

# Street Café Manual



Scottish charity SCO 44844

## **Street Café Manual**

**By Paul James-Griffiths © 2022**

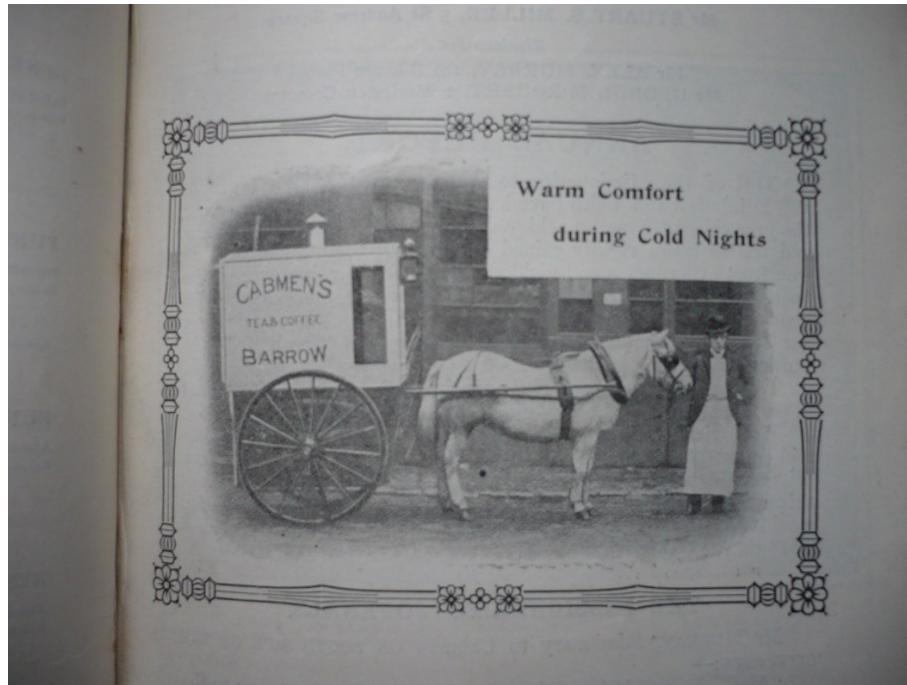
## **CONTENTS**

|                                                                |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Chapter 1: The History.....</b>                             | <b>3-5</b>   |
| <b>Chapter 2: The Biblical Principles of Street Café.....</b>  | <b>6-7</b>   |
| <b>Chapter 3: Setting up a Street Café.....</b>                | <b>8-10</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 4: Building the Bridge Through Questions.....</b>   | <b>11-12</b> |
| <b>Chapter 5: Sharing the Gospel.....</b>                      | <b>13-23</b> |
| <b>Chapter 6: Some Testimonies for Your Encouragement.....</b> | <b>24-26</b> |
| <b>Chapter 7: Follow Up.....</b>                               | <b>27</b>    |
| <b>Appendix: Resources.....</b>                                | <b>28-29</b> |

For further help: [info@christianheritageedinburgh.co.uk](mailto:info@christianheritageedinburgh.co.uk); 07985 070899

## Chapter 1: The History

Solomon once wrote almost 3,000 years ago that *'there is nothing new under the sun'* (Ecclesiastes 1:9, NKJV). Although we began Street Café in 2004, the concept has been around for centuries. When I was asked to put together a history of Edinburgh City Mission, I went through the old black and white photos in their archives, and came across two images of missionaries at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who ran a gospel ministry to the cabmen and general population of Edinburgh.



What a wonderful idea, serving free hot drinks on cold Edinburgh days and nights! Combining love in action with sharing the gospel is a good Christian model.

Well, even before this, during the Edinburgh Enlightenment (1750-1800), a Christian called William Creech opened up a room above his bookshop next to St Giles' so that seekers could come and join him to discuss and debate God, life and the Universe over coffee and cake. This room was a buzz of activity! You don't have far to look in the Bible for the idea of food and the gospel going together. I love the thought of Jesus cooking fish on the fire and inviting his friends to join him to chat over breakfast (John 21:12-19), and the early Christians opening up their homes for meals and God-discussions (Acts 2:46-47).

Yes, there is nothing new under the sun. Christians have been practicing hospitality evangelism for centuries, but when we serve out free hot drinks on the street and share life about Jesus, we prefer to call it Street Café. Think about it: most churches serve free hot drinks after the service these days. Most Christians seem to talk about anything but God on these weekly Sunday occasions, but could you imagine churches taking this out to the public on the busy streets and sharing the good news about Jesus as well? That's Street Café.

We began our first team in 2004, but by 2019, without any plan to do so, over 26 teams in 6 nations sprouted out of the original one. Not only were many thousands of people being reached with the gospel in a caring way, but also hundreds of Christians were being trained up to share the message of Christ. We are now praying and hoping to see a multiplication of Street Café teams, so that multitudes can be reached with the good news.

Maybe you are reading this manual because you are considering this approach as a possible outreach model for your mission church or group. We hope the following chapters will help you understand what we do and how we do it, and help you also to avoid certain pitfalls. We have been learning for some years now, and we are still learning!



## Chapter 2: The Biblical Principles of Street Café

Friendship evangelism is marvellous! We are encouraged to make friends at work, with our neighbours, or college students, or at the gym, or through some hobby, and share the gospel, as opportunities arise. Hopefully we are all doing this, and maybe some of you have seen some wonderful breakthroughs, with even some people you know giving their lives to Christ and being integrated in church. However, this is not the experience of most Christians. Usually, the neighbours seem to be barricaded in their own homes, and a cursory 'Hello!' or handwave and smile, or the occasional general chit-chat, is about the sum of most of our interaction.

People at the gym seem to be in their own world, pumping iron and exercising, often with their earphones plugged in, listening to music. We are not paid to share the gospel in our workplace, so opportunities are limited to lunch breaks and after work, and often people want to be alone then, or rush off home. It is easier for students at college and parents at the school gates, but the general pattern that I have observed seems to be similar to what I have mentioned above. We hear a message from the pulpit on Sunday, about how we need to share the gospel with people, and then feel guilty for not doing so. Going on evangelism courses can be very helpful, as long as we have an outlet for sharing our faith in some way, otherwise we tend to stuff our heads with yet more information, and struggle with the application, leading to frustration, and worse, stagnation and atrophy. In the meantime, the masses of people outside our friendship circles have never heard the gospel. Who will tell them?

