



VISUAL GUIDE

**HOW LOVE
RESPONDS:
GETTING
TO KNOW
YOUR CITY**



a Cru Church Movements Resource

How Love Responds: Getting to know your city Visual Guide

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Church Movements is a ministry of Cru. In partnership with the Church our mission is to increase the capacity and confidence of leaders to multiply faith communities, church-planters, and fruitful evangelists. Our strategic objectives include partnering to:

- reach 160M in the US with the gospel
- plant 160K new churches and faith communities
- develop 1M emerging leaders and church-planters

For more information, visit www.churchmovements.com

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A woman's silhouette is shown in profile on the right side of the page, looking out over a city skyline. The background is a dark, muted color with a cityscape visible through a window or opening. The overall tone is contemplative and focused.

PERSPECTIVE

This guide focuses on helping us understand the changes in our culture—the world in which we live and interact with people through daily conversations.

Taking a love that existed before time and making it understood today is no small order.

As imperfect followers of Jesus who desire to share His love with others, we have learned there isn't a magic formula for doing ministry. Everyone is different and on their own unique journey. This is why the church must live and work in a new way.

Let this serve as a guide to impacting the lives of people in the city today.

GO MAKE DISCIPLES



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)

JESUS

FROM GREENHOUSE...

Our churches and specialized ministries have functioned like greenhouses.

In the greenhouse you have similar routines and controlled environments - receiving about the same social, cultural, and spiritual inputs at about the same time. This has produced the same kind of product - good flowers!

And that is a very good thing!

**But today's reality can't compare
to a greenhouse.**

...TO WILD FIELD

The winds of this world influence understanding. Negative influences charm and distract. In our cities the environmental system exists way beyond our control. Chaos rules. People are exposed to influences from every angle, with no central support network to guide them.

We cannot combat the wind, the rain or the wildlife in these wild and open fields. We must instead learn from those who thrive in chaos...

We need new capacity and skill to communicate the gospel through meaningful conversations – in the open, chaotic fields of our day.

SCATTERING SEEDS

The humble dandelion releases a hundred seeds. They are scattered on the wind, carried by animals, eaten by pests. The dandelion expects this, and lives in the hope that a few catch and take root. Even two seeds that grow doubles the number of new dandelions able to repeat the process once again. And in this way, slowly but surely, it fills the field.

We need to learn to be like the dandelion..



SOME GROW, SOME DON'T

Our role as followers of Jesus is to spread as many seeds as we can. To open dialogue with as many new and different people as we can, in the hope that a few catch. We can learn from the dandelion.

We spread seeds. It's God's role to see that they grow. Every seed that flies is a conversation. Some will land, others won't. And that's okay.

**Because the more conversations we have,
the more seeds will grow.**



THE CITY TODAY

The city of today is a landscape full of diversity, opinions, and beliefs.

The people who share our sidewalks come from many backgrounds and cultural makeups.

All who live alongside us are unique. An understanding of them is critical to our mission to share the love of Jesus in this 'field.' We must know them, as we seek to make Jesus known.

EVERYONE IS ON A JOURNEY

In every conversation, in every interaction, we must know who we are talking to and be considerate of their beliefs and their relationship to Jesus (if any), or to Christians and religion in general. From this starting point we are able to better share our story and the story of Jesus to those in the city.

However, we must respect the journey and not simply determine how I can move someone along a spiritual path.

DEAR CHRISTIAN, I AM NOT LOST



“Most people in this wonderful world we share would agree that a good, purposeful life is something to strive for. How we choose to find that purpose can come in many forms. Everyone is out there finding their way. But the vast majority would not consider themselves lost on this journey. Neither should you.

“To reach me first you have to know me. To know me, you have to understand my journey. To truly understand, you have to surrender your desire to help and start to listen. To truly listen, you have to meet me where I am, around what matters to me. And you might be surprised by how much we have in common.

“We care about the same things. About creating a better, more peaceful world for everybody. About providing a safe, healthy and fun environment for our children. About being kind, caring and open-minded to our neighbors. These are beliefs we share. This is the common ground where we can meet.

