

Community of Hope

FESTIVAL OUTREACH

Training Resource Handbook



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The Community of Hope are a group of Christians from various evangelical churches committed to encouraging the nurture, growth and spiritual healing of the whole person. We affirm and celebrate what Jesus Christ taught and practiced, and believe the meaning of life and the answers to mankind's deepest needs are found in following him.

Originating in Sydney in 1991 by Reverend Ross Clifford - Principal of Morling Baptist Theological College; and Philip Johnson – Lecturer in Alternative Religions and Cults at the Presbyterian Theological College, it took off in Melbourne in 1996 under the direction of Reverend Harold Taylor – former Vice Principal of the Melbourne School of Theology (formerly Bible College of Victoria).

After investigating various studies conducted on how best the Gospel message can be presented to people with new age world views in new age environments, we developed various presentation methods that clearly relate the truth of the Gospel while using designs and objects often familiar in new age setting, like gemstones, cards and coloured bottles.

These methods along with the overall design of our stands, provide a comfortable setting to engage people in personal, spiritual discussions without offending them or watering down the Gospel message. Our advertising has various slogans like “Go on a Spiritual Journey” and “Exploring the Way of Jesus” and attract attention and provide a platform for us to introduce God as the ultimate source of truth. We ask seekers to be open minded to have God reveal himself to them – not us.

In new age settings there are all kinds of philosophies and different ways of thinking. We encourage presenters to listen but not to agree with the various ideas, instead affirming their open minds or willingness to explore ideas. This builds mutual respect and provides presenters with a platform to share our 'ideas' also. Since the beginning, we have been astounded at the acceptance and success of the methods.

Involvement in local festivals, markets and events also creates opportunities for churches to build bridges in the community and be relevant in today's society. We believe the potential to bring the Gospel to searching people far outweighs any dangers of involvement – “You are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4)

WHAT IS IT?

The Gemstones is a method derived from numerous items New Agers relate to and, therefore, find appealing. Gemstones (or crystals) are believed to have external powers for various things like healing, peace, love, sleep etc. The Mandala or Wheel of Life, is what we use to indicate different 'stages' in life.

In this presentation, the presenter uses the stones to 'walk' the person through various steps of a spiritual journey, using the same meanings that New Agers have attributed to the stones. We use the concept of having a higher form (God) walk through the spiritual journey with us, resulting in awareness of a greater being and taking the "self" away from the presenter.

WHAT WE SAY

People have recognised the importance of gemstones from ancient times until today. Ancient priests believed that they contained spiritual power to prevent and overcome evil. Today, crystals play an important role in our lives. They are used in computers, communication, laser technology, as effective amplifying reflectors capable of high and exact rates of vibration, and they also transfer electricity into radio and television signals. Crystals are believed to channel spiritual energies for healing and empowering a person, for example, with strength, confidence and good luck.

Each gemstone possesses particular properties and has a special meaning when used in relation to the search for spiritual wholeness. When used with the 'Mandala' - Wheel Of Life - crystals become a tool for reflection and guidance on our journey. Through their symbolic meaning, they point us to answers as we search for fulfilment and peace within ourselves and with others.

In the Mandala, eleven gemstones are used to show us the way to fulfilment:

AMETHYST - Sincerity. Forms a rim around the whole wheel, and also an inner circle around the hub of the wheel.

OBSIDIAN APACHE TEARS - Humility. Forms the ribs or spokes of the wheel.

Sincerity and humility are essential if we are to understand our spiritual journey. Sincerity means we are serious in our intention to find true meaning and fulfilment. Humility recognises that we are not perfect and that we have both strengths and weaknesses in our lives. These two stones remind us that our approach to life requires certain attitudes and that we are not able to make any progress without them.

MOONSTONE - Inner Self. To begin our journey, we need to look honestly at ourselves, acknowledging what we are, our strengths and weaknesses, and the potential we have.

RUTILATED QUARTZ - Regeneration (being 'born again', 'renewed'). To experience this we need to focus on renewing ourselves and intentionally growing to become the person we want to be. This process continues throughout the journey, as we reflect on the meaning of all the stones.

BLUE LACE AGATE - Grace. This idea is not talked about very much - it can be described as undeserved kindness. It is important to recognize times in our lives when we've been shown undeserved kindness (grace). The greater the act of grace received and realised, the more effective the next steps in our spiritual journey are.

CLEAR QUARTZ - Purity. Renewal of our lives requires a purging or unburdening of all that makes us unattractive. These burdens could include such things as undesired personality traits, attitudes, pains and hurts from relationships and experiences in life. Through purifying ourselves, we become free to be transformed into the person we want to be and gain greater clarity in our search.

CITRINE - Self Sacrifice. We should give of ourselves to others in an attitude of selflessness. Self-sacrifice is a direct result of seeing the value of and respecting others, and being willing to put them before our own needs and desires.

LAPIS LAZULI - Friendship. In the journey so far, we have reached the point of deep and meaningful friendships and relationships. We all have a need to be loved as well and a need to give love. It is through our friendship with others that we come to know ourselves.

PERIDOT - Inner Peace. It is the search for inner peace and for meaning beyond, which often starts people on a spiritual journey. We seek peace within ourselves, with those around us and with the spiritual realm.

CARNELIAN - Joy. We feel 'on-top-of-the-world' when we are happy and we seek joy in all areas of our life. As we develop and progress through the journey and deal with the issues and relationships within our lives, we begin to experience more joy. But this joy does not bring us total fulfilment.

Because we do not find total fulfilment in the search for meaning, we lack completeness within ourselves. This lack of peace and understanding leads many people to begin the journey again, bringing themselves back to the point of self reflection and contemplation (as represented in the moonstone). So they continue to search within themselves for completeness and satisfaction, but are disappointed because, for ultimate fulfilment, we need to look beyond ourselves.

Ultimately the centre and focus of all the symbols come together in the **ROSE QUARTZ**. The Rose Quartz represents **unconditional perfect love**. Unconditional love gives total fulfilment, but we are unable to give it to ourselves, nor can we get it from any other person. However, we can experience this unconditional love and be empowered, when we attune ourselves with the spiritual realm. But this needs careful thought because there is much in the spiritual realm that will not provide fulfilment.

The way to find answers to the meaning and force behind life is to explore the life and claims of Jesus. Through Jesus, we can experience perfect and unconditional love. Through him we find fulfilment and the power to develop in the areas of our life symbolised by the gemstones. Through Jesus, we can know peace, acceptance, meaning and joy. Jesus is the force behind life and he offers us fulfilment in our spiritual journey - anywhere, anytime, now! **Go to Page 14 to finish the presentation**

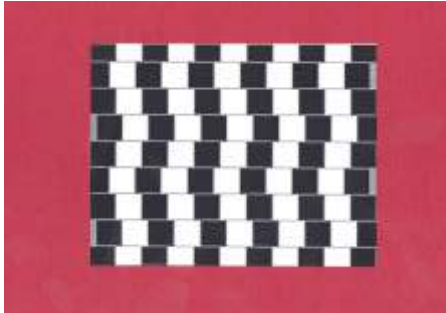
Obsidian (black)
Humility
(spoke stone)

Amethyst (purple)
Sincerity
(edge stone)

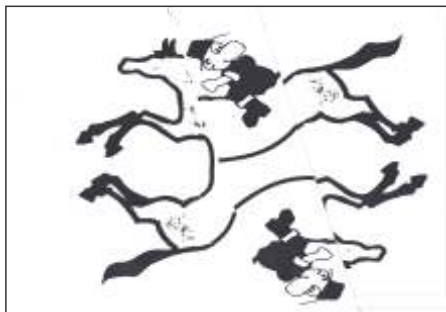


WHAT IS IT? This is a presentation about illusions in both the physical and spiritual worlds and reflecting on what is truth and its importance. By using these illusions and puzzles, we are showing that there can be difficulty in finding the truth in situations and relationships around us. Also, when we are looking into the spiritual world, are we aiming to show that we need guidance (God's Spirit to guide us) to recognise the truth.