There are many other ways we can engage with people, but one way is through Street Café. In this chapter we are going to look at the biblical inspiration and principles behind Street Café outreach.

### When you Run out of People to Invite

Jesus told a parable in Luke 14:15-24 about people being invited to a great supper. The servant went out to ask them to come, but they all made excuses. The master of the banquet then told his servant to *'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.'* The servant did as he was commanded and brought in people from the streets. There was still room at the feast, so the master said, *'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.'* On one hand, Jesus is challenging us to open up our homes to the poor, but on the other hand he is speaking about what is called the wedding supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:6-9), a future event of celebration in heaven for those who have repented of sin and trusted in Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Street Café is all about inviting the multitudes who pass us on the highways, streets and lanes to turn to Christ, to experience for themselves the joy of sins forgiven, peace with God and eternal life. A quick investigation of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles shows that Jesus and his apostles were regularly in the streets and places outside religious buildings (e.g. Luke 5:1-3; Acts 5:12-16) There is an insightful Scripture in

Proverbs 8:1-2, which says: *‘Does not wisdom cry out, and understanding lift up her voice? She takes her stand on top of the high hill, beside the way, where the paths meet, she cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, at the entrance of the doors.’*

Typically, when we spy out the land for a potential new Street Café site, we look for the busy places, at crossroads, near universities and popular shopping streets. Christ, who is called *‘the power of God and the wisdom of God’* (1 Corinthians 1:24), speaks through us to many people in these key locations.

Jesus told his disciples that he would make them *‘fishers of men’* (Matthew 4:19). There is a wonderful Scripture in Ezekiel 47:1-12, which is all about a stream becoming a river from under the threshold of the temple, which is symbolic of the Holy Spirit in a Christian (John 7:38). By this river there *‘will be places for spreading their nets’* where *‘There will be a very great multitude of fish... Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish of the Great Sea, exceedingly many.’* What a joy it is to work with a team of Christians in a busy place where we are in contact with many people! And they are from such varying backgrounds: unsaved churchgoers, Muslims, Jewish people, Hindus, Buddhists, atheists, agnostics, New Age pagans, and so on. A Street Café team in such a place is bursting with potential in both reaching many with the gospel, but also training up Christians in world mission. If we have run out of people in our friendship circles to invite to Jesus, we will find many people out there, *‘where the paths meet’*.

## **Loving the People**

Jesus said: *‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets’* (Matthew 22:37-40). This is the very heart of our faith: loving God with everything, and loving people. There are many ways to do this, but serving free hot drinks and being there for people where they are through Street Café is a simple, but effective way of living this out. Practising hospitality is an act of kindness, and serving people is an act of humility. We see how Jesus provided food for the 5,000, and cooked breakfast for his disciples on the beach. In the early church they regularly ate their food together *‘with gladness and simplicity of heart’* (Acts 2:46). One of the successful ingredients in the Alpha Course is eating together, and then, after the talk, asking questions and discussing the Christian faith over hot drinks. It might not seem much, but serving free hot drinks to people through Street Café, especially on cold days, is modelling Christ’s love.

## **Chapter 3: Setting up a Street Café**

### **You need a Team Leader and a Team**

When Jesus trained up the disciples, he sent them out in pairs to share the good news. Later we see the apostle Paul leading teams to reach the Gentiles. With Street Café we definitely need a team. For a start there is all the stuff to take to the place where we set up; this needs several people. But more than that, we need each other. Typically, we need 3-5 people in a team. Once we have more than 6 people it is time to think about setting up a second team. You will need to have a team leader who is committed to this regular outreach, or a team of leaders who can take it in turns to lead and set up.

Obviously, all of the team need to be dedicated Christians who know and love Christ and are keen to share their faith when they can. This does not necessarily mean the team all have to have been Christians for many years; sometimes we have seen people become Christians through Street Café, and, after some initial grounding in the gospel, they have come out with us. Often, they find it easier to communicate their faith, than people who have been around church for decades. It is wisdom to know the people personally first, so that you know their strengths and weaknesses, but sometimes it is not possible when working with a short- term mission team. In this case, if you know and trust the team leader there is usually no problem.

Besides finding your team, we need to bathe what we are doing in prayer, because we are leaning on God for this kind of work. We always begin and end with prayer. You will also need somewhere to store your equipment.

### **Spying out the Land**

It is important that you find the right place to set up. As explained in the last chapter, we need to locate a spot which is busy. This might be obvious, but one time we had a couple who trained with us in order to be equipped to set up their own Street Café team outside their church. When I asked where the location would be, I was surprised to hear that it was building which few people ever walked past. I gently suggested a busier spot, but the couple was insistent that they wanted to do this because it made sense to be right outside their building so that they could invite people in. After several weeks they gave up because they had very few conversations with anybody.

Over the years we have run regular and seasonal Street Café teams in various locations. In Edinburgh we have set up several tables on a key spot near to a main shopping centre. We have also had teams working outside nightclubs, at pagan and other festivals, near universities, outside a church which had a good footfall of people, and at other key spots.

### **Regulations**

As we work in Scotland, we are used to the council regulations here. In the UK it is much the same, but regulations vary in different countries. In some countries, nobody is

allowed to set up Street Café outreach; in others it is possible, but there is a lot of red tape to negotiate; elsewhere teams can be set up, but Street Café needs to be adapted to the culture and situation. This calls for investigation and commonsense. Our experience is that we are fine to set up Street Café, as long as we follow some key rules:

1. Don't sell without a licence (we give away everything for free).
2. Don't obstruct pedestrians (make sure that you set up in a place where nobody can trip up because of the table, or cause a bottle-neck).
3. Don't serve free hot drinks near cafés because you will be competing with the owners and potentially taking away some of their business, causing discontent.
4. Make sure you have good sanitizing regulations, and have a good hygiene system. We suggest that you do not add food to the hot drinks, otherwise you might hit problems with health and safety. Hot drinks are sufficient. Keep your coffee, tea, sugar and hot chocolate etc in plastic sealed containers away from mice, insects and dust. Always keep your milk containers in a separate bag. If someone puts an opened and leaking milk container in one of the other bags, your team will be horrified a week later with the foul stench! Make sure, when doing hot drinks at the table, that you keep a good hygiene system there too. Don't use the same spoon for tea, coffee, and hot chocolate. Use wooden stirrers for stirring drinks. It's not a good idea to put dirty spoons on the table or table cloth, otherwise you will permanently stain the surface and waste resources. Instead, put dirty spoons in a cup, or clean them straight afterwards with hot water.

