “Values Clarification” Philosophy in Education



Premise: Morality is individual to each student, so each student can clarify their own values

Reductio: Students can “value” cheating on tests, since they’ve placed a high value on it

Truth: Although a teacher may value honesty, allowing this freedom of irrational thought still fits within the “Values Clarification” framework

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - The Polarity of Good and Evil (e.g. karma)



Premise: Evil and good exist in a polarity, balancing each other out

Reductio: Children must suffer in India to maintain a balance with the children in America who are happy

Truth: When applied universally, it becomes absurd to believe that evil and good must coexist so they can balance out each other

Tearing-The-Roof-Off Example - Earth Day for Evolutionists



Premise: Humans have a moral obligation to protect the environment

Reductio: Evolution allows for all species to survive as they ‘will’ so that includes humans using (or abusing) the earth for whatever reason they believe will ensure their survival

Truth: God gave humans the moral responsibility to care for the earth as we are made in His image. Therefore, Earth Week makes more sense for Christians than atheistic Evolutionists!

Tactic #6 - Steamroller

Handling unreasonable and rude loud mouths!



Steamroller Tactic – Overview

- Steamrollers are people who overwhelm you and have strong opinions and personalities
- They keep you off balance and on the defensive with a lot of attitude
- They don't allow you to collect your wits and give thoughtful answers



How do steamrollers operate?

- They cut you off before you can respond to their challenge
- Once you begin to answer, they interrupt and pile on more challenges
- They may change the subject
- They clearly aren't listening to anything you're saying
- Steamrollers are insincere and are trying to 'win' through intimidation



Step #1 Responses to a steamroller



- “I’m not quite finished yet”
- “Hold on a minute, I need more time to answer. Are you interested in what I have to say?”
- “Is it okay if I answer your concerns before you ask another question?”
- “I know you have a lot of questions, but I need a moment to explain myself, is that okay?”
- “That’s a good question that deserves a good answer. I need a moment to give you one, okay?”

Step #1 Response Guidelines

- Ensure that you respond adequately to the first issue before you are forced to tackle another – one thing at a time
- Once you've made your point, ask them “Is that a fair answer to your question?”
- Don't become a steamroller yourself and let them continue once you're done



Step #2 – Shame the Steamroller (kindly!)

- Use similar statements as Step #1 but be direct in addressing bad manners
- Ask explicitly for courtesy but don't seem annoyed
- Say “I need to know if really want an answer from me. I'm trying to answer but you keep interrupting me”
- Say “Could I ask a favor? Could I have a moment to develop my answer without being cut off?”



Step #2 – Shame the Steamroller (kindly!)

- Say “Could I ask whether you want an answer or just want to talk? I get the impression that you don’t want an answer?”
- Say “Let’s try this – you make your point and I’ll listen and once you’re done I’ll respond and you won’t interrupt. Let’s be polite or we’ll have to end this conversation”
- Overall: Don’t be snippy or smug – stay focused, pleasant and gracious while in control



Step #3 – When all else fails, leave the Steamroller

- If there's no stopping them, listen politely until they've finished, then drop it
- Let them have the satisfaction of having the last word and politely end the conversation and walk away
- Wisdom dictates not wasting time with this kind of person



Steamroller Tactic

Example in Scripture

New Testament:

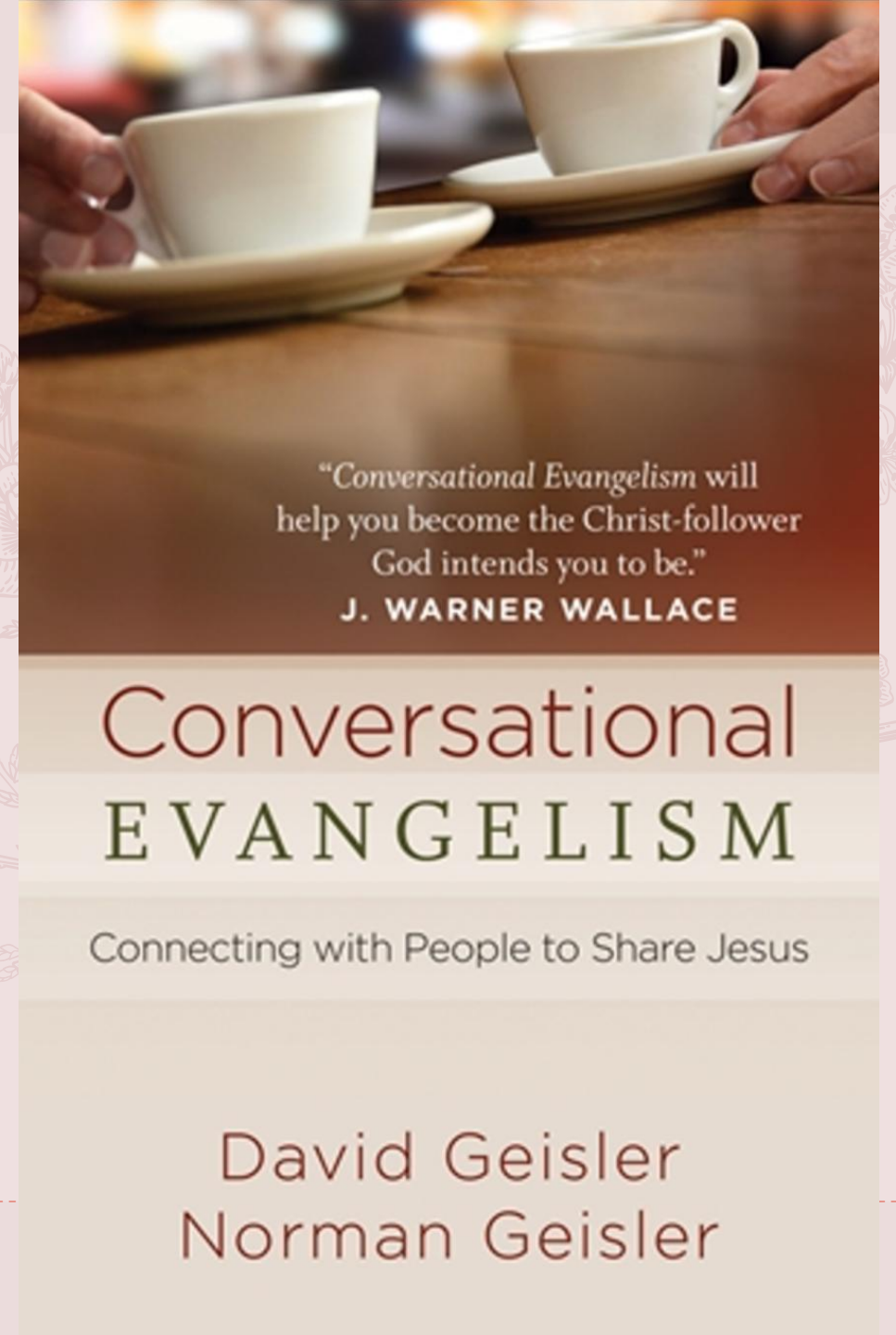
➤ Pearls before Swine (Matt 7:6)

““Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.”

We should be generous with the truth unless we encounter someone who shows utter contempt for the precious gift being offered to them



Highlights from Conversational Evangelism



Ingredients to This Model

- +1. Active Listening
 - +2. Positive deconstructionism* (tearing down)
 - +3. A questioning approach that allows others to surface the truth for themselves.
 - +4. A method for removing the burden of proof from us to them. (The Boomerang Principle)
 - +5. A method to determine the real barriers to the Gospel.
 - +6. A strategy for finding common ground.
 - +7. A strategy for building a bridge to the Gospel (both intellectual and heart bridges).
 - +8. A basic knowledge of the Christian faith and what makes Jesus unique.
-

= The Conversational Pre-Evangelism Method


*Concept developed by **Nick Pollard**, *Evangelism Made Slightly Less Difficult*, p. 44

Taking That Next Step

- A. Determine who the Lord is placing on your heart to reach out to!
- B. Pray for open doors (Col. 4:3).
- C. Look for Divine Appointments daily! (Acts 8:29).
- D. Make the most of every conversation you have with pre-believers to help them take one step closer (Col. 4:5; 1 Cor. 9:22).



Uncovering Barriers Between Them and God (review)

- 
1. Determine whether their issue is a real concern, or a **smoke screen**.
 2. Determine the **nature** of their barrier (intellectual, emotional, or a combination of both).
 3. Uncover the **specific** emotional baggage that they are carrying.
 4. Determine whether there is a **question or concern** behind the question or issue raised.
 5. Find out what their biggest **barrier** is to Christianity.
 6. Find out what would **motivate** them to get answers in these areas.
 7. Uncover the **volitional factors**.

Building a Bridge to the Gospel (Jn. 8:32)

1. Find the right balance in your approach.
2. Find common ground with those you are trying to reach.
3. Build a bridge from point of shared beliefs (even those they are not quite aware of).
4. Remember the goal.
5. Actively seek for opportunities to transition to the Gospel.