I only believe it, if I see it?



Look from a different angle



Look outside the box for the answer



The answer can be right in front of us



Knowing truth about our relationships

WHAT WE SAY

Illusions: This is a presentation about illusions in both the physical and spiritual worlds, and reflecting on what is truth.

Shaped Cards: I'd like to show you these 2 shapes. Tell me which one you think is the biggest (show shapes and wait until they see them - swap around) Which one is bigger? (show that they are the same size)

When observing the world around us and the things in it, we can sometimes believe that some things are a certain way, when in reality they can be different to how they appear. eg. advertising, etc

Refer to later: In the spiritual world, can we trust what we see and/or feel or do we need spiritual guidance?

Parallel Lines: Are these lines parallel? (show the card)

The lines are parallel when you look from a different angle (turn card 90 deg)

When conflict occurs in our life, sometimes it's good to look at it from a different angle, maybe from the other person's point of view. This gives us a clearer picture, which enables us to come up with better solutions.

Refer to later: View God/Jesus teachings from a different perspective other than a worldly view

Horses: Place the jockeys on the horses without bending or folding the paper. They tend to move the paper around area. After a time, show the person how to place the papers correctly. **With dilemmas we come across, we may need to step 'out of the box' we normally operate in, to look for answers elsewhere where we may not usually look.**

Refer to later: Some will need to look outside their circle of influence (eg. New Age). Mix with some Jesus people. Read different books (eg. Scriptures)

F Sentence: Please read this sentence. How many F's do you see? (they will usually say 3 or 4) The truth is there are 6 F's in the sentence, can you see them? (show them) If you met someone in the café later and they said there were 3 F's in the sentence, would they be right? You know there are 6. What if they were very sincere? Would they be right (this could open up to a discussion about truth - relative/absolute etc.)

Sometimes in life, the answers to our questions are right in front of us.

Refer to later: Some would have - an experience of God - Sunday School as a child a Bible on a shelf - a person in their life - a thought, but miss seeing it.

Link: Knowing the answer to these puzzles isn't going to change your life much... but this next topic could.

Relationships: What is the first relationship you see in this picture? (a couple). Another relationship is the relationship between parents and children. Can you see the child?

We are all involved in different relationships - friendships, marriage, parents, children, work colleagues etc. Let me ask you - Do you want to know the truth about these relationships - like where they are at? Some of our relationship can be a puzzle, confusing to work out. But when we spend time to listen and share etc. we are closer to knowing the truth at where they're at and then we can address the key issues. (give some examples)

We want to have truth in our relationships with siblings, partners, friends and employers, but what about our relationship with God?



Do we want to know the truth to the questions we have about God? Does God exist? Does he accept me the way I am? What happens to me when I die? If you could talk to God, what would you ask him? Do you think about the spiritual aspect to life? *(the answer the seeker gives, helps you to discover where they are coming from and this may develop into a discussion)*

Circumstances

You want the answers you receive to those questions to be true. Let me show you this *(show picture)*.

What do you see when you first see this picture?

They say that depending on where you are coming from, colours what you see. if you are young, you firstly see the young lady, if you are mature you will see the more mature lady. And, I guess, if you see both you're middle age.

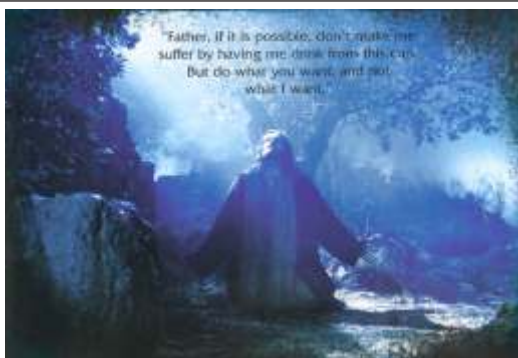
We don't want the questions we ask about the spiritual realm to change when our circumstances change. We expect those answers to remain true whether we are young or old, rich or poor, sad or happy.



Being Manipulated

We don't want to be tricked or manipulated when we are searching for answers. Let me show you this *(show envelope and get them to point to square of choice and reveal appropriate answer)*

Do you feel tricked or conned? Let me show you how I did this. When we are genuinely searching, how do we know we are not going to be manipulated by a person, organisation or even by me?



ANSWER FOR 'MANY WAYS TO GOD'

Depending on the person you are talking to, you may wish to continue the verse where Jesus said he is the only way to God, no one comes to the Father except through him.

The night before he died, Jesus asked His Father (God), was there any other way this sacrifice could be removed? But there wasn't. Jesus would have to be the sacrifice. If there were other ways to God, why didn't God tell Jesus? Why put Jesus through the suffering, if there were other ways? Or was Jesus speaking truth when He said He was the only way to God the Father?

When we set out on a spiritual journey, we can often misread the spiritual illusions that come across our paths.

We may believe that God won't accept us because of the things we have done. We may believe that God will accept us regardless of what we do or think.

How do we know the truth? Is it possible to know we are on the right path?

Are we relying on our feelings or our presumptions of the truth?

How can we know what is true?

Jesus said He is the way, the truth and the life.

He offers a spiritual pathway to transform the way we live our lives.

When we take this pathway, God's Spirit will guide us through the spiritual illusions that are all around us.

Jesus said if we come to him, he will give us His spirit and He would never leave us.

How do we connect to God's Spirit? Find out about Jesus teachings and see what God is saying to you. In the quietness, allow God to speak to you. And be prepared to let God do it in a way which is best for you. *(give New Testament Bible)*

Take this Bible and allow God's Spirit to reveal himself to you.

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WHAT IS IT?

This quiz is based on the book by Christian marriage counsellor and author Gary Chapman. After many years of counselling, Dr. Chapman noticed a pattern: everyone he had ever counselled had a “love language,” a primary way of expressing and interpreting love. He also discovered that, for whatever reason, people are usually drawn to those who speak a different love language than their own. He has helped countless couples identify practical and powerful ways to express love, simply by using the appropriate love language.

Many husbands and wives who had spent years struggling through marriages they thought were loveless, discovered one or both spouses had long been showing love through messages that weren’t getting through. By recognizing their different love languages, they witnessed the rebirth of the love they thought had been gone for good.

This quiz has been designed to attract people interested in understanding what their Love Language is, as well as opening dialog with them about the ultimate love of Jesus.

WHAT ARE THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES?**Words of Affirmation**

Actions don’t always speak louder than words. If this is your Love Language, unsolicited compliments mean the world to you. Hearing the words, “I love you,” are important—hearing the reasons behind that love sends your spirits skyward. Insults can leave you shattered and are not easily forgotten.

Quality Time

In the vernacular of Quality Time, nothing says, “I love you,” like full, undivided attention. Being there for this type of person is critical, but really being there—with the TV off, fork and knife down, and all chores and tasks on standby—makes your significant other feel truly special and loved. Distractions, postponed dates or the failure to listen can be especially hurtful.