### **Equipment for One Team**

For Street Café outreach you will need the following items for a session lasting a few hours for just one team:

1. A solid, six-foot folding table. Despite being as careful as possible, in the rush of activity on the street, the table will get dirty with drink stains, which is off putting. To overcome this, buy a plastic table cloth (darker colour), or cover the table with a stickable cover (darker colour).
2. A strong trolley for transporting the table, if you have to walk quite far.
3. One waterproof bag for putting drinks and cups etc inside. We have coffee, tea, hot chocolate, wooden stirrers (in a sealed container), metal spoons (in a sealed box), sanitisers, paper towels, bin bags, and cups (50-100 cups will be fine for one session). Always make sure everything is regularly topped up!
4. One waterproof bag for putting gospel literature inside. We use Gospels, Why Jesus? booklets, testimony booklets, and some well-chosen gospel tracts.

5. One six-foot long banner clearly advertising Street Café (2 or 3 feet wide). Our banners have white and yellow text on a navy-blue background so that the words stand out, especially when it is dark. Our text says the following:

Street Café – FREE HOT DRINKS – Building Community.

We can send you an email attachment with the template banner, free of charge, if you wish, but you would need to pay for your own printing. To attach the banner to the front of the table use reliable Velcro (on the table and on the banner).

6. Two 5-litre strong metal flasks with hot water.

7. Two separate litres of milk (in case one gets spilt, you still have another).

8. A literature box: In case it rains mildly, you can still continue serving hot drinks, but the literature needs to be covered. We suggest you use a large, shallow plastic box with a lid for this purpose. People can still see the literature, but it's kept dry.

## Chapter 4: Building the Bridge through Questions

So, you have set up your Street Café team in a key, busy location, you have a team, and have all the equipment ready, and are following local regulations. So, what's next? At first you will be inexperienced or rusty, and will take a while to get into the way it works. This is normal. Don't all stand in a line behind the table because this can be intimidating, but instead, break up the line and have two standing behind the table to serve drinks and the other two or three on the other side of the table, but not blocking the Street Café sign. Call out 'Free hot drinks!', as not all people see the sign. Eventually people will stop and come over for a hot drink. Make sure you make a nice hot drink! (for example, to make a good frothy hot chocolate, put a tablespoon of powder into the cup, add a little bit of milk, stir with a wooden stirrer until you make a paste, then put the hot water in).

When engineers build bridges, they first construct the two opposite end parts on land, before building the bridge between those two points. Our team serving hot drinks is one point, and the guest coming to the table is the other point. Sometimes the guest will ask why you are serving free hot drinks. That's a great start to building a bridge of communication. You could say something like, 'We're Christians and Jesus said that we should love God and love our neighbour, so we are trying to put this into practice by showing kindness to people. We think it's good for the church to be available for people, so that they can receive prayer or help.' Our experience is that people tend to be really appreciative, and that this simple act of kindness can open the door to a fruitful discussion about the gospel. However, in most cases we will have to take the initiative to build a discussion through questions.

The first step in building the bridge in communication is to ask the guests about themselves. If they are students, what are they studying? Are they tourists? Are they on holidays? Where have they come from? Are they local shoppers? How has their day been? When people start drinking hot drinks, unless they are in a rush, they tend to socialize. This approach tends to open the guests up to talking about themselves, which most people like to do. This is an important stage of bridge-building because we are taking time to value people as individuals by showing an interest in them. There is no rush to get to the gospel abruptly, otherwise people will think we are serving hot drinks as a catch, in order to preach our belief to them. People need to relax with us first and develop the beginning of discussion without high-pressurising techniques.

As the guests share about something that is important to them, we can be praying in our hearts, whilst listening to them, and asking the Lord how to transition to something more spiritual by using their own interest as a point of common interest. We see this with Jesus himself in John 4:5-26. In this case Jesus was thirsty and he asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water from the deep well. This natural request was followed by Jesus talking about 'living water'. In turn, the discussion went on to 'a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life'. Next, this developed into a discussion about sin and

the true worship that God requires, with Jesus then revealing himself as the promised Messiah.

There have been many wonderful discussions about the gospel during Street Café outreach, which have emerged out of the guest's own interest. For example, two weeks ago I discovered that the young man I was serving was a fourth-year history student at university. I asked him what had challenged him most in his course. He told me about the growing revelation amongst scholars that the medieval 'Dark Ages' is a myth; instead, they are discovering that the church drove scientific development in this period. This led to discussing a Christian worldview, which in turn led to me naturally introducing the gospel to an agnostic who was starting to seek as a result of his studies. He was so grateful and readily took Christian booklets to read.

On another recent occasion I used a discussion about a person's large and beautiful jade stone in his necklace, to introduce Jesus' parable of the 'pearl of great price' (Matthew 13:45-46). This grew into a discussion about the meaning of this parable and the gospel of Christ. The result was that the young man opened up about his desire to know God. Over the years we have started gospel discussions from science, the weather, Covid, Black Lives Matter, Cop26 and Climate Change, history of art, geography, IT and computer science, historical places in Edinburgh, pet dogs, music, fashion, the latest film... The list goes on. We need to be creative, but we also grow in this as we practice it!

### **Use the Literature**

Very often we will use the literature on the table as a starting-point for discussion. For example, as you are pouring out the hot drink for your guests you might point out the booklets and explain briefly what they are, and that they have all been written from a Christian perspective. Ask the guest to choose one as a gift. Many people will do so. The person will choose a particular booklet, which is fascinating. Often, we will say something like, 'That's interesting! Why did you choose that one?' Invariably it is because something has piqued an interest somewhere in the person.

For example, a Muslim may choose our testimony booklet called *Pilgrimage*, which contains five testimonies of Muslims who have turned to Christ. We have had students studying witchcraft in their anthropology courses choosing our booklet called *Witches and Wizards*, about five witches who have become Christians. Over the years we have had thousands of discussions about the gospel which were triggered off by someone choosing a booklet. Often, they will do so without being asked. After a discussion we always offer our guests a copy of *Why Jesus?* Or *Love is the Bridge*, which is a Gospel of John. These are pocket evangelists which, over the years, have seen many turn to Christ.