“I also believe you should navigate this world with the belief that everyone knows something you don't. That you can learn something from every interaction. That everyone can help you on your journey as much as you can help them. Look at the world through this lens and listen, understanding and shared purpose will become second nature.

“Humbly, I think we all believe in something. That none of us are really lost, we are just finding our way. For many, including myself, there is no expected destination. The journey is the way. Meet me on it and who knows where we might travel together.”

—Someone you know

SEVEN PERSONAS: EVERYONE BELIEVES

For those who do not follow Jesus, there is not a vacuum of belief. Spirituality in the wild field takes many forms and the journey to purpose offers many paths. We need to look at the world through this broad spectrum of belief...

... from the faithful we know to those who have become disillusioned.

... from the anti-dogmatic who pushes against faith to someone satisfied and comfortable with a life outside of religious belief.

... from the uncertainty of those anxious for purpose and direction to the excitement of those exploring different pathways.

Our role is to get to know everyone we meet and see the world through their eyes. To be ever-curious. To walk in their shoes. If we respect that everyone has their own beliefs, then we will always have a place to start with the truth of the gospel.

**Let's understand
some of those in our city...**

I'M JEN (ANTI-DOGMATIC)



Jen is a 43-year-old Asian-American female.

She displays Christian values and abides by the golden rule. She self-identifies as Non-Christian and is quite content with her spiritual viewpoint. She has had exposure to many denominations of Christianity but rejects them all. She believes that we are created by a higher power of some sort, but that is where any similarities end. She wants nothing to do with Christianity or Christians.

IN JEN'S WORDS



“Most religious people or people of faith are so entrenched with their beliefs that they don't really want to hear any counter arguments. They are not open to new ideas. This sort of repels people who approach with an open and logical mind.”

JEN

JEN AND CHRISTIANITY



Positive view of Christian Values



Negative perception of Christianity due to negativities/activities from Christians and discouraging of independent thought or archaic beliefs (e.g. gender, etc.)



Closed to engagement with Christians or engaging around Christian faith

I'M ALAN (COMFORTABLE)



Alan is a 54-year-old Caucasian male, was born and raised in an affluent home, and is well traveled.

Growing up, his family had little discussion about religion and faith, but very much encouraged education and understanding. He is well-read in many world philosophers' and thinkers' works and has embraced an intelligence-first perspective on life. Therefore, he views faith-based beliefs as a crutch for the unlearned. He is satisfied with his life outlook and desires to make the world a better place. He will gladly engage in conversation about faith and purpose but not without a bit of an internal eye roll.

IN ALAN'S WORDS



“I do not feel any discontent with my agnosticism. I am open-minded and am always up for a learning experience, but I do not feel as though I am missing anything in my life.”

ALAN

ALAN AND CHRISTIANITY



Positive view of Christian Values



Negative perception of Christianity due to negativities/activities from Christians and discouraging of independent thought or archaic beliefs (e.g. gender, etc.)



Open to engagement around purpose and/or community

I'M DANIELLE (ANXIOUS)



Danielle is a multi-ethnic 24-year-old female who self-identifies as a curious Non-Christian and displays Christian values, or follows the golden rule in what she deems important in life.

She occasionally experiences anxiety and has sought many avenues to alleviate this including psychotherapy, Kundalini Yoga, and more. She believes in a higher power but has little context to what that means in her life. She is open and searching, and would engage with a Christian organization to help build the community and discuss purpose and spirituality—if there was no initial effort to convert her and she felt she would not be judged.

IN DANIELLE'S WORDS



“I believe in a higher power but not really sure if that is God, or time or universe. It does kinda suck being this confused, but I suppose it doesn't bother me.”

DANIELLE

DANIELLE AND CHRISTIANITY



Positive view of Christian Values



Unaware of Christian perspective or
Negative perception of Christianity due to
negativities/activities from Christians and
discouraging of independent thought or
archaic beliefs (e.g. gender, etc.)