Receiving Gifts

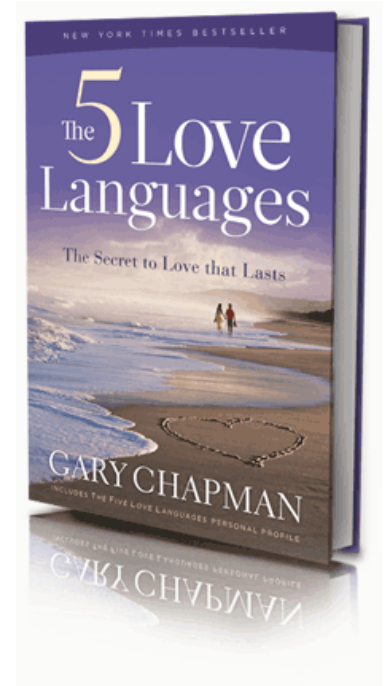
Don’t mistake this love language for materialism; the receiver of gifts thrives on the love, thoughtfulness and effort behind the gift. If you speak this language, the perfect gift or gesture shows that you are known, you are cared for. You are prized above whatever was sacrificed to bring the gift to you. A missed birthday, anniversary or a hasty, thoughtless gift would be disastrous—so would the absence of everyday gestures.

Acts of Service

Can vacuuming the floors really be an expression of love? Absolutely! Anything you do to ease the burden of responsibilities weighing on an “Acts of Service” person will speak volumes. The words he or she most want to hear: “Let me do that for you.” Laziness, broken commitments and making more work for them tell speakers of this language their feelings don’t matter.

Physical Touch

This language isn’t all about the bedroom. A person whose primary language is Physical Touch is, not surprisingly, very touchy. Hugs, pats on the back, holding hands and thoughtful touches on the arm, shoulder or face—they can all be ways to show excitement, concern, care and love. Physical presence and accessibility are crucial, while neglect or abuse can be unforgivable and destructive.



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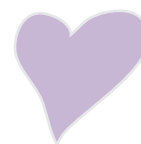
Words of Affirmation

These can be written or spoken - compliments, words of encouragement, requests rather than demands. These things all affirm your self worth. They can create intimacy, heal wounds and bring out the full potential of a person.



Acts of Service

Someone helping you with a task or doing a chore for you will make you feel loved. An act of service that is freely given may speak more love to you than anything else.



Quality Time

Spending quality time together through sharing, listening and participating in joint meaningful activities communicates that we truly care for and enjoy each other. Walks, holidays together, going out together, sharing things like these are immensely important.



Physical Touch

As a gesture of love, physical touch can reach to the depths of our being. As a love language it is a powerful form of communication from the smallest touch on the shoulder to the most passionate embrace.



Receiving Gifts

Gifts are visual symbols of love, whether they are items you made or purchased. Gifts can demonstrate that you care and they represent the value of the relationship. Sometimes a person's presence can be a gift. Even a small token can be important.



~ Empowerment to Love Others ~

Many people genuinely want to give of themselves more completely in love, but find it difficult to do when confronted with the cost that often comes with loving. The Community of Hope believes that each person can be empowered to give more lovingly of themselves through knowing Jesus, the Master of all five love languages. We invite you to contact The Community of Hope to be put in touch with friends of Jesus and fellow inquirers to assist your in you search.

Discover Your Love Language

Most people feel loved when they are treated in a certain way. This way is called their "Love Language". There are five main languages, but within each of these are variations call dialects. This short quiz will help you to understand your own Love Language and may explain certain difficulties in relationships around you. Above all, it's important to communicate by listening to others and explaining yourself well.

In each box, number each answer 1 to 5.
1 being the **LEAST** like you, 5 being the **MOST** like you and .

I frequently . . .

- A1 _____ encourage and affirm others
A2 _____ offer to help others with jobs
A3 _____ spend time with my friends
A4 _____ touch other people to show affection
A5 _____ give gifts to let others know I care

Most of all I love . . .

- C1 _____ being helped with a task
C2 _____ being encouraged
C3 _____ receiving sentimental gifts
C4 _____ spending time with my closest friend
C5 _____ being touched affectionately

I treasure . . .

- D1 _____ a warm embrace
D2 _____ special moments together
D3 _____ a phone call or email from a friend
D4 _____ gifts from those I love
D5 _____ sharing responsibilities & jobs

When I think of an ideal partner for me, the thing they would do most often is . . .

- B1 _____ spend special time with me
B2 _____ give me special gifts
B3 _____ show warm physical affection to me
B4 _____ encourage and compliment me
B5 _____ share day to day tasks

I care most about . . .

- E1 _____ receiving gifts
E2 _____ physical affection
E3 _____ being helped in a job
E4 _____ being complimented
E5 _____ spending time with a close friend

*When you have finished these five boxes above, transfer your scores to the five smaller boxes along the bottom of the form.
(Fill in all the A's, B's, C's etc.)
The box with the highest score is your Love Language.*

Words

- A1 _____
B4 _____
C2 _____
D3 _____
E4 _____
Total _____

Service

- A2 _____
B5 _____
C1 _____
D5 _____
E3 _____
Total _____

Time

- A3 _____
B1 _____
C4 _____
D2 _____
E5 _____
Total _____

Touch

- A4 _____
B3 _____
C5 _____
D1 _____
E2 _____
Total _____

Gifts

- A5 _____
B2 _____
C3 _____
D4 _____
E1 _____
Total _____

WHAT IS IT? The coloured bottles in this presentation represent our spiritual journey and the different layers in the bottles symbolize the earthly and divine realms. Again, this presentation opens dialogue with people by discussing our spiritual journeys and the areas in our lives where we can experience and overcome obstacles.

WHAT WE SAY

Colour, the subtle effect on our life - How seven coloured bottles can help us understand our spiritual journey! Colour plays an important part in our lives but we rarely give it a second thought. We take it for granted without realising its effect on us.



Colour affects our moods and creates atmosphere. For example, green is used to bring relaxation, blue gives a sense of peace, red is often the colour of action, energy and passion, including anger. Colour is important in maintaining and restoring health. For example, looking at blue light is known to lower blood pressure by calming our nerves, while red light causes it to rise. Different colours affect us emotionally and physically and can help restore us to health and harmony.

Colour is also important in our journey to spiritual wholeness. Some believe that colour has particular healing properties and also a spiritual meaning. For example, red refers to life, strength and energy; green stands for harmony, balance and growth; yellow represents intellect, mental powers and wisdom.

Colour has meaning in a spiritual understanding of life. Many symbols used in worship and other spiritual exercises have special colours to represent particular attitudes. For example, purple and violet symbolize sorrow and regret for wrong doing; gold and white refer to celebration and joy; and red represents spiritual life and power. In the spiritual journey to wholeness, colours are used to help us think about our lives and encourage us to grow in understanding.

To explain our spiritual journey, each bottle has two layers - the top of coloured oil and the lower of coloured water, each with a particular meaning. The top layer of oil signifies the spiritual or divine realm, the lower layer of water represents the human, earthly realm in which we all share.

1. The PEACE bottle - blue over blue. Blue stands for tranquillity, and in the spiritual realm, there is perfect peace, while in the earthly realm, we are continually seeking peace. We long for peace in relationships, we want world peace, seek peace for a beautiful environment, peace in our health, etc., and although we want peace and harmony in our lives, it seems impossible to achieve.