## **Chapter 5: Sharing the Gospel**

### **Your Testimony**

If you have developed a discussion about spiritual things, how do you bring the conversation to the vital topic of eternal salvation? We find that we can do that very naturally by sharing our testimonies of how we came to know Jesus Christ. If you are unused to doing this, perhaps it would be a good idea to write it out, then read it to a friend first. You could practice sharing your testimony with your friend, whether Christian or not. Try to practice sharing your testimony without using religious words and phrases like 'I got saved', 'I was born again', or 'I asked Jesus into my heart'. Imagine the person you are talking to has no knowledge at all of the Christian faith. Such a person would be bewildered at the 'language of Zion' and would need to understand what you are saying in words that make sense to the unchurched. Try to keep it short and simple.

### **The Biblical Gospel**

Over the last 50 years or more the traditional, biblical gospel, has become seriously diluted, thus losing its power to transform people. Sometimes we come across Christians trying to get somebody to 'say a prayer of salvation' after hearing a couple of Bible verses being read out in two minutes. Occasionally the person's heart might be well prepared for this before repeating the 'sinner's prayer', in which case what happens is the last link in the chain of an ongoing work, often over years, leads to the person really being converted to Christ there and then. However, in our experience of forty years of reaching many thousands of individuals with the gospel, most people need space and time to work this radical decision out first.

High-pressurised modern methods might initially appear to be really successful at first, but when the dust settles and a sober analysis is taken, we discover that most of those who 'said the prayer' cannot be found. Sometimes they have even 'prayed the prayer' to get rid of the Christian, and then give a false mobile number. We have even come across some people who have 'said the prayer', at least a dozen times, but were not the slightest bit interested in turning from sin and following Jesus. Instead, they wanted a Sugar Daddy in the sky who would wave a magic wand so that all their problems would go away, to leave them to carry on life as they wanted. Others think they have received a ticket to heaven by just saying a prayer, with no genuine faith and repentance.

Our approach is more of a marathon than a quick sprint. We regard people as valued and precious individuals, not as numbers to be scalped by a gospel machine. We look at the biblical picture of agriculture as a model for mission (Isaiah 28:23-29). The hard-working farmer first prepares the ground by ploughing it, then sows the seed, waters it, allows the crop to grow, then finally reaps and stores it. Some Christians think that the fields are always 'white to harvest' (John 4:35) everywhere, all the time, and all we have to do is ask people to say the sinner's prayer and we will see a great reaping. Let us look at this agricultural process more carefully.

## a) Ploughing

*'He who ploughs should plough in hope'* (1 Corinthians 9:10).

*'Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, till He comes and rains righteousness on you'* (Hosea 10:12).

Often, during a spiritual conversation, we sense it is the right time to drop a question like, 'If you died, do you think you would go to heaven?' This is really important because it enables both the Christian and guest to engage with the vital issue of eternal salvation. Our experience is that about 90% of people say that they hope to get to heaven, if there is one, because they are good people. We often pose this question to people brought up in churches too. You would be amazed how revealing this is. This question shows whether a person has built his life on Christ and his word, or on his own self-righteousness. I once asked a Methodist pastor this question and he reacted with anger and stormed off. About an hour later he came back to apologize for his behaviour, and admitted that he did not know Christ as Saviour and Lord. We ended up having a brilliant discussion about the gospel. On another occasion I popped the same question to a man training up to become a Church of England minister. He was so embarrassed because he did not know. He later told me that he asked the same question to 12 ordinands at Bible college and none of them knew how to get saved.

Any good doctor would tell you that first you must diagnose the illness, then offer the cure. It's the same when sharing the gospel, which cures souls. First, we must help the guest to realise that there is a problem called sin, before we offer the good news of Jesus. Of course, there are some people who are already deeply concerned with their sin and realise that they have a problem. Such people need to hear about God's saving grace. But in our experience, they are rare.

Our first step in dealing with all people is the realisation that only Jesus can save people, so we are dependent on him alone for this miracle. Secondly, we need to bathe our outreach in prayer. Hosea calls this breaking up 'the fallow ground' (Hosea 10:12), ploughing, or preparing the ground for sowing the gospel. However, the Bible also speaks about preparing the heart for the gospel through the Law of God, or Ten Commandments. We cannot sow the grace of God on a hard, sin-baked heart that is full of self-righteousness. The hard heart has to be broken up by the Law of God, so that the sinner knows he is really sinful. People need to come to Christ, not to have a Sugar Daddy who gives them what they want without any problems, but to be saved from the power of sin, the world, the devil and hell.

When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, they covered up their sin and guilt behind fig leaves and trees (Genesis 3:7-8). Ever since then, humans have tried everything to cover up their sin. Some people hide behind intellectual arguments; others behind self-righteous deeds, or religion. The purpose of God's Law, his Ten Commandments, is to act as a mirror to show a person the true state of his soul. Rather than being squeaky

clean and pure, the Law shows *'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked'* (Jeremiah 17:9). Let's look at some Scriptures:

*'Now we know that whatever the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin.'* (Romans 3:19-20)

*'I would not have known sin except through the Law.'* (Romans 7:7)

*'Therefore, the Law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.'* (Galatians 3:24)

If a person is already humble and knows he is a sinner, he needs grace; but if he is a proud, arrogant, self-righteous person, he needs the Law to humble him to prepare him for grace. The Bible puts it this way: *'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble'* (James 4:6). The Law acts as a teacher to show the person that he is a sinner who cannot possibly save himself; this then prepares him for salvation through Christ alone.

The Law of God reveals the following truths about human nature:

*'There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, yet is not washed from its filthiness'* (Proverbs 30:12).

*'Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"'* (Proverbs 20:9).

*'For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin'* (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

*'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'* (Romans 3:23).

