

Unit 3: Sharing the Gospel

Lesson 5

Sharing with Historical Doubters

Bridge: Equipped 18

Announcements

- Next week will be the end of Unit 3 already!
 - No class the week of Christmas or New years.
 - Class resumes January 7th!
- Dec. 21st is our outing for this unit!
 - Save the date!
 - We will plan the outing next week.

Does a straw have one
hole, or two?

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Sharing with Historical Doubters

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Doubting History

- People are given to exaggeration
- Some people believe the Jesus of the Bible was not a real historical person, just a made up story
- A lot of this lesson will seem familiar.
 - Doubting the historical accuracy of the Bible is a common enough argument, though, that it's worth looking at for a full lesson.

How Do We Respond?

- Thankfully
- Take the offensive
- Consistent impartiality of historical literature
- Martyr's death of the disciples
- Historical eyewitnesses of the resurrection
- Emphasize that if Jesus is who the Bible says he is, then he is the son of God, and the saviour of souls.

Thankfully

- Thank them for their honesty
- Arguments start easier when people feel defensive. Thank them for being willing to be vulnerable and honest, to create and show them that their opinion is valid and matters, in order to provide a safe space.
 - This will drastically calm the conversation from “argument” back to “conversation”
- A lot of people who grew up in religious homes and schools may feel defensive about asking questions because they were reprimanded for asking them as kids.

Take the Offensive

- As with many objections to the Gospel, take the offensive, not the defensive.
- Ask:
 - “What and where in the NT accounts makes you doubt the authenticity?”
 - “What and where in the NT makes you doubt this account was the real Jesus?”
- You will find that often they are simply repeating something someone else said.
- Ask them if they’d be willing to read just one of the Gospels, open mindedly, and get back to you.

Consistent Impartiality of Historical Literature

- Explain that to be consistent, Jesus and the Gospel accounts must be approached the way ALL ancient literature is approached by an impartial historian: TRUSTWORTHY UNTIL PROVEN OTHERWISE
- Point out that we have more copies of the NT in manuscripts than any other document from the ancient world.
- There is more evidence concerning the life of Jesus than for Julius Caesar

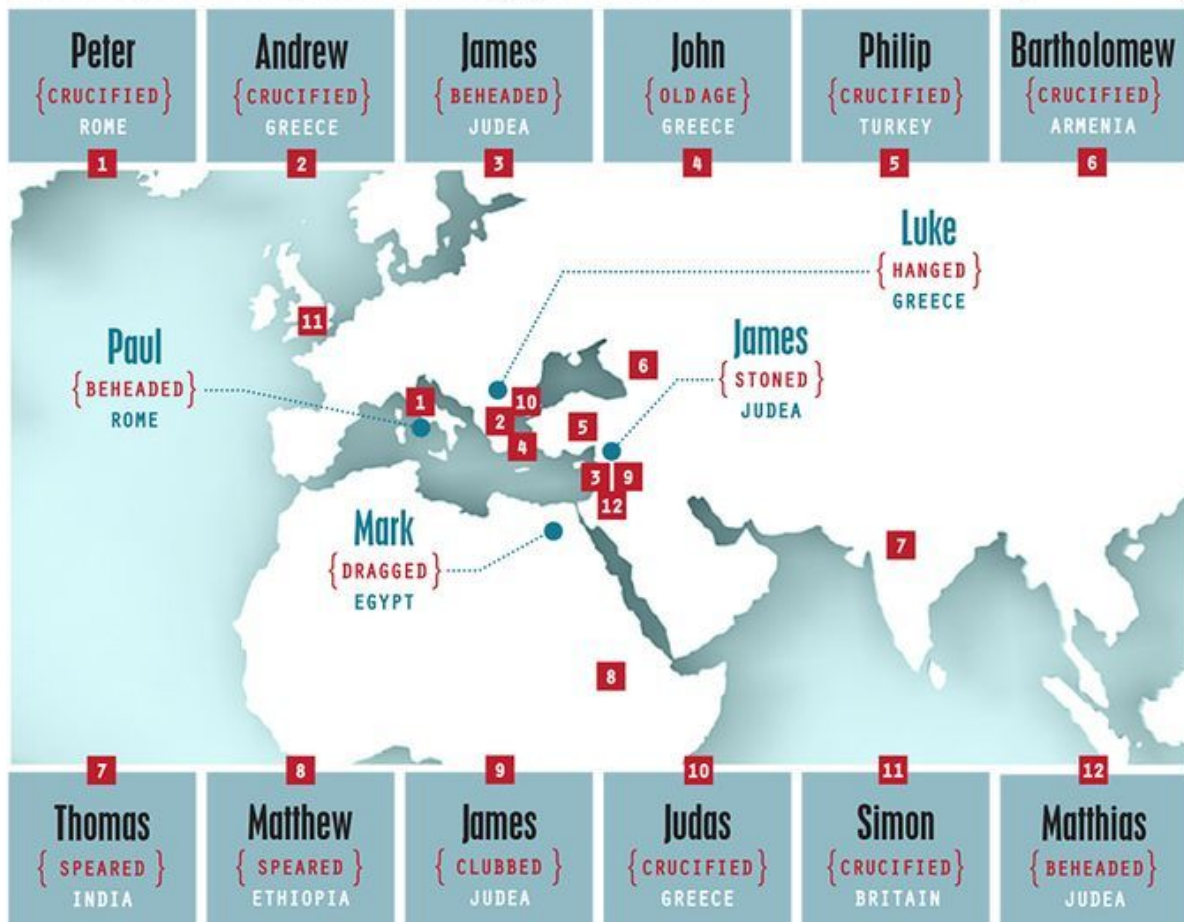
Manuscripts

Martyr's Death of the Disciples

- Share that most of the original disciples died a martyr's death for what they believed.
- They were so convinced of who Jesus was that they died a martyr's death.
- Why would people die for a lie (I don't like this phrase because it's tricky).

The Twelve Apostles and Early Church Leaders: Paying the Ultimate Cost

{ MANNER OF DEATH }



Sources: Fox's Book of Martyrs, John Foxe; Fox's Book of Martyrs, Updated and Abridged, John Foxe; Antiquities, Josephus.

Designer: Mark Hernandez

Historical Eyewitnesses of the Resurrection

- Explain that the empty tomb is one of the most attested facts of history and has been called so by historians and scholars.
- 500+ eyewitness accounts
- People are normally surprised that the evidence behind the empty tomb extends beyond the Bible
- Suggest they read, to name a few, the writings of:
 - Tacitus
 - Josephus
 - The Talmud
 - Lucian
 - Pliny

If the Bible is True

- Emphasize that if Jesus is who the Bible says he is (and he is!), then he is the son of God and the Saviour who died for our sins and rose from the dead
- We must either trust him or reject him

The Bible's Indisputable Historical Accuracy