Open to engagement around purpose
and/or community

I'M AARÓN (EXPLORER)



Aarón is a 24-year-old Hispanic male who was raised in a Catholic household in a predominantly Catholic, urban community.

He never really questioned his faith until attending a larger Middle School where he was exposed to new religions and beliefs. Once out of school, he began to explore other spiritual practices and his purpose in life. He does believe in a Higher Power or Higher Powers and is relatively comfortable with his spirituality but at times faces the fear of “What if Christianity is the way?”. He would be completely open to having a conversation about spirituality with “open-minded” Christians.

IN AARÓN'S WORDS



“I have questions about the numerous religions and which one is closest to actuality. I have a hard time believing anyone has it exactly right.”

AARÓN

AARÓN AND CHRISTIANITY



Positive view of Christian Values



Negative perception of Christianity due to negativities/activities from Christians and discouraging of independent thought or archaic beliefs (e.g. gender, etc.)



Open to engagement with progressive Christians around faith, purpose and particularly community

I'M CRYSTAL (DISILLUSIONED)



Crystal is a 36-year-old African-American female who became increasingly disillusioned by seeing the use of religion as a method of subjugation in and around her experiences with the “Black Church.”

She agrees with the principles of Christianity but sees profiteering and hypocrisy as a huge issue in the modern-day church - particularly mega-churches. Provided there was no initial effort to “convert her”, she would engage with Christian organizations to help build the community and discuss purpose and spirituality.

IN CRYSTAL'S WORDS



“To me, religion is a man-made construction to control the populace. Unfortunately, it uses the faith and spirituality of the people to manipulate them for monetary, land, and power advancements. Faith is something you believe in, not something you are told to believe in.”

CRYSTAL

CRYSTAL AND CHRISTIANITY



Positive view of Christian Values



Negative perception of Christianity due to negativities/activities from Christians and discouraging of independent thought or archaic beliefs (e.g. gender, etc.)



Open to engagement around purpose and/or community

I'M WES (INQUISITIVE FOLLOWER)



Wes is a 33-year-old Caucasian male who is a recent convert to Christianity.

Though his parents weren't religious, he had some exposure to Christianity through his sister who would take him to a Baptist church as a child. He never really became actively involved in Christianity until a few years ago. He was struggling with addiction, and his marriage was in jeopardy until his wife's colleague introduced them both to a faith-based recovery program. He credits Christianity with saving both his life and his marriage but is not sure that it is the only path to salvation.

IN WES' WORDS



“I do believe there is a God. I believe I was created by God and I can communicate with Him through prayer and listen to His words. At times, I feel that I am disappointed with myself when I fail to reach the target.”

WES

WES AND CHRISTIANITY



Positive view of Christian Values



Positive perception of Christianity, but acknowledges negativities/activities from Christians



Open to all engagement with progressive Christians or a Christian organization

I'M SHAWN (FAITHFUL)



Shawn is a 27-year-old African-American male living in New York City.

He became a Christian in his early teens at his local church and now considers himself an influencer in the practice of Christianity. He is a leader who purposefully lives out his Christian faith through intentional efforts that give back to the Black community. In addition, he believes this faith activity will lead others to Christ.

IN SHAWN'S WORDS



“My spiritual goal in life is to follow the path of Jesus, trying to live with the beliefs of what’s good and moral and trying to help those who are still looking for something or someone to believe in.”

SHAWN

SHAWN AND CHRISTIANITY



Positive view of Christian Values



Positive perception of Christianity



Open to all engagement with progressive
Christians or a Christian organization



FIRST SEEK TO UNDERSTAND

We must understand people in order
to connect with them.

To meet them where they are ...

... to understand what they believe and value

... so we may journey alongside them, at their pace,

.... while pointing them toward Jesus and His gospel

... and trusting God is at work.

IT'S ABOUT A PERSON, NOT THEIR PROGRESS



?

How do we go about moving people closer to Jesus?



