

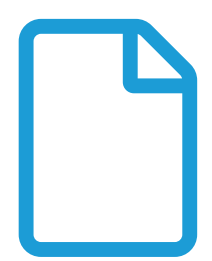


SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS



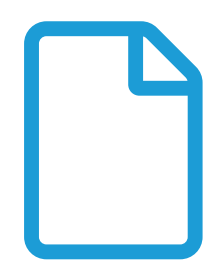
**EVANGELISTIC
PRAYER
TEAMS**

SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS Course Overview



Course Summary

These studies explore how we can start having spiritual conversations with our friends and colleagues.



Course Structure

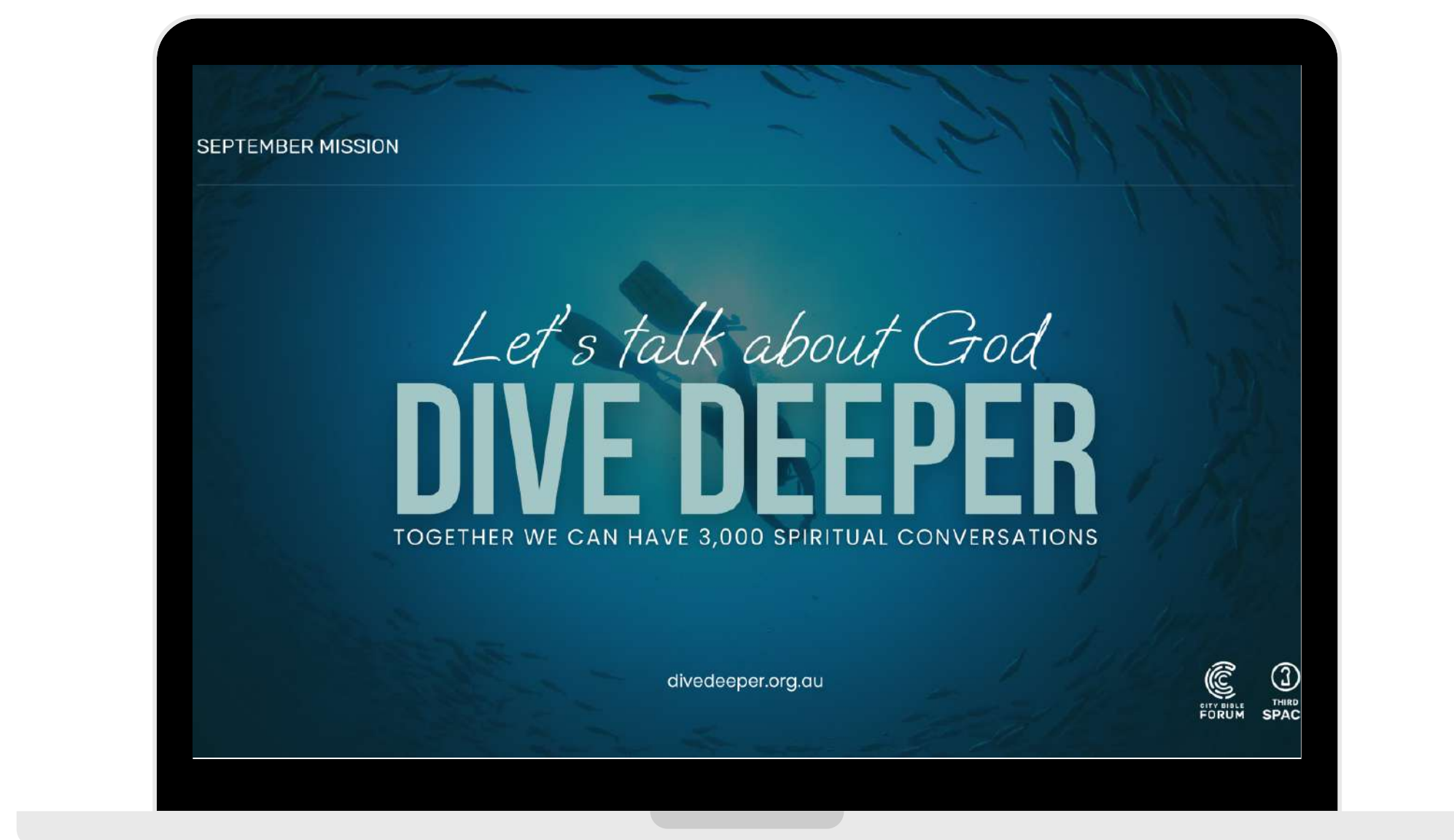
1: INJECTING GOD INTO OUR TALK

2: THE POWER OF QUESTIONS

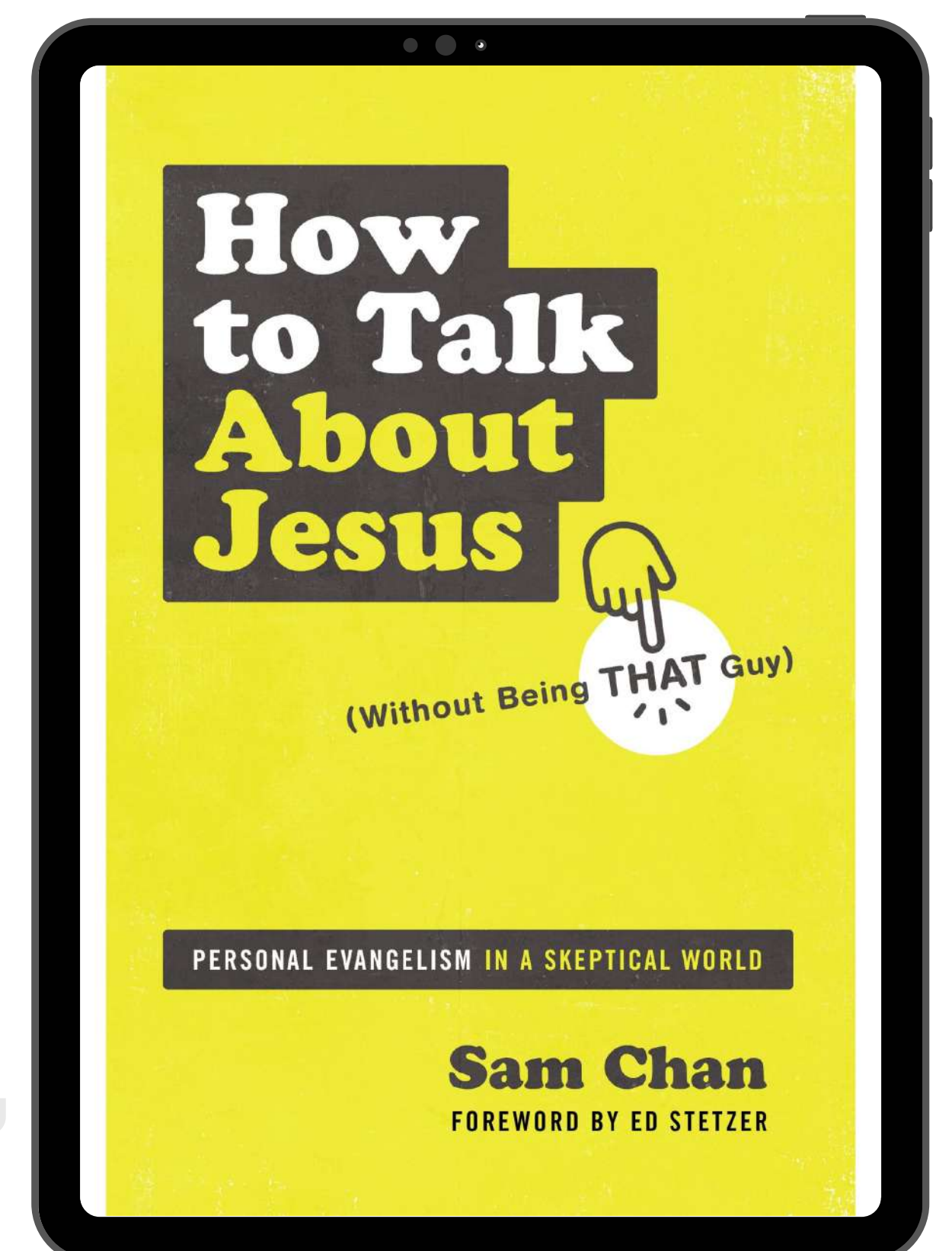
Next Steps



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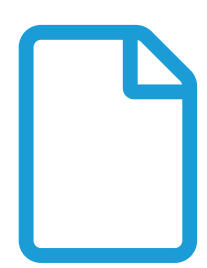
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SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

1. INJECTING GOD INTO OUR TALK



Introduction

In June 2021, LinkedIn introduced the option to state your pronouns. The Victorian Government inclusive language guide tells us that a person's pronoun is "not a preference." It is their identity. Our language is being changed in an attempt to shift us away from heteronormality.

In a similar fashion, feminists have been agitating for decades to change our language to be more gender inclusive. So, chairman became chair person, or simply chair, policeman became police officer. And there were many jokes about personnel access covers, being follically and vertically challenged, or terminally unavailable.

This challenging of our language is meant to change the way we think, so that every time we stumble over a sexist, ableist, or ageist term, the issue is raised again in our consciousness until eventually the language shift has embed itself in our unconscious - and our thinking is changed.