### **The Law, Reformers and Revivalists**

God has moved in extraordinary ways through the history of the church, bringing multitudes of people to a genuine life in Christ. During the Reformation and every biblical revival, certain ingredients are rediscovered. One of these is the purpose of God's Law to drive people to Christ to be saved, because through it they become deeply convicted of their sin. Here are some quotes from some of these famous preachers:

*'A gospel which merely says, 'Come to Jesus,' and offers Him as a friend, and offers a marvellous new life, without convincing of sin, is not New Testament evangelism...True evangelism...must always start by preaching the Law.'* (Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones)

*'It is a great mistake to give a man who has not been convicted of sin certain passages that were never meant for him. The Law is what he needs...Do not offer the consolation of the Gospel until he sees and knows he is guilty before God. We must give enough of the Law to take away all self-righteousness. I pity the man who preaches only one side*

*of the truth – always the Gospel, and never the Law.’ (D.L. Moody, Edinburgh 19<sup>th</sup> century revival)*

*‘It was he [the Law] who drove us to the cross.’ (John Bunyan, Pilgrim’s Progress)*

*‘The first duty of the Gospel preacher is to declare God’s Law and show the nature of sin...In its true and proper work and purpose it [the Law] humbles a man and prepares him – if he uses the Law correctly – to yearn and seek for grace.’ (Martin Luther; John Knox said similar things)*

*‘The very first end of the Law [is] namely, convicting men of sin; awakening those who are still asleep on the brink of hell...The ordinary method of God is to convict sinners by the Law, and that only.’ (John Wesley, Edinburgh revival, 18<sup>th</sup> century)*

*‘You must preach the Law, for the Gospel is a silken thread, and you cannot get it into the hearts of men unless you have made a way for it with a sharp needle; the sharp needle of the Law will pull the silken thread of the Gospel after it.’ (Robbie Flockhart, Edinburgh street-preacher, 19<sup>th</sup> century revival)*

*‘Lower the Law and you dim the light by which man perceives his guilt; this is a very serious loss to the sinner rather than a gain; for it lessens the likelihood of his conviction and conversion. I say you have deprived the Gospel of its ablest auxiliary [its most powerful weapon] when you have laid aside the Law. You have taken away from it the schoolmaster that is to bring men to Christ...They will never accept grace till they tremble before a just and holy Law. Therefore, the Law serves the most necessary purpose, and it must not be removed from its place.’ (Charles Spurgeon)*

When sharing God’s Law with people I usually turn the mirror on myself first in humility, so that I do not come across as the person’s judge. I go through the Law myself and show the person where I have broken the Law and I’m revealed as a guilty sinner. Then I go through the Law with the person. In the struggle to own up to sin a person might squirm and wriggle because it is uncomfortable, but we cannot brush this aside. Once a person truly sees himself as God sees him, he has nowhere to hide, except in Christ. However, some will reject his good news, because they prefer darkness, and some will accept it, because they love truth and light (John 3:19-21). Martin Luther, the famous German reformer hits the nail on the head:

*‘The fatuous idea that a person can be holy by himself denies God the pleasure of saving sinners. God must therefore first take the sledge-hammer of the Law in His fists and smash the beast of self-righteousness and its brood of self-confidence, self-wisdom, and self-help. When the conscience has been thoroughly frightened by the Law it welcomes the Gospel of grace with its message of a Saviour who came into the world, not to break the bruised reed, nor to quench the smoking flax, but to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, and to grant forgiveness of sins to all the captives.’*

(Luther’s Commentary on Galatians 3:10-19)

## **b) Sowing**

*‘And He said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”’ (Mark 4:26-29)*

*‘As you do not know what is the way of the wind,  
Or how the bones grow in the womb of her who is with child,  
So you do not know the works of God who makes everything.  
In the morning sow your seed,  
And in the evening do not withhold your hand;  
For you do not know which will prosper,  
Either this or that,  
Or whether both alike will be good.’ (Ecclesiastes 11:5-6)*

I sometimes refer to our age as being the ‘three-click generation’. People today want instant results. If they cannot get what they want on their computers in three clicks of the button, often they get frustrated and give up. Evangelism is not like this. Anybody wanting to share the gospel with others will have to accept that this kind of thinking is out of sync with normal mission experience. We are in for the marathon, not the quick sprint. Usually, the ground in the person’s heart has to be prepared, and then the gospel sown. Mark follows the agricultural analogy above in his Gospel: it’s a process from sowing and growing to reaping a harvest.

One of the great and beautiful mysteries I have discovered is how a baby is conceived, develops in the womb, and is born. Jesus likens conversion to being ‘born again’ in John 3:3-8, and perhaps he had his thoughts on the above Scripture in Ecclesiastes 11:5-6. As a team we have reached thousands of individuals with the gospel over many years. It is wonderful to be like a spiritual midwife assisting at the new birth of a genuine conversion to Christ, but we should be just as happy to plough with the Law to prepare the heart, and then to sow the gospel. Jesus makes this clear when he says, *‘One sows and another reaps.’* He understands how some people might get impatient and frustrated because of the process, but he also gives us a really encouraging statement: *‘And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.’* (John 4:36-37). Do you see that this is TEAMWORK? The kingdom of God does not have celebrity superstars, even if some churches promote them. We are in this together. If we can plough and sow, praise the Lord! If we can reap, also praise the Lord! All parts of the process are vital. It is God who gives the growth in his mission field (1 Corinthians 3:7).

## **Sharing the Gospel of Grace**

If a person’s heart has been prepared by the Law, so that the conscience is awakened, then it is time to share the gospel. A person who is alerted to a terminal medical

condition is usually determined to find the cure. This is where grace comes in. Sin is the root cause of the problem; the gospel is the cure.

We read of Peter's first sermon on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out. The crowds were '*cut to the heart*' and were desperate to find salvation in Jesus as Messiah (Acts 2:37-41), and so 3,000 were converted and added to the church in a single day. Such movements have happened in church history, and still do so, but with Street Café we are in the process of reaching one person at a time, and trying to give them quality time to work through the gospel and weigh up the cost of following Jesus. We are not into quick fixes.

Let me now go through the gospel with you. If the person with whom you are discussing spiritual things accepts that God made the world and that the person is a sinner, separated from God, it's time to focus on restoring that relationship with God. The gospel is like a coin with two sides: repentance and faith.

## **Repentance**

Jesus said, '*Repent, and believe in the gospel*' (Mark 1:15)

The Greek word for repentance is *metanoia*, which means change, not just feeling sorry, or regret. It means to do a U-turn and change the direction of travel. The Hebrew word *teshuvah* is, however, even more radical: it means to return. It is an attitude of the heart that is determined to follow through on a decision to obey God and his purity, rather than man. It is radical and revolutionary. Just as with a magnet when the same poles are facing each other, there is an invisible resistance, if you turn one of them to the opposite pole the magnets are drawn irresistibly to each other. God remains pure and faithful, it is us who need to turn completely around and return to him, submitting to his ways of how to live our lives, and then his power will flow in us. Sadly, many Christians neglect to cover this ground when sharing the gospel, because they are so focused on trying to get the person to say the sinner's prayer. But if we get the sinner to 'say the prayer' before there is any understanding of repentance, we make a serious mistake and could be in the danger of making false converts, or as the Bible puts it, we have produced stillborn babies, or '*brought forth wind*' (Isaiah 26:18).