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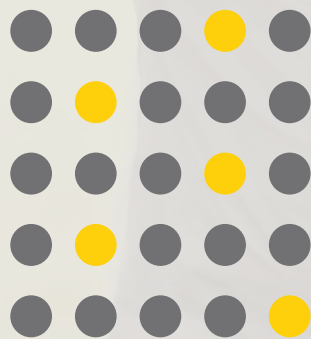
How do we help faithful followers of Jesus discover how they can grow in their faith and uniquely impact the lives of others?

HOW DO WE BEGIN?

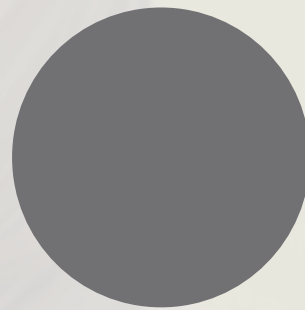
IT'S ABOUT MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS / MOMENTS, NOT EVENTS

We've got to learn that
it's more about moments with people,
not events in our greenhouse.

moments



not events



It's about *us*, not *us-and-them*.

And not *you join us*,
but *we join you*
on your spiritual journey.



THE ART IN ANY CONVERSATION

The art in any conversation is about how people find connection. The exchange demands that each listen, respect and understand the other. If we want to find common ground we must first listen and understand.

COMMON GROUND

HOW LOVE RESPONDS - THE POSTURE WE WANT TO DEMONSTRATE

**NO MATTER WHAT TOOLS WE USE
OR STRATEGIES WE EMPLOY...**

- 1 BE PRESENT AND LISTEN** – follow the conversation, not your agenda. Ask questions. Listen long. Come alongside.
- 2 FIND COMMON GROUND** – build a relational bridge, not a spiritual chasm. What do you mutually care about?
- 3 WALK IN THEIR SHOES** – understand their story - not your conclusion. Empathize! You may not understand them and could come to the wrong conclusion.
- 4 TALK LIKE A REAL PERSON** – use words meant for people - not for the pews. In the pool of conversation, Christian dogma or religious words can be like an annoying cannonball.
- 5 CREATE A BETTER STORY** – share your faith as you care for the city - don't just count conversations.



HOW DO WE SHARE THE GOSPEL TODAY?

We have a problem to solve.
Christianity is neither **AUTHENTIC** or **RELEVANT**
to those who don't follow.

Christians are talking at people about their own beliefs without understanding or caring what another believes. Sure - our truths need to be embraced and believed! Absolutely! But our truth will land **BETTER** if we appreciate their journey.

A photograph of a brick wall with a large white circle in the center. The circle contains the text 'HOW DO WE SHARE THE GOSPEL TODAY?'. Below the circle, there are two paragraphs of text in white, centered on the wall. The wall has some faint graffiti on it.

HOW DO WE SHARE THE GOSPEL TODAY?

Every truth told is like a brick in a growing wall -
a sound barrier that prevents either side from
hearing each other.

We each think that it's the other person's
responsibility to tear it down.



HOW DO WE SHARE THE GOSPEL TODAY?

If “telling” adds a brick,
a conversation loosens one.

The more conversations we foster,
the smaller the wall becomes.



HOW DO WE SHARE THE GOSPEL TODAY?

Our ambition is to initiate meaningful gospel conversations with every human being on this planet.

Let's be like the dandelion. Why?

Because more meaningful conversations increase opportunities for relationships and for sharing the Gospel.



Let's talk about how every follower can share Christ and make disciples!

Sent 6:7



Consider joining us in our [Sent 6:7](#) process to equip people to build and multiply the local church, faith communities and discipleship groups, so that every follower of Jesus has a place for connection, growth, and equipping. This is vital for the vision of everyone knowing someone who truly follows Jesus.

