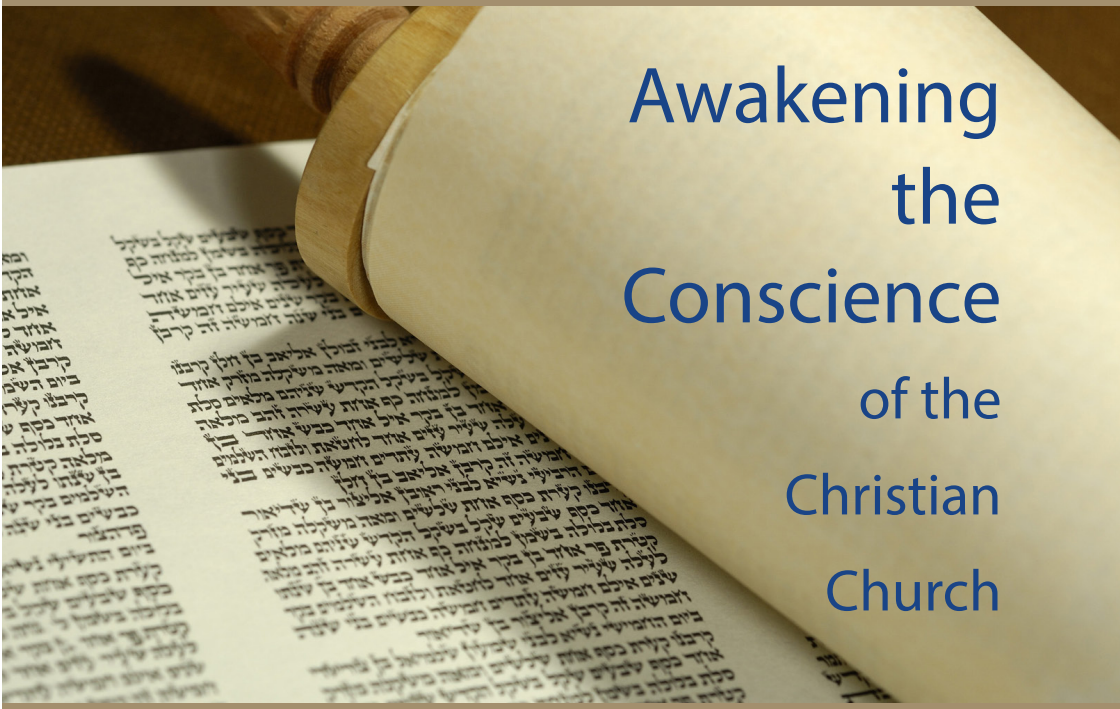


A resource of Christian Witness to Israel (N. America)  
to challenge, assist and equip in local Jewish evangelism.

# THE AC COURSE



Awakening  
the  
Conscience  
of the  
Christian  
Church

**THE BIBLICAL BURDEN**

**3. THE MISSIOLOGY**

**3a The Ministry that is Glorious**

# COMPLETE COURSE OUTLINE

## The Biblical Burden for Jewish Mission The Hope throughout History for Jewish Redemption Contemporary Connections for Jewish Salvation

### THE BIBLICAL BURDEN

<i>The MOTIVE</i>	<i>Psalms 67 Romans 9-11</i>	<i>The Praying patriarchs The Praying apostle</i>
<i>The METHODOLOGY</i>	<i>Isaiah 63 Luke 4</i>	<i>The Longing of the prophet The Liberation of The Prophet</i>
<i>The MISSIONOLOGY</i>	<i>2Cor 3&amp;4 Acts 20-22</i>	<i>The Ministry that is glorious The Ministry that is blessed</i>
<i>The MANDATE</i>	<i>Psalms 150 Rev 4&amp;5</i>	<i>The Holy hallelujahs The Cosmic chorus</i>

### THE HOPE OF HISTORY

<i>PROTECTIVE PROVIDENCE</i>	- Past, Present, Future
<i>PIRATES OF PROVIDENCE</i>	- Expulsion and Expansion
<i>REPLACEMENT AND DEFACEMENT</i>	- Forgotten and Forsaken
<i>REFORMATION AND RE-EMBRACEMENT</i>	- The Puritan Hope
<i>The LIE OF THE LAND</i>	- Too much love will kill you
<i>REWRITING THE RAPTURE</i>	- Confusion and correction

### CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS

<i>The CHALLENGES TO CONNECTING</i>	<i>The separated and the assimilated The atheist and the evangelical</i>
<i>The FRAGRANCE OF FRIENDSHIP</i>	<i>The aroma of Christ</i>
<i>The WISDOM OF WORDS</i>	<i>(Un)common language</i>
<i>RABBINIC REINTERPRETATIONS</i>	<i>Jewish objections Peter and Pentecost</i>

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

1. As you begin each study, pray for the Lord's grace and wisdom.
2. Discipline yourself to set aside one hour for each paper.
3. Keep a personal 'physical' notebook.
4. Begin with the questions and in your own notebook, answer each question in one sentence, prior to engaging in the study.
5. Read through the paper in one sitting, with note-taking.
6. Answer the questions again; this time, a paragraph each.

Feel free to send your answers to me, ask further questions, or simply make appropriate comments.

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## **THE BIBLICAL BURDEN**

### **THE MISSIOLOGY**

#### **3a The Ministry that is Glorious**

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. When was the last time you heard a sermon on Obadiah? How many churches are truly preaching the whole of Scripture?
2. What was the nature of the glory of the Old Covenant?
3. Why is the Old Covenant (and by extension rabbinic Judaism) a 'ministry of death'?
4. What distractions are there in the realm of Jewish mission and Israel ministries that take us away from the 'one thing needful'?
5. In what ways should (and must) the Church be more discerning about para-church ministries?