Jesus, knowing the hearts of people, and how they love miracles, but often without repentance, declared to the crowd following him: '*If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*' (Luke 9:23) For the crowd following, crucifixion was a serious matter. Many of them had witnessed the slow, cruel deaths of victims by the Roman crucifixion. Jesus is saying that if we are serious in the desire to follow him, then we must be prepared to suffer rejection, ridicule, mockery, and even death for his sake. This is a tough call. We dare not water it down. According to Open Doors, over 350 million Christians worldwide are suffering persecution, and it's rapidly becoming a global problem. We need to be honest with people; there is a cost.

## Faith

If we turn from our sin and self-righteousness, casting them aside as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6), we need to turn to Christ and put our trust in him for our eternal salvation. How does this work? We are told how to activate faith in Romans 10:9-10:

*'That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'*

If we have established that no form of self-righteous deeds can make us right with God, then we need to humble ourselves to receive God's righteousness. God's forgiveness, eternal life in heaven, and the power of God's Holy Spirit to help us, are all wrapped up in God's gift of Christ. The Bible calls this grace:

*'For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them'* (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Notice that our good works do not save us (from hell, the power of sin, the world system and the devil's power), but Christ alone, who is called the Saviour. The good works we do as a Christian are an expression of our love for God, not to try and earn a place in heaven. Let's look at a few more Scriptures to reinforce this understanding, because it is of vital importance:

*'But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the **Holy Spirit**, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that being **justified by his grace** we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to **good works**. These things are excellent and profitable for people'* (Titus 3:4-8, ESV, emphasis mine).

*'And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work'* (Romans 11:6, KJV).

To enter heaven, which is totally free of any sin and is pure, we need God's righteousness, without which it would be impossible. Jesus Christ is called '*The Lord our righteousness*' (Jeremiah 23:6), so by letting go of self-rule and self-righteousness and trusting in Christ alone to save us, we receive his righteousness by the Holy Spirit.

At the cross Jesus Christ died to bear the punishment of our guilt and sin. Sin must be punished if God is a righteous judge. The problem is that everyone is a sinner, and the Bible says, *'For the wages of sin is death...'* (Romans 6:23). Not only do people physically die, but they are spiritually dead. Either we pay for our sins, which will be for eternity in hell, or God pays for our sins, because only he can do so. The Scripture above in Romans 6:23 continues: *'... but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.'* This is why when we trust in Christ as our Lord and Saviour we are justified by him, or as the Bible says, *'we are justified by His blood'* (Romans 5:9). This is why Jesus Christ had to be fully God and fully man.

## The Resurrection

Often Christians don't mention this in sharing the gospel, but stop at the cross. This is an incomplete gospel message. The Bible says:

*'If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. **And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.** More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. **And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.** Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied'* (1 Corinthians 15:13-19, emphasis mine).

You see, if Christ only died on the cross, then he would not have conquered death for us, with the result that he would not be able to share his eternal life with us. But Christ did not just die and rise again, he also ascended back to heaven (Acts 2:33), so that he could rule from there and send his Holy Spirit into our lives.

*'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life'* (John 3:16).

## c) Watering

*'I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase'* (1 Corinthians 3:6).

One of the joys we have in Street Café is coming across somebody who has a Christian friend who has been a good example and has already shared the gospel with this person. We simply cover the same ground, watering what has been sown. In some countries where Christians are very active in sharing their faith this is more normal; sadly, in our culture it is very rare.

## d) Reaping

*'Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe'* (Revelation 14:15).

Christ reaps through us frail and weak humans. What an amazing and beautiful thing! Some of us get to experience the joy of seeing somebody who is ready to come to

Christ do so. How can we know when a person is ready to give his life to Christ? If we follow the agricultural analogy, the farmer checks his ripening crops to see whether it is time to reap. For example, with fruit on the tree, you don't have to wrestle and force the fruit off, otherwise it will be sour. When the fruit is ready to be harvested it is ready to drop off the branches! In the same way a person who is ripening in his faith will show signs of this, such as:

- Awareness of sin
- Hunger to read the Bible
- Lots of questions about God and the Bible
- Wrestling with the cost of surrendering to Christ.

When we see these symptoms, we know that reaping is usually close by. It is time to challenge the person to receive Christ. Although the 'sinner's prayer' is not found in the Bible, it is based around biblical principles and many come to Christ in this way. By saying this prayer with repentant and believing hearts they activate saving faith in Christ and are converted, or 'born again'. However, this method seems to have been only around since last century.

What did people do in the previous centuries? They were encouraged to go on their knees and pour out their hearts to God in their own words, confessing and forsaking sin, and confessing to God that they now believed that Jesus died on the cross and rose again to save them, and from now onwards they wanted to submit to Christ as Lord. We have found that when a person is ready to be reaped, the heart-felt cry and sincere prayer just pours out of them. Also, in the early church the new believers were baptized in water as a sign, or seal, of their repentance from sin and self-righteousness, to faith and a new life in Christ.

### **e) Keeping**

*'Feed My lambs'* (John 21:15)

After a person has given his life to Christ, he should be encouraged and strengthened in his new faith, because the enemy of souls will attack the new Christian, causing doubts. God's family needs to nurture the new Christians, showing them how to pray and read their Bibles and walk with God. Most churches have new believers' courses, Bible study groups, and so on. Helping the new believer to become part of a house group is also vital as forming Christian friendships is vital in developing the person's growth. It is also important to encourage the new believer to share his faith. Often the new believer is the one who challenges the old believers to do this!

### **Miracles at Street Café**

The longer I continue as an evangelist, the more I'm stunned at how God works in the life of each person to bring sinners to salvation. Each new birth is a miracle of God,

which is why Jesus said, '*No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him*' (John 6:44). When we go out to reach people with the gospel, he promised he would be with us. He does the miracle of converting people, and we get to assist in the process. What an honour and privilege!

When Jesus sent out his disciples, he told them: '*Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons*' (Matthew 10:8). First, he sent out the 12 apostles to do this, then the 70, then the church, as we repeatedly see in Acts of the Apostles. We have not seen such dramatic miracles yet when we have been out doing Street Café, but we believe very much in praying for people. We ask people, after we have been in a discussion, or just before they are about to leave, whether they would like prayer for anything. Some people are happy to be prayed for about finding a job, dealing with difficult neighbours, and health issues. Sometimes they come back to tell us our prayers were answered, which then propels some of them on their journey to Christ.

