

Gospel Conversations — Week 5: Hard Topics, Good News

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- What are the elements of coming to faith? God-shaped hole; crisis; longing; the message of the truth; loving witness/relationship; regeneration; time
- Both/and: Propositions *and* narratives; Truth *and* love; Meeting physical *and* spiritual needs; Conversion *and* ongoing discipleship
- We've seen so far:
 - Ruth; Naaman the Aramean
 - Jesus and the Jewish People (Jn 8:31–59)
 - Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26–40)
 - Peter, Stephen and Paul speak to Jewish audiences (Acts 2; 7; 13)
 - Paul in Synagogues
 - Paul speaking to uneducated Gentiles
 - Foundationalism versus coherentism
 - Rom 1:18–32 suppression of truth
 - Paul at Athens (Acts 17:16–34)
 - Romans 2:1–16 – “Puzzled pagan moralist”?
 - 1 Cor 1:18–2:16 – The wisdom of the world and the scandal of the cross and the resurrection
- Convincing Rhetoric: Logos, Pathos, Ethos⁷
 - Logos: Does the message ring true?
 - Ethos: Can this communicator be believed? What are the signs of authenticity of the message? (Sign of power; plausibility; actions of the communicator; etc.).
 - Pathos: Is this person *for* me, or against me?
- What the Good News of Jesus offers: 2 Cor 5:11–21
 - Peace with God, peace with others
 - 11 We persuade others
 - 12–13 Paul's credential is his love
 - 14–15 We might no longer live for ourselves, but for Christ
 - 16–17 Belief means we look at everyone differently, including those who don't yet believe
 - 18–19 Ministers of reconciliation
 - 20–21 God's “proffer.” For us selling this deal, easiest settlement offer ever!
- Those Who Turn Away
 - John 6:66 many turned back from following him
 - 2 Tim 4:10 Demas loved the world
 - 1 Jn 2:19 They went out from us, they never were of us
 - Parable of the weeds (Matt 13:24–30)
 - Hebrews 6:4–6 Those who have tasted the heavenly gift (but, 6:9 “confident of better things”)
 - Jude 22–23 Have mercy on those who are doubting
 - James 5:19–20 Whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering
 - Luke 15 Parables of lost sheep, lost coin, lost son
- What do these stories teach us about how to have gospel conversations? Can you think of some examples?
 - “Why do Christians believe that Jesus is the only path?”
 - “Why are some Christians no different than non-Christians? Why should a nice person become a Christian?”

⁷ Hunter, *The Celtic Way of Evangelism*, 47ff.