2. The SEARCH bottle has a top layer of Blue, representing tranquillity, and a lower layer of Magenta which represents ambition. This indicates a search for contentment in relationships, with our careers, with family, our finances etc. The message of this bottle is that if we wish to deepen our search in the spiritual realm, sacrifices must be made - whether it's time, energy, money or even emotions.

3. The GROWTH bottle has a top layer of blue, representing tranquillity again, and a green layer, representing growth in understanding. These colours together symbolise a desire to grow spiritually. We grow in knowledge, and grow physically throughout life, but often neglect any growth in our spiritual lives.

4. The WISDOM bottle - The gold top layer represents divine wisdom or illumination from the spiritual realm and the yellow bottom layer symbolises human intellect. We have made fantastic advances in technology, medicine and science, but often this does not lead us to peace and harmony. For this, we need the true wisdom from the spiritual realm.

5. The ACTION bottle has a top layer of gold representing wisdom or illumination. The lower red represents energy, suggesting to us that action is required if we are to gain spiritual wisdom. We need to put into practice the spiritual knowledge we gain along the way, sifting out the things that will harm our spiritual well being.

6. The LIFE bottle has a top layer of transparent red representing joy and true life which comes from the spiritual realm, the empowering life of the spirit. The lower layer of darker red represents physicalness, blood or life. While we recognise and celebrate many things in our lives, we also realise there are many imperfections and weaknesses in human life and our physical life is limited here on earth.

7. The CHRIST bottle is the most significant of all. The clear top layer represents perfection or purity. The lower red layer represents physicalness, blood or life. It is a symbol of Jesus coming to the earthly realm and shedding his life blood to enable us to have a real and true link to the spiritual realm. Jesus is the source of all wisdom and knowledge*. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life . . . nobody can come to the Father (spiritual realm) except through Jesus. To truly understand spiritual realities we need to follow the way of Jesus.

THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

As we look at the colours they show us that we are involved in a search for peace, growth, wisdom and true life. All of these indicate a desire for spiritual growth. But none of these are possible unless we are empowered spiritually through Jesus who is the "key" to true spiritual understanding*. *In the Christian sacred writings. Colossians chapter 2 verses 2 & 3

Does a colour have real meaning to you?

If you wish to experience true spiritual growth and understanding you can invite the living Master Jesus into your life. He will give you the power of the Spirit to renew your life and to lead you deeper into the true way. Jesus offers to meet you in your particular need and to bring you hope, joy and peace. This is his free gift for you - anywhere, anytime!

Go to page 14 to finish the presentation

Intro: People tend to think of the star signs in terms of their personal horoscope. What's going to happen to me this week? Most people don't realize that the Constellations tell a much bigger story, a Universal story. Let me explain. If you go out on a clear evening and look up at the stars, can you see the images of the Constellations? Takes a bit of imagination doesn't it, and you'd never see them if you hadn't been told about them. It is a curious thing that many of the ancient cultures recognized the **same pictures** and gave the **same meanings** to the Constellations. For example the Latin word Virgo means 'virgin' as do the Greek and Sanskrit words **Parthénos** and **Kanya**. The ancient Sumerians also had a similar understanding. It seems that somewhere early in history the names and meaning of the stars was given to mankind.

This chart (refer to poster) is of just one small part of the sky. The constellations in this section speak to me. Let me tell you the story. This portion of the sky is visible in the Southern hemisphere.



Firstly, here is **Virgo**. Virgo, the virgin is always represented as a woman with a sheaf of grain in her hand. (Point out the grain). The first woman Eve was given a promise that her '**seed**' (one of her descendants)(Point to the grain when referring to the Seed) would play a pivotal role in the whole human story. *He would be the means of us having friendship with the Creator.*

Just close to Virgo and with his eye on the grain is **Corvus** the crow (point to Corvus). The constellations consist of stars of various brightness; the Alpha star is the brightest, the Beta the next, and so on. In Corvus, the Alpha star is the eye (point to the eye). It is as if the beady eye is looking at the seed (Run



finger from eye to grain) just waiting to jump in and grab it. This reminds me of something I read in Revelation (Show and hold the words forward so they can see as you slowly read) Revelation chapter 12 verse 4. **"The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour her child [the Seed] the moment he was born. She gave birth to a male child."** That is like Corvus with his eye on the seed. There is this constant struggle between good (point to the Seed) and evil (point to Corvus). If you look at the 6 o'clock news tonight, you will see it there. Wars, crime, violence, famine, sickness and hatred, when in our hearts we want good. But we don't have to look far to see the bad, even in our own lives there is this strange mix of good and not so good.



(Now point to Libra) Just to the left is **Libra**, the symbol is of a set of scales. (move your hands like a set of scales). If you were in the City and saw a public building with a set of scales on the front, which building might that be? ..wait..prompt..The Law Courts. The job of the courts is to work out the right and the wrong and to try and set things right. We have a moral dimension. We all have a sense of right and wrong, a conscience. If someone walks out of the courts without a conviction, but we reckon they are guilty .. we feel indignant .. they should have been locked up .. We feel cheated when injustice prevails. Something in all of us cries out for justice. We have a sense that ultimately all injustice will be brought to account.



Next is **HYDRA** the Serpent; What creature is this? The snake or serpent. The Serpent has from the beginning represented Satan, the deceiver. This is the longest constellation. If you look up at the sky and see Hydra overhead, it will seven hours to pass that point in the sky. It's as if the evil one is always hanging around.



Just above Hydra is **CRATER**, the cup of God's wrath. Just as we get indignant at injustice, so too does God. Especially since what he created was good and perfect, but man has messed it up. God holds us accountable for how we live. God's indignation is like a dark cloud hanging over all forms of evil. None of us wants to live under God's anger. Jesus was no different in that sense. In the final hours before he was crucified Jesus prayed (Show the words) (Luke 22:42,44) **"Father, if you will, please don't make me suffer by having to drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want. Then an angel from heaven came to help him. Jesus was in great pain and prayed so sincerely that his sweat fell to the ground like drops of blood."**



We can't be dogmatic about the meanings of various signs, but let us look at perhaps the best known Constellation in the Australian sky - Crux - **The Southern Cross**.

The Southern Cross is on the Australian flag. There is often debate about changing the Australian flag, but even if it were changed I reckon the Southern Cross would still be there.



On the Australian flag, how many stars are used to depict the Southern Cross? ..wait..prompt..Five. (There are six stars on the flag, one is the Federation Star .. there are 5 in the cross. (Use your hands to animate this next bit highlighting the five stars) This reminds me of the nails driven one into Jesus right hand, one into his left hand, the crown of thorns pressed into his forehead and the spear thrust into his side.

(Point on the cross on the poster) Here is a picture written large in the sky, a sign of the cross which is central to man's relationship with God.

John 19:33,34 When [the soldiers] came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of them pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

Can you find the Southern Cross in the sky? Which way is South (have this worked out and point to the South). In the Northern hemisphere there is Polaris, the North Star. Find Polaris and you have found North. There is no equivalent in the South .. there is no South star. But main axis of the Southern Cross points to the South. Navigators love it. If they can find the Southern Cross they can find South. (Could talk about needing a secure, fixed point in life)

The Southern Cross is up at angle of about 38 degrees. The latitude of Melbourne is 38 degrees South. So when you look up into the sky to the South at an angle of 38 degrees above the horizon, you will be looking at the point that the Southern Cross rotates around. (Raise straightened arm to an elevation of about 38 degrees while facing to the South). That where you will find the Southern Cross. Looking up at the Southern Cross once brought this thought crossed my mind? Where was the cross of Jesus? .. wait .. prompt.. Just near Jerusalem. Jerusalem is in the Northern hemisphere (latitude 32 degrees). Could the Southern Cross be visible from Jerusalem. To find out I went on google.. as you do... The answer which came back shocked me - No, it is not visible from Jerusalem now days - but it used to be. Over decades and centuries, the position of the constellations drift in relation to the earth - so at some time in the past the Southern Cross was visible from Jerusalem. So when was it last sighted from Jerusalem? Another surprise, The Southern Cross used to be visible from Jerusalem UNTIL 27AD. When did Jesus die on the cross? Just after 27AD. The sign in the sky was visible from Jerusalem until the time of the actual cross, but when the real cross happened the symbol moved on. Now it is no longer visible there. But here we still have this incredible sign above us every night as a reminder of God's greatest gift.

