

## **Topic Summaries (In Order of Presentation)**

### **Keys to Everyday Effective Evangelism - Dr. Ray Ciervo**

In this session, Ray Ciervo will provide us with tools to increase our confidence to evangelize. He will teach us the following keys: opening doors by listening, asking the right questions, and declaring the truth.

### **The Impact of Christianity - Dr. David Marshall**

New Atheists, New Agers, and at times American Public Education agree that Christianity has done the world great harm: caused wars, encouraged slavery, oppressed women, and stymied the forward march of scientific knowledge and social welfare. David Marshall argues that all this is not merely wrong, but overlooks the crucial driving forces of history. In fact, nothing has done more to improve life in this world than the life, acts, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Dr. Marshall shows how the Gospel has raised the status of women around the world, liberated slaves, nourished modern science and democracy, brought desperately reforms to dark corners of the Earth, and fostered education, health care, and freedom.

### **Ideas Have Consequences: The Bigger the Idea, the Bigger the Consequence - Dr. Richard Land**

We have seen the truth of this statement play out tragically and graphically in our time. Friedrich Nietzsche proclaimed the death of God echoed by American theologians of the 1960s as memorialized on the cover of Time magazine with the infamous "Is God Dead?" cover appropriately dominated by an almost entirely black cover. The assertion that God is dead led, as C. S. Lewis and Francis Schaffer said it would, to the death of truth and the death of man as "man." And of course it was all given "scientific" authority by Darwin and his "theory of evolutionary origins." If Nietzsche and Darwin are correct, then the philosopher Bertrand Russell is right when he said, "Man is a speck of dust blown on the winds of fate." In other words, life is meaningless, it has no purpose, rhyme or reason, and there is no good or evil or right or wrong. There is just meaningless existence and arbitrary individual choices.

All of the "mega-ethical" moral issues that we deal with in our culture result from large segments of our culture accepting these false and destructive ideas. If man is really just the most sophisticated mammal, but nevertheless an animal just like every other animal, then killing unborn babies and harvesting their tissue for medical treatments for older and bigger human beings are morally "defensible." Euthanasia of the elderly, the infirm, the terminally ill, and the mentally handicapped is "defensible." A worldview based on Carl Sagan's kind of naturalism saying "the universe is all there is, all there ever was, and all there ever will be," inevitably dictates a moral relativism that makes the world a very dangerous place unless you are healthy, strong, and productive. If there are no moral absolutes, then anything is possible. We have seen what these ideologies can inflict on human beings.

The only answer to these "crimes against humanity" is to believe in a transcendent God who has given us eternal truths including man being created in His image, which means that there is a cavernous gulf in terms of dignity, value, and worth between every human being and the rest of creation. Consequently, some things must never be done to another human being.

### ***Apologetics: The New Bad Word and Why We Need It - Laurie Stewart***

Many Christians don't know what apologetics is or they have a bad impression of it. The word "apologetics" either confuses them or offends them. It's high time Christians understand what it is and why we need it, no matter what they want to call it. All Christians need be prepared to know what they believe and why they believe it to be true. "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer [apologia] to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect" (1 Pet. 3:15). Do Christian parents know how answer their children's tough questions? Come learn some of the questions—it might blow you away. Every Christian parent needs to learn how to answer these questions, because if they don't, our children will look to the world for answers. Get better equipped to raise Christian kids in a secular world!

### ***Defending a Never Changing Gospel in an Ever Changing World - Dr. Richard Land***

It is clear to those who us who live in the second decade of the 21st century that it is indeed an ever changing world. We have been exposed to change at a more accelerated rate than any other human beings in history, culminating in the technological revolution, which is just beginning. Frankly, we stand today in terms of the technological revolution about where people in the 15<sup>th</sup> century stood right after the invention of the printing press.

In such a world it is a special challenge to defend the never changing Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in terms that people can relate to, grasp, and understand. However, our first century brothers and sisters did it, moving from the Hebrew thought world to the Greco-Roman one in less than a generation.

We are all called to fulfill the Great Commission in every generation, which has no punctuation, which means evangelism comes first, discipleship comes last, and it always includes both and everything between them.

## **Breakout Sessions:**

### ***Are the Gospels Reliable? - Dr. Ray Ciervo***

Our Christian faith depends on the reliability of the gospels. In this session, Ray will tell us if the gospels were written by eyewitnesses, whether the text has conflicts or undesigned coincidences.

### ***Worldview in Focus - Laurie Stewart***

Every person has a worldview, whether they realize it or not. It impacts our thoughts, decisions and actions. It permeates every aspect of a person's life. Ideas have consequences. Why do Christians need a biblical worldview? The Scriptures tell us that only in God's light can we see light (Ps. 36:9). However, a recent alarming study says that only 4% of millennials hold a biblical worldview. Additionally, an increasing number of young Christians are leaving the faith to follow other worldviews that dominate the world culture and especially college campus life. Come learn exactly what is a biblical worldview and why it is critical we examine our ideas. "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ" (Col. 2:8).

## **Are the Gospels Myths? - David Marshall**

Skeptics like Reza Aslan, Richard Carrier, and Bart Ehrman ("ACE") argue that if Jesus really lived (and they debate that), the gospels that tell his story are terribly unreliable. Drawing on his new book, *Jesus is No Myth: The Fingerprints of God on the Gospels*, David Marshall argues that in fact, the gospels show numerous fascinating and powerful internal signs of credibility. Thirty remarkable traits of the gospels are forensic clues, like fingerprints or DNA, which show that the story of Jesus is deeply, even uniquely, credible, and help reveal his on-going power to change the world.