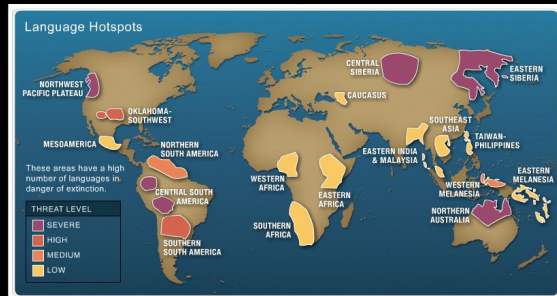
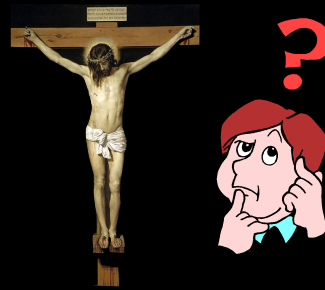


92 Languages (cultures) are extinct
and many more on the brink.



History is a cultural graveyard?

How could a religion that
celebrates the crucifixion
of its leader survive?



How could a religion that
teaches such unpopular ideas
survive?

- Justification by faith
- Blood atonement
- Love your enemy
- Heaven as hope
- Death to self
- God / man
- Election



How could a religion that
targets the poor & powerless
survive?

“Blessed are the
poor in spirit, for
theirs is
the kingdom
of heaven.”

Matthew 5:3



1 Corinthians 1

“²⁶ For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷ but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸ and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, ²⁹ that no man should boast before God. ³⁰ But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, ³¹ that, just as it is written, “*Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.*”

1 Corinthians 1

“²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

**How are we to understand
God’s “call” on our lives?**

Romans 9 addresses

God's choice
in our role



Israel

God's choice in
our redemption



Individual

Romans 9

"²⁵ As He says also in Hosea, 'I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' And her who was not beloved, 'beloved.'"²⁶ "And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'you are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God. ²⁷ And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved ²⁸ for the Lord will execute His word upon the earth, thoroughly and quickly."²⁹ And just as Isaiah foretold, "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, We would have become as Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah."

"³⁰ What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; ³¹ but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ just as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, And he who believes in Him will not be disappointed."

**Is The Key To Understand God's Call
Our Response To The "Rock Of
Offense" - The Cross?**

Paraphrase Of Romans 9:25-30

"The O.T. prophet Hosea spoke of God's gracious love and call going to the Gentiles. And Isaiah made it clear that not all of Israel would be recipients of God's blessings, only a remnant. This is why the Gentiles, who had no path to pursue a relationship with God actually found it by faith and Israel who had such a path stumbled on it and missed out. The crucified Jesus was the "rock of offense" that they stumbled over and he was also the rock of foundation for the church where the Gentiles found salvation by faith.

1 Corinthians 1

"¹⁸ For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

"²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

1 Peter 2:8

"A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense"

Galatians 5:11

"But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished."

Two mistakes we can make in the ministry of the Gospel

1. Removing or hiding the offense

- **Deemphasizing spiritual pain (N.T.)** - suffering, sin, guilt, repentance, discipline, self sacrifice, etc.
- **Emphasizing material gain (O.T.)** - economic, social, political, and physical salvation & power.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



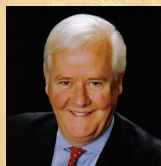
“When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.”

Why do many people join a church?

- 1. Preacher.**
- 2. Programs.**
- 3. People.**
- 4. Politics.**
- 5. Parking.**

How to grow a mega-church

1. Positive, gifted preaching.
2. Felt need centered Programs.
3. Warm, friendly people.
4. Homogenous culture.
5. Comfortable facilities.



Os Guinness

“The “seeker church” does a good job of getting people into the church but not a good job of making them disciples of Christ.”

Worldly theology is
peace without sacrifice,
kingdom without the King,
forgiveness without atonement,
change without repentance,
virtue without discipline,
ethics without grace,
Gospel without the Cross

Two mistakes we can make in the ministry of the Gospel

1. Removing or hiding the offense

- **Deemphasizing spiritual pain (N.T.)** - suffering, sin, guilt, repentance, discipline, self sacrifice, etc.
- **Emphasizing material gain (O.T.)** - economic, social, political, and physical salvation & power.

2. Creating an unnecessary offense

- **Legalism** - (abuse of O.T. boundaries) majoring on minors, inflexibility, intolerance.
- **License** - (abuse of N.T. freedom) selfishness, carelessness, insensitivity, etc.

*Two mistakes we can make in
the ministry of the Gospel*

1. Removing or hiding the offense

**Making it all about
THE AMERICAN DREAM!**

2. Creating an unnecessary offense

**Fostering an unhealthy
intellectual, emotional, &
social environment.**

**Fostering an unhealthy
intellectual, emotional, &
social environment.**

1. Forbidding honest questions and differing perspectives.
2. Stifling emotional expressions and experiences.
3. Disrespecting the diversity and the common image of God in each person.

1 Corinthians 8:13

"Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble."

1 Corinthians 10:32

"Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God."

2 Corinthians 6:3

"Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed."

Galatians 5

"13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but **through love serve one another**. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

"15 But if you **bite and devour one another**, take care lest you **be consumed by one another**."

"16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."



Bell Hooks

"Love is moving toward another person's soul with a commitment to help them reach the deepest desire of their heart."

*(which is reconciliation
with God, self, & others)*

American Cultural Values
**Individual Entitlement
To The Good Life**

We expect life to be free, fun, fair, & fulfilling, with any and all problems solved quickly & painlessly through common sense, hard work, faith, & prayer.

Autonomy

We have a plan and God is in it.

Freedom

We can do our own thing but not suffer the consequences.

Achievement

We can be anything we choose to be.

Romans 9 Challenges

**Individual Entitlement
To The Good Life**

We bear God's image - selflessly caring for others,
submitting our will to His, and bearing a cross.

Caring Vs. 1-5
Calling Vs. 6-24
Cross Vs. 25-30

John 15

"¹⁸ If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me."

**A sign of God's call on
a person's life is their
unlikely response to
the Word of the Cross.**

Romans 11:33

"Oh, the depth of the riches
both of the wisdom and
knowledge of God!"

How unsearchable are
His judgments and
unfathomable
His ways!"