One day a woman in her 50s came up to the table. We shared the gospel with her, but she was indifferent. We asked whether she would like prayer about anything. Straightaway she requested prayer for a 'terrible pain' in her body. Despite being on pain killers, she was suffering badly. We prayed and asked her whether she felt better. Disappointed, she left and walked home. The next week she came looking for us to tell us what had happened the previous week. She told us that she was halfway home when suddenly a power came on her and the pain instantly left her. She had not had any pain since. Although we never saw her give her life to Christ, it shook her out of her indifference to become more open to God.

We had reached a lot of people at the Samhuinn pagan festival in Edinburgh opposite St Giles' Cathedral. One of our team was struggling with trying to convince a committed atheist about God, but was getting nowhere, because he seemed to have answers for everything. In desperation she asked him whether she could pray for him. He said that she was wasting her time, but he did not mind. She put her hand on his shoulder and prayed, but he said nothing had happened. Some days later he contacted our team member to say that he had lied and was struggling in his conscience about it. As soon as she prayed for him, he told us later, that a power went surging through his body. He changed from being a smug atheist to becoming a seeker. I know of two other hardcore atheists where this has happened. I spoke to both of them outside the university; both were now on a journey to find God and were reading the Bible. It's not a technique though; as humans we want to take something like this and bottle it. God is not an idol; he is our Sovereign King.

I'll never forget sharing the gospel for over an hour with a Chinese woman student doing a Master's degree. She really wanted to understand how to become a Christian, so I shared the gospel from several different angles, but I was not breaking through. I asked her whether I could pray for her. She was happy about that, so I poured out my heart to God. After I had finished, I looked up to see tears streaming down her face. 'Are you alright?' I asked. 'Yes,' she replied. 'Your words were making some sense to me, but it

was only after you prayed that I felt God. Something has happened. Before I theoretically believed in God, but now I know he is real.' We went through the gospel all over again and she gave her life to Christ.

Over the years we have seen these kinds of things happen. We are not looking for anything sensational, but we love God and seek to love the people we meet. If, for any reason, God does a miracle, then it is for his purposes. We can so easily forget to ask people if we can pray for them. Showing this kindness to people and bringing them straight to God in prayer is very special.

## **Chapter 6: Some Testimonies for Your Encouragement**

Over the course of decades sharing the gospel with thousands of individuals, we have been delighted to have been used by God to plough, sow, sometimes water, and occasionally reap. In this chapter, I would like to encourage you with some real people who have become Christians, to show you how what I've discussed in the previous chapters actually works. The testimonies below are just a few of many. We believe that this is just the tip of the iceberg of what God is doing through Street Café.

### **Ali \***

Ali was one of those party-animals and one of the in-crowd at Edinburgh University. Often, he would be the last person on the dance floor in the early hours. I used to see him with the others, smoking outside the library. As the weeks passed, I found myself praying for him and his friends. One day, he came over to Street Café for a coffee. We chatted about general things first – his course, and so on. He asked what we were doing so I told him we were Christians just showing some kindness to people because Jesus said we should love him by loving others. This led to a discussion about the Christian faith, but he had problems with Christ being the only Saviour, preferring a more multi-faith approach. I worked through with him why only Christ could save us. This included the Law, sin, judgment, and the full gospel. He was not convinced and got ready to leave. I offered him a copy of Why Jesus? which at first he refused. But when I said 'I think God will speak to you through this,' he took it and disappeared.

Two weeks later he contacted me (I wrote my name and phone number inside). He said that he had accepted Christ. We met up and his story began to unravel. After our initial gospel discussion, he went back home. Few people realised that Ali had a struggle with depression when he was on his own. He would try to drown this in the party life at university. One day he had an appointment with a counsellor, and while he was in the waiting room, he rummaged around in his bag where he found the Why Jesus? booklet I had given him two weeks before. He sat there and read it through. After his counselling session he returned to his flat and read it again. Realising his need of Christ, he prayed to receive him, confessing his sin. He was amazed to discover a new peace which he had never had before and was keen to tell me all about it.

Over the weeks Ali worked through issues with some Christians, rejecting his multi-religious view, and forsaking sin. As he became established in Christ, he was out sharing his faith, and others turned to Jesus. Later his work took him to China and Kazakhstan where he shared his faith with many.

### **Sarah \***

Over the course of about five weeks an Indian student called Sarah doing her Master's degree, came for hot drinks, which led to discussions about the gospel. Every time she came, she would choose one of our booklets to take away and read. The following week we would discuss the contents, and then she would choose another booklet. By the end

she had read all ten of our booklets. Her questions were becoming more and more about moral issues, and she was weighing up the cost of giving her life to Christ. Finally, she did this, and was discipled. She returned to India where she now lives with a Christian husband, serving the Lord and helping the plight of the poor there.

### **Jacob\***

On the first day of opening up our Christian Heritage Centre in Edinburgh, a tall young man came in to ask whether he could set up a table outside the church railings with a Christian team, so that they could pray with people and share Jesus. I checked to make sure that they were biblical Christians, then went out to pray with them before they started. Before I went back into the centre, I casually asked why they had chosen that spot to set up an outreach table. Jacob, the team leader, told me what had happened the previous summer. He had chained up his bicycle on a railing, just opposite a table with people serving free hot drinks.

Jacob told me that he pretended to be on his mobile phone, but he was actually eavesdropping on a gospel conversation from one of our team on a Street Café outreach. He said he had grown up as a Roman Catholic and had always believed in God, but could never find him. As he heard the gospel being explained, he realised that he had stumbled on the answer. He asked to take a copy of the Why Jesus? booklet, then promptly disappeared to go and read it. He gave his life to Christ, found an evangelical church, and now here he was, leading a team of Christian students to reach the lost. I would not have known his story, unless I had asked him that question.

The three mentioned above were all different: Ali came to Christ within a few weeks, having heard the gospel being explained, and then reinforced through reading his copy of Why Jesus? Sarah took longer, several months altogether. In her case the booklets were a key part of her salvation encounter, as well as the gospel discussions at the table. With Jacob, his heart was well-prepared. Having grown up in the Roman Catholic Church, he was deeply conscious of his sin and guilt, but just did not know how to find Christ because nobody had shown him. His eavesdropping on a gospel conversation at the table and the reading of the Why Jesus? booklet came together, leading to a fast conversion.