Of course, a sign is just that, a sign. If we were driving to Apollo Bay, then we would head down to Geelong - no worries. Once we got into Geelong we would expect to see a sign to Apollo Bay. We wouldn't stop and hug the sign - we would keep following the signs until we got to our destination. So with the signs in the sky; they urge us on in our journey. On our trip we wouldn't just rely on the road signs, we would take a Melway or maybe a GPS. So, we need to look for more sure revelation than the star signs. The Bible is God's revelation to us. In the Bible we can learn about the man Jesus, his character, his place in history and what he has achieved for us.

It is said of Jesus : **"Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name"**

Romans: 5v6 **You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.**

Give a New Testament. **Go to page 14 to finish the presentation**

NOTES: Have Bible verses ready to share as appropriate.

The script as above is quite long. Some of the details is there for your information. It is always important to know more than you are actually sharing. Research it further yourself. Be prepared to abbreviate but do so without losing the thread.

I like to have the disclaimer on Signs. The real message is Christ, so try not leave them with the impression that the message is the stars. No, they are just signs. Much as the Old Testament temple was a God-given sign of the true heavenly temple.

....keeping the spiritual journey going

One way to end the presentation, is to finish with . .



- 1** What do you know of Jesus teachings? ...or
You don't need to take notice of my views or that of an organisation but what you may want is to have God reveal himself to you.
- 2** One way I suggest is that you take this NT bible and just read a small section each day praying that God will reveal himself to you. He may do this in various different ways - through a person, an incident, a thought or from what you read.

- 3** When you give them the NT Bible, turn to the inside cover and explain that this book is not written by just one person, but many authors inspired by God. There is diversity and variety throughout the Bible, all united by a common theme.

Opportunity to explain further.



Suggest a website, check them out first.

- ☐ www.fallingplates.com
- ☐ www.thechristfiles.com.au
- ☐ www.thebibleproject.com
- ☐ www.jesusfilm.org/film-and-media

Suggest a Bible App, check them out first.

Search in the Apple Store or Google Play "Bible Gateway" and install for FREE

- 4** Ask them if they would like you to pray for them as they read during the week ahead?

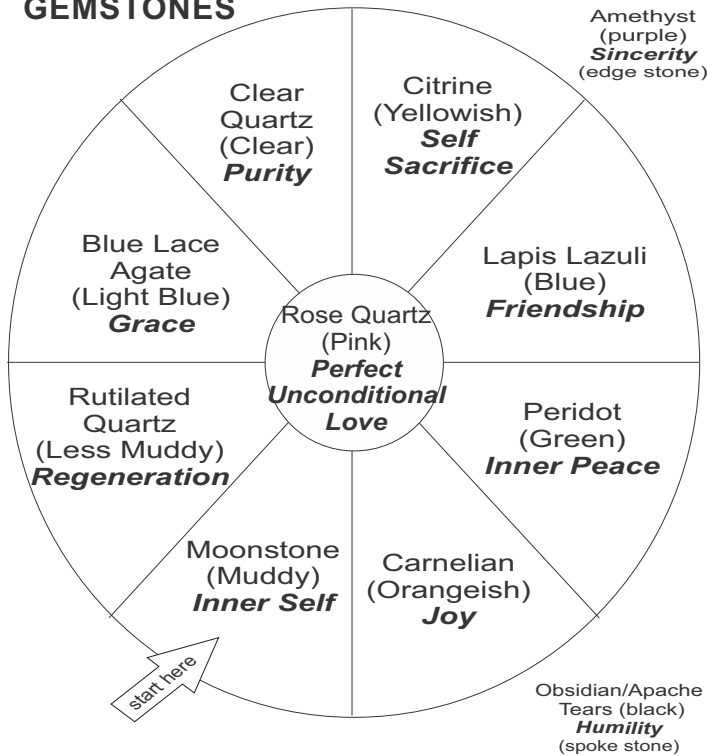
Fill out the prayer slip.

Ask if you can contact them in a few days time to see if they had any feedback about their experience reading Jesus teachings? This prayer slip stays with you for you to pray for them. It's your contact, your opportunity/responsibility to pray for and, if possible, for further the discussion.

Pray for	TICK <input type="checkbox"/> Please contact me
First Name	Email.....
for.....	@.....
.....	Phone.....
	these details are confidential and are only kept by the person talking to you.

- 5** Ask if they have someone in their social network who follows Jesus. Suggest they ask them about their perspective.

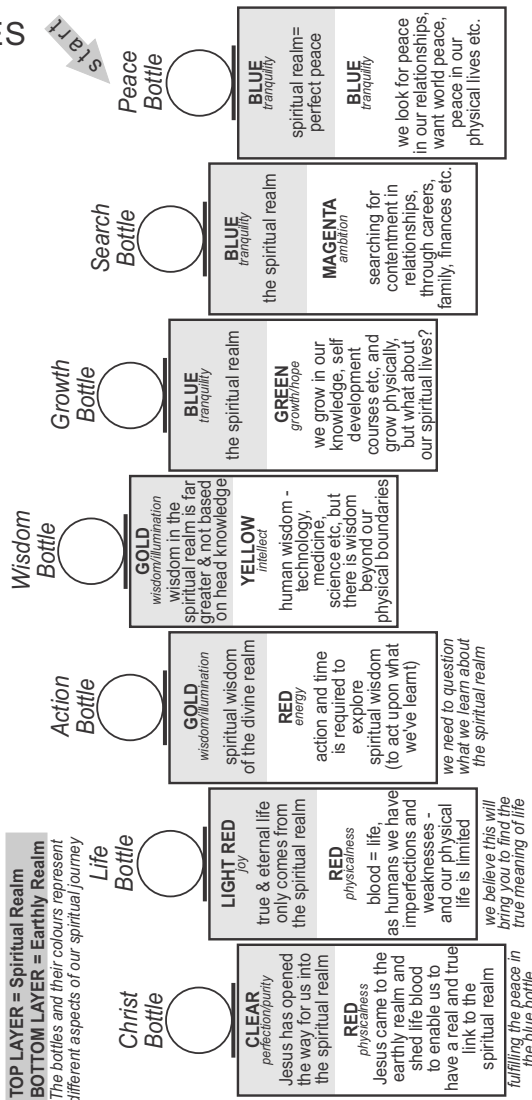
GEMSTONES



ILLUSIONS

1. Visual puzzles - shape puzzle & any others
2. Mental Puzzles - F sentence
3. Socially - Relationships, time and guidance
4. Physical compared to the spiritual, time and guidance
5. Summarize
6. Life can be a big puzzle
Spiritually void often misread by the spiritual illusions
7. How do we know the truth?
be manipulated by someone - coloured squares
different states of mind - lady picture
8. Jesus claims to be the way, the truth and the life.
How do we get God's Spirit?