Big Picture

Injecting God into our speech can help introduce God into the thoughts of our friends and colleagues, and makes it easier to speak about him at work.



Key Truths (cont)

Christian Talk - There is a Christian way of speaking. There is the obvious: there should be no lying, anger, slander, filthy language, foolish talk, and course joking - rather we should be people full of thanksgiving (Colossians 3:8-9, Ephesians 5:4). We are not grumblers, but our words should be full of thanks, grace, and praise.

At Work? - Further, when we are together, Christians have a comfortable rhythm and language, which we shy away from when at work. When we get together we can speak about God's provision of rain, give thanks for the food we have to eat, thank God for his good gifts, and present our requests to him. We're at ease asking God to direct our paths, to save us from temptation, and to forgive us our sin.

However, when we go to work we pretend that we also share the spiritually dead, materialistic worldview of our colleagues - at least in our speech. Why do we do this?

Talk like everyone else? - If you've ever travelled overseas, you will have found yourself adapting your speech patterns to the culture around you - perhaps changing our accent, adapting local phrasing. A similar thing happens at work, we adopt the way those around us speak. We assume that most people don't want to hear us speak of God.

God at work - Another reason we don't speak of God in our workplaces is we haven't spent a lot of time reflecting on how God works through our work. Budgets are set, cases are written, reports are filed, all seemingly without God's help. But a moment's reflection reminds us that, of course God is involved in every aspect of our worklives! Why not start acknowledging that with thankfulness? Out loud! At work!

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

We can learn from the feminists and LGBTIQ+ advocates. We need to inject God into our speech. It will mean pushing back against the flow of our culture, but it can start to raise God on the agenda of our friends and colleagues.

Why not start in a small, safe, and acceptable way?



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Application (cont)

Consider:

When someone asks you about your plans for the future,

"I'm praying about it and hope that I may..."

When someone asks you about your weekend,

"I went to church where the preacher..."

When something goes well or someone congratulates you,

"Thank you, God was very kind, he..."

When someone shares their difficulties with you,

"I'm so sorry to hear that, can I pray for you?" (And if appropriate pray there and then)

You may feel more comfortable starting to inject this kind of talk into your speech with Christians first, but the goal is to start injecting this God talk into your work speech - so that it becomes a part of the subconscious of your language - and so God becomes part of the thinking at your work.

Why not start this week?



Prayer

Pray for courage to start injecting God into your talk at work.