So much of our work is ploughing and sowing, so we do not usually see the results straightaway, although we have seen a few people who had been prepared well before they met us, come to Christ at the end of our first gospel discussion. For the huge bulk of the people with whom we share the gospel, it is the very first time that they have heard this. The seed needs time to grow. From time to time we hear of new Christians popping up in different churches and their testimonies go something like this: 'I met some Christians serving free hot drinks in Edinburgh. I was an atheist/agnostic and discussed God with them for hours. I took away a booklet and read it. I found myself often thinking about God, then I met a Christian at work/on my university course who

invited me to go to church. I went on an Alpha Course/Christianity Explored Course and gave my life to Christ.'

\*For security reasons all real names have been changed.

## Chapter 7: Follow Up

Jesus said, '*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations*' (Matthew 28:19, NKJV). He did not say that we should go and get people to make decisions, or professions of faith, or even to be converted, because conversion is his miracle, not ours. He said we should make disciples. If someone has made a commitment to Jesus, it would be unloving just to leave that person alone, like a neglected newborn baby.

If a person has trusted in Christ as Lord and Saviour, there should be obvious signs that this person wants to be a disciple, or learner, such as:

- A growing love for Christ
- A growing distaste for sin and thirst for righteousness
- A growing hunger for the Bible
- A growing desire to be with other Christians as part of a church
- A desire to share this amazing gospel with others and serve God.

If such signs are absent, then the person would seem to have gone through the motions without any real substance, because when a person is born again, he becomes a 'new creation', which is demonstrated by a new lifestyle. The Bible says: '*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new*' (2 Corinthians 5:17, NKJV).

If there is a genuine hunger in the person who has either made a commitment to Christ, or who is showing real interest, then there will be a gushing up of questions, because it is like unblocking a well of water. It is important to try and address these questions, but wisdom is needed. Jesus sent out his disciples to reach people, two by two for a good reason (Luke 10:1), both to encourage each other, pray in agreement (Matthew 18:19), and as a safeguard against possible temptation (Matthew 10:16).

Meeting up regularly with the new Christian or serious seeker in a neutral space like a café is ideal during the initial stages, but it is good to be able to draw the person into a small group in your church as soon as possible. The house group is God's idea and it should be a place of encouragement and discipleship (Acts 2:46-47).

There are many good courses which can be used in the follow-up process for a few people, such as Path of Disciples, or POD ([pathofdisciples.org](http://pathofdisciples.org)), or for bigger groups, such as Alpha, and Christianity Explored. Often churches use their own materials.

## Appendix: Resources

When we set up a Street Café table, we always have literature resources available. I know firsthand the value of giving Christian literature to people. Yes, some of it might not be read; some might even be taken, just to be polite, and then binned. However, I know of dozens of people who have been converted to Christ through being given gospel literature. Some of these people are now missionaries, church planters, pastors and elders. For many others it is an important link in their journey to Christ.

Years ago, I put together a series of booklets, which contain testimonies of people who have become Christians from other religions. These booklets have been very effective by God's grace. They can be bought from Ritchie Christian Media, under the category of Outreach and Testimony Booklets, at £2.99 each: [ritchiechristianmedia.co.uk](http://ritchiechristianmedia.co.uk)

Here is the list, so far.

*Dawn of the New Age* (for New Agers)

*Pilgrimage* (for Muslims)

*Messiah* (for Jewish people)

*Angels of Light* (for Spiritualists)

*Witches and Wizards* (for Witches/Pagans)

*Light Seekers* (for Hindus)

*Evolution Crisis* (for Atheists).

Every year thousands of people take what we call our staple diet booklets:

*Love is the Bridge* (Gospel of John, which also contains the bridge illustration of explaining salvation). This can be ordered at Pocket Testament League: [www.ptluk.org](http://www.ptluk.org)

*Why Jesus?* by Nicky Gumbel, from the Alpha Course: [www.eden.co.uk](http://www.eden.co.uk)

We have designed some of our own tracts, which you are welcome to look at, and if you would like to see them, please contact us to see copies. If you like to use them for outreach, you are welcome to print your own copies:

[info@christianheritageedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:info@christianheritageedinburgh.org.uk)

The main ones we use so far, are:

*Love is...* (this is almost 100% Scripture, and takes the reader from the biblical description of love to 'God is love', and then through the gospel).

*Evidence for God* (this is for people who are looking for rational evidence).

*Are you going to heaven?* (This is almost 100% from Scripture, and we have this in 7 languages).

### **Websites for Apologetics**

We see great value in doing what the Bible says, concerning reasoning with people about our faith (apologetics), because it is rational and anchored in reality and truth. Paul especially did this, and God himself says '*Come now, and let us reason together...*' (Isaiah 1:18). Scripture says: '*But sanctify [set apart] the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear, having a good conscience...*' (1 Peter 3:15). We are called by God to love him with everything, including our minds (Matthew 22:37-40).

Having said that, we also understand that we cannot convert people to Christ through being better debaters, or being more intelligent. Apologetics address the mind of a person, which needs solid answers, but a person can be convinced by all the evidence, and still not become a Christian. The power of the gospel is in the message of the cross, which appeals to people's consciences (1 Corinthians 1:17-25), so that anybody can share it with any culture, without having to be an expert.

Here are some useful Christian websites for apologetics:

### **For General Apologetics**

**Bethinking.org** (This is a very useful website which covers a lot of subjects. However, it does have more of a bias towards Theistic Macro-evolution, which many Christians do not accept. This is the belief that God made life, and then it evolved through a process from bacteria to humans over billions of years).

### **For answering Muslims**

: Jay Smith | The Forum of Christian Leaders online  
<https://foclonline.org> › users › jay-smith-0

### **Creation/Evolution**

Truth in Science: <https://truthinscience.uk/>

The Institute for Creation Research: <https://www.icr.org/>

Creation Ministries International: <https://creation.com/>

### **Recommended Books on Evangelism**

Spurgeon, C.H., *The Soul Winner*, Christian Focus Publications, 1992.

Cahill, M., *One Thing You Can't Do In Heaven*, Biblical Discipleship Publishers, 2002.

Comfort, R., *Revival's Golden Key*, Bridge-Logos Publishers, 2002.