BOTTLES



LOVE LANGUAGES

DO YOU KNOW YOUR LOVE LANGUAGE?

At the heart of human life is the desire to be intimate and to be loved by another....
... but we express love in different ways. We have different ideas of what love is and often have difficulty in communicating love.

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

These can be written or spoken. Compliments, words of encouragement, requests rather than demands. Affirm your self worth. They create intimacy, heal wounds and bring out the full potential of a person.

GIFTS

Gifts are visual symbols of love, whether they are items you made or purchased. Gifts can demonstrate that you care and they represent the value of the relationship. Sometimes a person's presence can be a gift. For instance, being at a funeral or celebration event shows solidarity and support.

PHYSICAL TOUCH

As a gesture of love, physical touch can reach to the depths of our being. As a love language, it is a powerful form of communication from the smallest touch on the shoulder to the most passionate embrace. Handshakes, pats on the back, hugs and even play wrestling may communicate affection.

ACTS OF SERVICE

Someone helping you with a task or doing a chore for you will make you feel loved. An act of service that is freely given may speak more love to you than a gift, kind words, time with someone or physical touch.

QUALITY TIME

Spending quality time together through sharing, listening and participating in joint meaningful activities communicates that we truly care for and enjoy each other. Walks, holidays together, going out together and sharing things like these are immensely important to a

Jesus brought comfort and peace and said it is better to give than to receive. He came to serve not to be served, spent time with his friends, touched people when they were hurting. Ultimately, Jesus expressed his love for us by laying down his life (John 3:16).
Through Jesus we can be empowered to express love in a fuller way!

It is not easy to step out of your comfort zone to share Jesus with people who either have adopted another spirituality or have been affected by this through the media and tend to have an indifference to the 'church'.

Most people at festivals do not understand Jesus from a Christian perspective, have little understanding of the Bible and are seeking spiritual answers to their daily life in other ways.

The starting point in approaching these people is learning their 'language' and not only gaining an understanding of their culture, but also to use their culture to build a bridge to sharing Jesus in a way they can understand.

Festival ministry starts off from preliminary evangelism, which leads to evangelism. This is an important part of Mission strategies.

There are many examples of this approach in Mission history:

- William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, struggled for years preaching the Gospel in the slums of London in the 1890's. It was not until they used pub tunes, which were set to Christian messages, that the poor understood the message of Jesus. Five years after using this approach, the Army was well established with over 900 centres and had over 200 mission groups overseas.
- The Wesley Brothers also used bawdy tunes in the 18th century. Their approach led to the Methodist Church being established.
- Don Richardson (wrote 'Peace Child'), saw the exchange of babies amongst two tribes in New Guinea to create peace as a great example of Jesus being a peace child for us.

Key points have been developed based on missionary principles to share Jesus:

- Be aware you're operating on New Age Festival territory - not church territory - talking to spiritual seekers who are looking for answers, which are very different from Christianity - although they speak English, it's a different culture!
- Start from where people are at and build a bridge that leads to sharing about Jesus. Sometimes this leads to more in-depth sharing and prayer. At other times, people hear about Jesus and move on - and you have simply sown a seed! **You cannot share more than people are prepared to accept at that time in their search.** Sharing requires listening skills, patience, the love of Christ for the other person, respect for their point of view and asking open-ended questions to create dialogue.
- Going slowly and respectfully for their views does not mean being less Christian in our approach. It means allowing those hearing the presentation to move at their own speed. It is respecting their spiritual journey rather than bringing them to OUR desired conclusion at OUR speed. The methods are designed to create dialogue and rapport with seekers, which helps the presenter to gain an insight in where people are at, in order to build a bridge to sharing Jesus appropriate to their circumstances.
- The methods developed have been carefully developed to achieve initial contact, create an interest and credibility because people can identify with a universal spiritual journey, before sharing Jesus in ways appropriate for them. The methods can lead to more in-depth sharing about Jesus and possibly prayer with people. Changing the presentation or coming to the Gospel message too quickly to get a result, destroys the flow of the presentation and does not allow for dialogue and a rapport with the listener. There is a fine line in presenting these methods in your own words, which is essential, and changing the concepts.
- An important concept in sharing Jesus with New Age seekers comes from the perspective that his message can empower people to overcome their struggles in daily life. Therefore talking about

the cross, his suffering for our sin, sanctification etc. are for most people, concepts outside their understanding at this point. 'For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing' **1 Corinthians 1:18**

Remember, we are trying to create an interest and hope through Jesus as the answer to their search. We are God's messengers in the process of people coming to Jesus. Allow the Holy Spirit to move the seeker. For most people, coming to the point of acceptance of Jesus is a process, not a one off event.

SOWING / REAPING MODEL

Jesus used this model below with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-3)

1. He created initial contact "Give me a drink"
2. Aroused her interest by saying "If you drink of the water I can give, you will never thirst again"
3. Referred to the imperfections in her life (sin)
4. Created credibility in her mind "I can see you are a prophet"
5. Delivered his message: "God is spirit and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth"
6. Jesus allowed the woman to move and act according to her understanding.

Other biblical examples and encouragement:

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.) Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man's design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead. "When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." **Acts 17:16-32 (NIV)**

The Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. **2 Timothy 2:24-26**

"Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" **1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (NIV)**

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. **1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)**

The Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. **2 Timothy 2:24-26 (NIV)**

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. **1 John 4:4 (NIV)**

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." **Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)**

SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM

A. Evangelism without prayer is like an explosive without a detonator!

Share the Good News in the power of the Holy Spirit and let God do the rest!

Personal preparation includes:

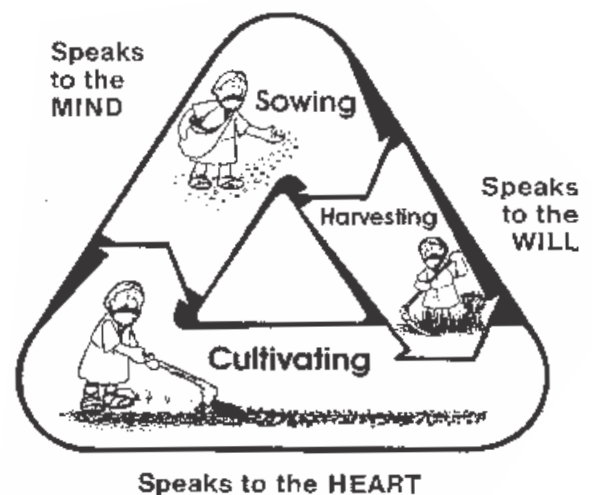
- Praying about the festival and about your involvement. Ask for prayer from your family, friends, small group, congregation etc.
- Reflect on how Jesus met the needs of individuals (John 4) and how Paul shared the gospel with pagans (Acts 17:16-24)
- Review training notes, DVD, material. Read the brochures we distribute and other recommended material.
- Read books like 'Jesus and the gods of the New Age' or 'Riding the Roller Coaster' both by Philip Johnson & Ross Clifford or 'What is the New Age still saying to the Church' by John Drane