Pray that your colleagues will notice your demonstrated trust in God by how you talk about him in your life.

Remember

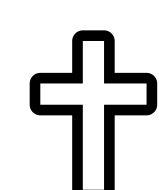
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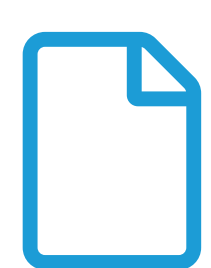
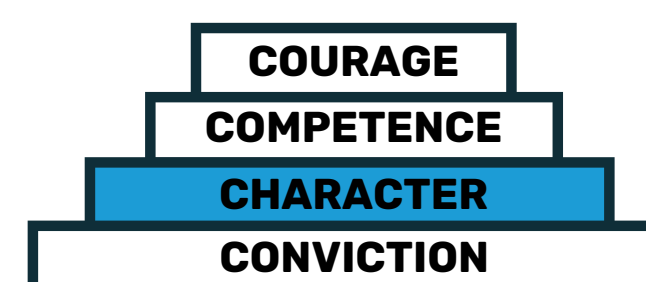
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SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

2. THE POWER OF QUESTIONS



Introduction

On a scale from terrified to as casual as anything, how do you rate your comfort in bringing up Jesus at work?



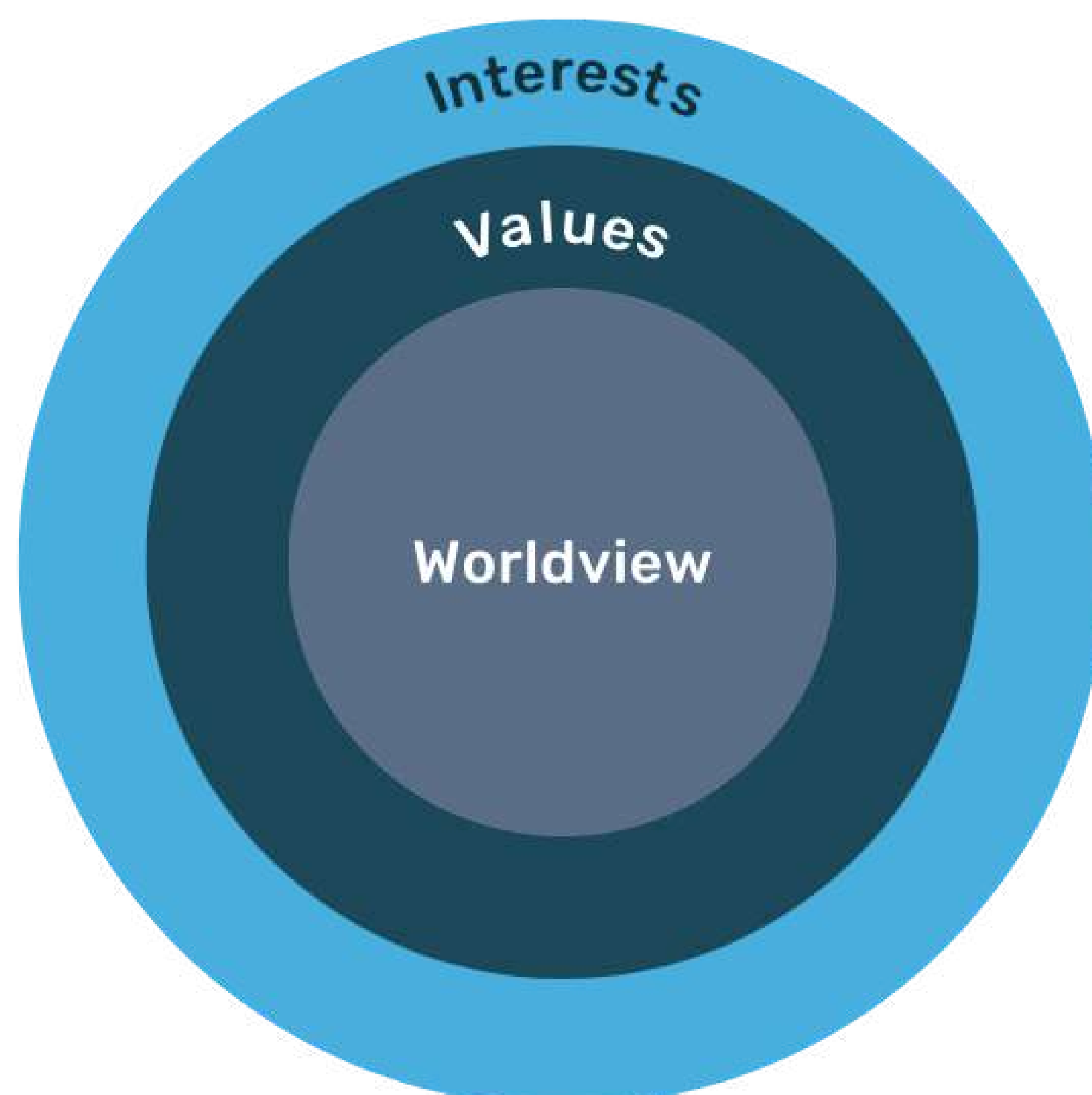
Big Picture

People in our culture are resistant to talking about Jesus, but questions can help us go deeper with them.



Key Truths

People tend to be comfortable speaking in 3 different layers of communication, depending on their relational comfort level: Interests, Values, Worldviews.





Key Truths (cont)

Interests – conversations tend to be superficial and stick to undeniable facts. "It's warm today."

Values – conversations start to express preferences, ethics, values, and beauty. From "Caramel is better than chocolate." to "There's nothing more important than family."

Worldviews – now we are speaking about what we truly believe about life, what's wrong with the world, and where we find meaning. When talking about Jesus, we're speaking at the Worldview layer, which is what our culture tends to resist. However there are ways of going deeper into this layer with people...

Nudge Questions

A nudge question acts like a catalyst to talking about Jesus with our friends.

A catalyst is a substance that you add to a mixture to start a reaction, and just like a catalyst, a nudge question requires the right ingredients to work - relational trust, interest etc.

However, if they are there a nudge question can help us move deeper with people quicker.

They invite our friends to speak about themselves, often in factual ways, but on topics that begin to expose their worldview. Some examples are:

- What are you looking for in life?
- Why is this important to you?
- What is one thing you absolutely must have in life?
- What happens if you don't find what you're looking for?
- What do you think it all means?
- What do you believe about God?
- What do you think God wants from you?
- Do you have a faith?
- What religion did your parents raise you with?
- Do you pray?
- What's the best thing about _____? (eg being a Muslim, being an Atheist)
- Tell me about traditions, festivals, or celebrations that are important to you? (especially when they are near, this could be Eid, Diwali, Christmas, ANZAC Day, Grand Final Day)
- What do people get wrong about _____? (eg Islam, Atheism)



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Key Truths (cont)

A great question can be ruined if we're not prepared to listen - so get listening. Show interest. We're not trying to disprove their beliefs, or win an argument. We are trying to understand them and what they believe in hope that they will agree to listen to our beliefs, or to explore who Jesus is for themselves by reading a Gospel with us.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

What has been your experience of introducing Jesus into conversations with your friends and colleagues?

Have a look through the list of questions above. Which of these questions do you think you could ask one of your colleagues this week?

You may like to get more training or advice in how to start having spiritual conversations, read Sam Chan's Book *How to Talk about Jesus (without being that guy)* which has formed the basis of this study. Alternatively, you can do Sam's online course, *Sharing Jesus at Work* (citybibleforum.org/courses)



Prayer

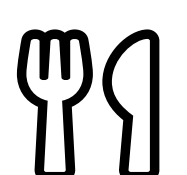
Pray for courage to ask one of the questions of your friends and colleagues.

Remember

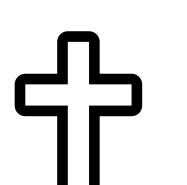
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