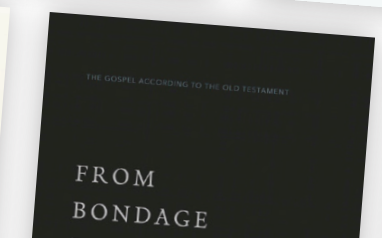
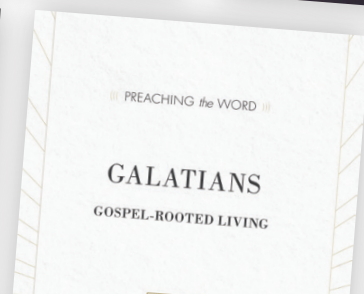
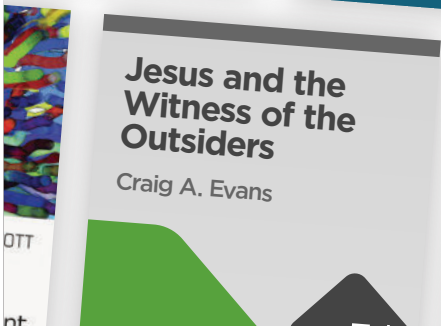
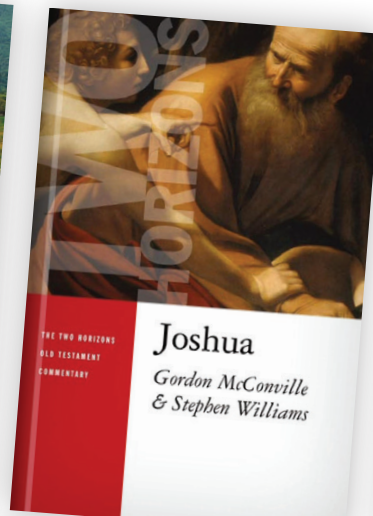
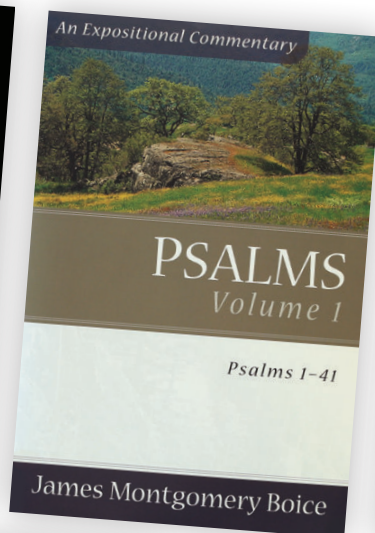
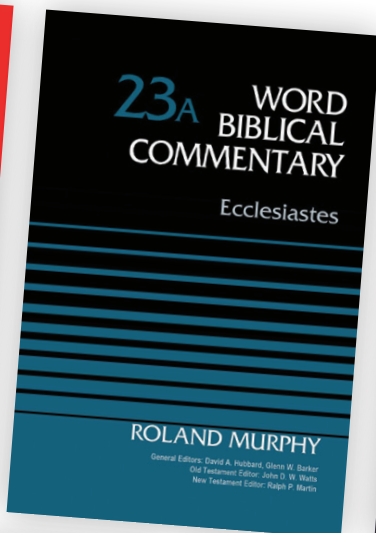
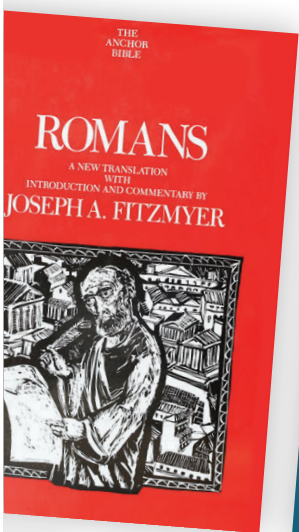
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Watch our brief video [here](#)



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“FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SEEK AND SAVE THE LOST” - LUKE 19:10

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LOST CAUSE

REVIVING EVANGELISM

WE HAVE A PROBLEM! Evangelism has become a taboo word and confusion about evangelism has left the church with a lackluster approach to reaching the lost.

THERE IS A SOLUTION! We must be about the mission of Jesus: “to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). That means we must revive evangelism. A church with a culture of evangelism will hold the Biblical values of evangelism, share the compelling narratives of evangelism, and live out the white-hot faith behaviors of an evangelistic church.

Join 5000+ Church Multiplication leaders
as we revisit evangelism together.

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