B. Evangelism is a process . . . not a project!

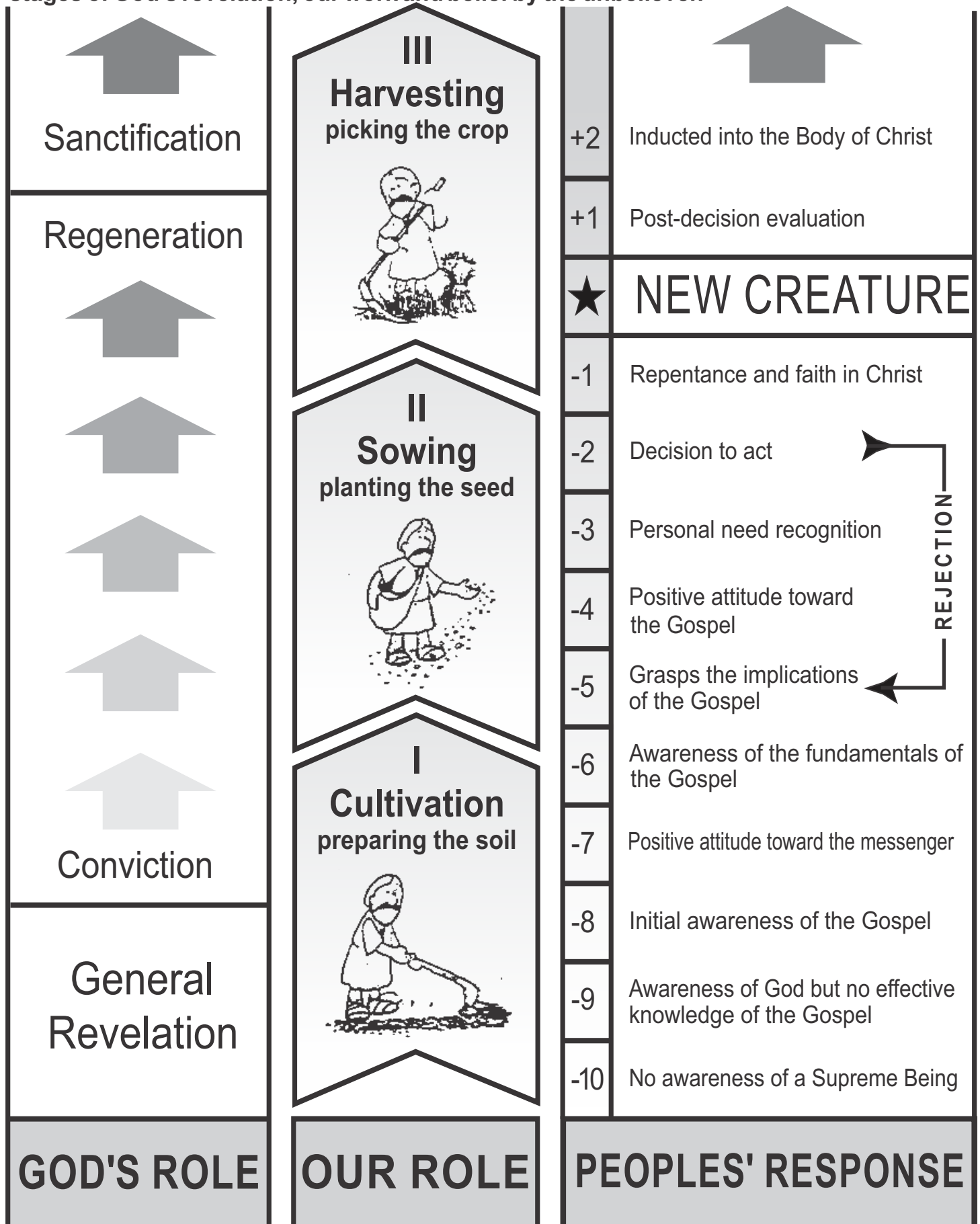
- Cultivating - Speaks to the HEART
- Sowing - Speaks to the MIND
- Harvesting - Speaks to the WILL

C. Advantages of the Evangelism process:

- It's biblically based - a common pattern found in Scripture
- It respects the dignity of the person
- It appeals to the 'whole' person
- It removes the false 'results' pressure we can sometimes feel
- It involves the entire Christian community
- It has built-in follow up



Here is a 'ladder' which represents the evangelism process as it moves through the stages of God's revelation, our work and belief by the unbeliever.



FOUNDED

The origins of the New Age movement can be found in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

GENERAL INFORMATION

The New Age movement includes elements of spiritual and religious traditions. This list is not exhaustive, but here are a few:

ATHEISM - is the rejection of belief in the existence of deities

PANTHEISM - is the view that the universe (or nature) and God are identical. Pantheists do not believe in a personal or creator god

POLYTHEISM - is the belief of multiple deities or gods

GAIA - is draws a connection between the survivability of a species (evolution) and its usefulness to the survival of other species

ARCHAEOASTRONOMY - is the study of how past people understood phenomena in the sky and what role the sky played in their cultures

ASTRONOMY - is a natural science that deals with the study of celestial objects such as stars, planets, comets, nebulae, star clusters and galaxies

ECOLOGY - is the scientific study of the relation of plants and living organisms to each other and their surroundings

ENVIRONMENTALISM is a broad philosophy and social movement regarding concerns for environmental conservation and improvement of the state of the environment

GNOSTICISM - is refers to diverse religious movements consisting of various belief systems generally united in the teaching that the material cosmos was created by an imperfect god 'demiurge' with some of the supreme God's breath, spirit or soul

NEOPAGANISM (or **Paganism**) - is an umbrella term used to identify a wide variety of religious movements, particularly those influenced by the pre-Christian pagan beliefs of Europe. Some attempt to reconstruct or revive indigenous, ethnic religions as found in historical and folkloric sources

NEW THOUGHT - is emphasizes metaphysical beliefs, including the effects of positive thinking, the law of attraction, healing, life force, creative visualization and personal power.

UNIVERSALISM - is the 'applying to all' application or applicability. It is a principle that asserts that all people are under the consideration and love of God and that theological concepts (doctrines) which conform to this concept are in fact more in accord with the divine concepts. A belief in one, common truth is also another important tenet. The living truth is seen as more far-reaching than national, cultural or religious boundaries.

WESTERN ESOTERICISM or **HERMETICISM** - is a broad spectrum of spiritual traditions found in Western society. It refers to the collection of the mystical, esoteric knowledge of the Western world. This includes, but is not limited to, alchemy, theosophy, herbalism, occult tarot, astrology, Rosicrucianism and Western forms of ritual magic. The tradition has no one source or unifying text, nor does it hold any specific dogma, instead placing emphasis on "inner knowledge" or Gnosis

THEOSOPHY - is a doctrine of religious philosophy and mysticism. It holds that all religions are attempts by the "Spiritual Hierarchy" to help humanity in evolving to greater perfection, and that each religion therefore has a portion of the truth

SPIRITUALISM - is a monotheistic belief system or religion, assuming a belief in God. A distinguishing feature is the belief that spirits of the dead residing in the spirit world can be contacted by mediums, who can then provide information about the afterlife.

New Age practices and philosophies draw inspiration from major world religions such as: Buddhism, Taoism, Chinese folk religion, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.

