



***Gospel for  
Victoria:  
Stories of Faith  
from Your  
Churches***

***May 2, 2024***



# Background

- **Leaving church & faith**
  - EFC, “*Hemorrhaging Faith*”
  - Skye Jethani, *With: Reimagining the Way...*
  - C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*
- **CityReach Victoria** – our changing landscape
- **Doctoral Research**
  - *Why & how are people coming to faith?*

# How I got Here

- ***“How many people have you led to the Lord?”***
- ***“...prayed the prayer”***
- **New believers**
- **Unique testimonies**



# How and Why do People Come to Faith?

## 1. What is the Biblical Gospel?

- a. Romans 1-4 – **Salvation** for all who believe
- b. 1 Corinthians 15 – **Story** of Jesus, New Creation
  - a. N.T. Wright – “signposts of the new creation”
- c. Mark 1 – **Invitation** to Kingdom & Discipleship
  - a. Dallas Willard – “Jesus is taking apprentices”
- d. Acts – *to Jews or Gentiles?*
- e. Jesus – personal encounters & analogies
- f. **Prophet** reveals, **Priest** reconciles, **King** reigns

# How and Why do People Come to Faith?

1. What is the Biblical Gospel?

2. How does the Gospel work?

a. **Missiology** – translating Gospel to context

a. Lesslie Newbigin, *Gospel in a Pluralist Society*

b. Jonathan K. Dodson, *Unbelievable Gospel*

b. **Sociology** – group dynamics, affiliation

a. Rodney Stark, *Triumph of Christianity*

c. **Psychology** – stages, transformation

a. Gordon T. Smith, *Beginning Well*

# Interviewing New Believers

*20 people recently **baptized** in  
Evangelical churches in Victoria*

- **Who** – 10 men, 10 women  
11 Canadian-born, 9 foreign (3 local)
- **When** – 1 born in 50's, 4 in 60's,  
5 in 70's, 8 in 80's, 2 in 90's
- **Where** – 12 churches, 8 plants;  
5 large, 15 small churches



# Interviewing New Believers

- **Why** – Background, motivation
  - Reaching a crisis, turning point
- **How** – Elements, means
  - “Believe, belong, become”
  - “Fact, faith, feeling”
- **What** – Effects, message
  - Gospel: *What is Christianity all about?*
  - Bible: *What is your life verse?*