FOUNDED About 550BC in northeast India

FOUNDER Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha)

FOLLOWERS Worldwide = 376 million (6 %), Australia = 419,000 (2.1 %, 2006 census)

MAJOR LOCATIONS The main religion of many Asian countries but is practised worldwide

MAJOR BRANCHES Nikaya, Mahayana, and Vajrayana

RELIGIOUS TEXTS Tipitaka

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Pali, a language close to that spoken by Buddha

SPIRITUAL LEADER Every Buddhist tradition has a spiritual teacher/leader who may or may not be ordained (for example, Lama in Tibetan Buddhism, Roshi in Zen, Venerable in Theravada)

PLACE OF WORSHIP Temple or meditation hall

MAIN SYMBOL Wheel of Life or meditating Buddha

PRAYER & WORSHIP Traditionally, Buddhists go to the temple on the full moon, new moon and half moon days, where they make offerings of food to the monks, pay reverence to the shrine with flowers, candles and incense, chant, meditate and listen to talks on dharma. Buddhists bow three times to the main shrine of the Buddha image and three times to the resident monk (if present). Pointing feet to the shrine or monks is avoided because it is considered disrespectful.

It is traditional to wear white on such days, and shoes and headgear are removed before entering as a sign of respect. Sometimes they remain in the temple all day and night.

EVENTS, HOLIDAYS & RITUALS

VISAKHA PUJA (WESAK) Sixth full moon of the lunar calendar, usually in May. Commemorates the birth, enlightenment and final release or passing away of the Buddha.

ASALHA PUJA Eighth full moon. Commemorates the first sermon or the turning of the Wheel of Dharma and the arising of the Noble Sangha with the first enlightened disciple. Also marks the beginning of a traditional three-month retreat when monks stay in one place and lay people make an extra effort in their own practice.

KATHINA Traditional offering of robes and requisites to monks and temples after completion of the retreat.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Buddhism is the dominant religion of the Far East but has grown in popularity in the West. It has developed into a variety of forms within different countries and cultures. But all Buddhists share a deep respect for Buddha, "the enlightened one", and consider Buddhism the path to end all suffering.

Buddhists aim to develop goodness as the basis for happiness through generosity, moral restraint and meditation. Ultimately, Buddhists believe the refuges are to be found in our own hearts.

CORE BELIEFS

Buddhists believe there is no higher refuge than the 'Triple Gem':

Buddha the historical teacher, the fact of enlightenment, the potential of our own minds to realise the truth;

Dharma the teaching of the Buddha, the nature of reality and truth;

Sangha the monastic community who provide leadership and teaching. Those who embody the Dharma through their own direct realisation of it, whether monastic or not.

Karma is the law of cause and effect. All intentional action by body, speech or thought gives a future result.

Rebirth is the incessant regeneration of existence as long as ignorance and craving persist. Not reincarnation, which is the transmigration of an unchanging essence or soul.

The goal is Nirvana, the end of craving, the end of all greed, hate and delusion, all selfishness and conceit. It's the ultimate peace or happiness: the deathless.

FOUNDED Earliest forms date to 1500 BC or earlier in India

FOUNDER Hinduism is formed of diverse traditions and has no single founder

FOLLOWERS Worldwide= 900 million (14%), Australia= 148,119 (.07%, 2006 census)

MAJOR LOCATIONS India, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the USA

MAJOR BRANCHES Theravada (south and southeast Asia), Mahayana, Vajrayana (north and northeast Asia)

RELIGIOUS TEXTS Vedas, Upanishads, Sutras, Bhagavad Gita

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE Sanskrit

SPIRITUAL LEADER Guru, Sage

PLACE OF WORSHIP Temple or home shrine

MAIN SYMBOL Aum

PRAYER & WORSHIP Mantras are invocations, praise and prayers that through their meaning, sound and chanting style help a devotee focus the mind on holy thoughts or express devotion to God/the deities.

Pilgrimage is not mandatory in Hinduism, though many adherents undertake pilgrimages to several Indian holy cities, including Allahabad, Haridwar, Varanasi and Vrindavan.

EVENTS, HOLIDAYS & RITUALS

MAJOR HOLIDAYS Mahashivarati (mid-February), Holi (Spring), Ramnavami (late March), Dusserah (early November), Diwali (mid-November)

FESTIVALS Hinduism has many festivals throughout the year. The Hindu calendar usually prescribe their dates. The festivals typically celebrate events from Hindu mythology, often coinciding with seasonal changes. There are festivals which are primarily celebrated by specific sects or in certain regions of the Indian subcontinent. Some widely observed Hindu festivals are Maha Shivaratri, Holi, Ram Navami, Krishna Janmastami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Dussera, Durga Puja and Diwali.

RITUALS The vast majority of Hindus engage in religious rituals on a daily basis. Most Hindus observe religious rituals at home but observation of rituals greatly vary among regions, villages, and individuals. Devout Hindus perform daily chores such as worshipping at the dawn after bathing (usually at a family shrine, and typically includes lighting a lamp and offering foodstuffs before the images of deities), recitation from religious scripts, singing devotional hymns, meditation, chanting mantras, reciting scriptures etc.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hinduism is a conglomeration of religious, philosophical and cultural ideas and practices that originated in India, characterized by the belief in reincarnation, one absolute being of multiple manifestations, the law of cause and effect, following the path of righteousness and the desire for liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.

As in every religion, some view their own denomination as superior to others. However, many Hindus consider other denominations to be legitimate alternatives to their own. Heresy is therefore generally not an issue for Hindus.

Most Hindus believe that the spirit or soul of every person is eternal. The cycle of action, reaction, birth, death and rebirth is a continuum called Samsāra. The notion of reincarnation and karma is a strong premise in Hindu thought. The Bhagavad Gita states that: "As a person puts on new clothes and discards old and torn clothes, similarly an embodied soul enters new material bodies, leaving the old bodies."

Prominent themes in Hindu beliefs include (but are not restricted to), Dharma (ethics/duties), Samsāra (the continuing cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth), Karma (action and subsequent reaction), Moksha (liberation from Samsāra) and the various Yogas (paths or practices).

In accordance with ahimsā (the avoidance of violence), many Hindus embrace vegetarianism to respect higher forms of life.

Statement Of Faith

The Community of Hope affirms the faith of the church as expressed in the ecumenically accepted creeds of the church, The Apostles, the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds. It is also expressed in the contemporary affirmation of the Australian Evangelical Alliance - "A Statement of Faith".

We worship the only God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, whose creative, outgoing love overflowed from the divine community to create the universe and who calls us to share in eternal life and love and to participate in the fulfilment of divine purposes.

In grace and humility, Jesus, the only Son of the Father, shared our humanity and became our example of service and sacrifice. Out of love for the world, he suffered the consequences of our sin and died in order to overcome the power of the evil one; to release humanity from alienation from God and from being captive to self-centred sinfulness; and to restore a disordered creation. The power of the Father defeated death and brought new life to Jesus who now reigns as Lord of all and who, through the active presence of the Spirit, calls for repentance, brings the possibility of forgiveness, and gives new life to all those who live in union with him.

Christians live in love by the power of the Holy Spirit, as a single community of God's people. We are filled with the Spirit who transforms lives and characters according to the example of the Lord Jesus. The church is built up by the gifts of ministry and service which the Spirit brings. The life of the church is guided by God through the Scriptures which are uniquely inspired and the final authority for Christian faith and practice.

As a community of those who worship God and live in fellowship, we are called to bring to everyone the good news of salvation which can only be found in a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are committed to work for justice in society and to protect and enhance God's creation. While working for the kingdom in the present, we also look forward to the return of the Lord Jesus, who will bring justice to all and the glorious, perfect kingdom of God.



Help the unchurched to...

Go on a Spiritual Journey



Community of Hope

www.communityofhope.org.au
E: info@communityofhope.org.au



This handbook can assist Christians in understanding what Community of Hope does as well as show them how to use the methods developed by Community of Hope to outreach effectively.

Permission is granted to copy or duplicate this handbook for Christian Outreach purposes only