## MISSIOLOGY

We have considered **'The Motive'**, in Psalm 67 & Romans 9-11. We developed our thoughts further with **'The Methodology'**, in looking at the longings in Isaiah 63, and the preaching of Jesus in Luke 4.

Now we must now spend some time considering what is the mission? You may say, haven't we done that already? Yes, to some degree, but let us pause on some wonderful truths from Scripture pertaining to **'The Missiology'**.

I was a regular pastor for half of my ministry life (now totaling 36 years). Regularly pastors need to step back and consider what it is that we do? Sometimes the world squeezes us into its mold. Sometimes congregational members squeeze us into their perceived pattern of ministry. It is also good for us in missionary work to pause and consider what it is we do, both in our service to the church and in evangelistic mission to the (Jewish) world.

It is also important to pause and consider scripturally the nature of our missiological calling. The work is not ours. The mission is not ultimately ours. What we will consider now is that the (biblical burdened) missiology that drives us is both glorious and blessed.

What we do has a glory to it. What we do has a blessed end to it. Therefore we do not lose heart. Therefore we do not go about our labors aimlessly, but purposefully, to hear the ultimate 'well-done', graced to a faithful servant.

Our first paper under this heading takes us to 2 Corinthians 3 & 4 and there we ask the question: 'What is the nature of our mission?' The answer comes back in simple terms:

**'It is a glorious ministry speaking of a surpassingly glorious Messiah.'**

## **3a THE MINISTRY THAT IS GLORIOUS**

### **(Please read 2Corinthians 3&4)**

I was recently taking a small group meeting to which I had invited a Jewish lady. I was preaching on John 17:2-5. In the informal fellowship time afterwards I asked her for her thoughts. She said, *'Well, I didn't really get much of the earlier part of your sermon.'* I asked, *'Why was that?'* *'Well, when you read v5, I couldn't stop thinking about it.'* It took a while for her to get back into listening to the preacher. (Maybe it was just my preaching...)

Sometimes Gentiles don't 'get' what a Jewish person, 'gets'. In John 17:5, Jesus is praying to his Father, *'Now, Father, glorify me in your presence, with the glory I had with you before the world began.'* For a (thinking) Jewish person to contemplate that, is staggering. Jesus on his final night with his disciples is praying about a glory He had and a glory He wished to be seen. And my Jewish friend could only think of the Shekinah glory that Israel visibly enjoyed in the Old Testament... and she couldn't leave that verse.

The word glory is used all too easily in Christian vocabulary. So while I want us to consider this Scripture under three headings of 'glory', let us do so with some sense of the staggering nature of what that is: the weightiness of the divine presence; the awesome reality of the God-ness of God.

I have three points to walk us through this passage:

- 1. Old glory in the Old Covenant**
- 2. Veiled glory unto the ancient people**
- 3. Surpassing glory known by Christian believers**

## 1. Old Glory in the Old Covenant.

There is generally a low view of the Old Testament in many Christian circles. It is seen as something hard to understand, not necessary for us Gentiles and just for a time and a people, long past. It has little or no relevance for 21st century American Christians. Take a glance at preaching, or more accurately at the texts from which those preachers are bringing their message. Aside from the low bar of substance in the preaching, more often than not, preachers will avoid the Old Testament, either out of difficulty, or irrelevance. Let us remember the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament was the Bible that Jesus preached from! Let us remember, it was the Scriptures of the early disciples.

As we begin to think on 'old glory, as well as develop our thoughts on 'new glory', let us never miss the point that the 'old' came with glory! 2Cor 3:7 says that – *'the ministry of death... came with glory'*. And v9 and v11 also speak of the glorious nature of the 'old': *'the ministry of condemnation... what was being brought to an end came with glory'*.

When we get a new vehicle, we usually quickly dispense with the old. So it is with all new items; the new computer; the new phone; the new toy. We are so used to seeing the inadequacies of the former and the delights of the new, that we fail to appreciate the wonderful nature of that which is now surpassed by our new toy.

I am not a hoarder, even though my wife thinks I am! However, I do have a box of 'old stuff'; things which, in their day, were truly amazing. I have a 5&1/4" floppy disk. Amazing! At least I was amazed at how many sermons I could fit onto that floppy disk in Wordstar format (yes, that was before Word!). Then the 3&1/2" came out and wow, the capacity exploded! (Am I speaking in tongues to some young person??)

In that box I also still have a Nokia 2310 cellphone (affectionately known as a brick!). I have an old large reel-to-reel audio tape of me singing the third verse of *'Away in a Manger'* aged 10. It was amazing in 1970 (not the singing! – well, it probably wasn't bad either!).

What I'm endeavoring to say by way of illustration is this. Please do not denigrate our God and his glorious presentation of the 'old' ministry, even though it brought death. The Old Covenant came with glory. Let us look at some aspects of this glorious 'old' thing.

### **(i) The Moral Magnificence of this Ministry**

The 'Old' was a ministry of God's moral nature carved on letters of stone and given to the very ancestors of today's Jewish people. Peter Naylor (a friend from Cardiff, Wales) has a very helpful commentary on 2Corinthians. He says, *'Prior to Moses there had been nothing like this and at that time this ministry was as indispensable as it was unique.'*

I just wish some present day preachers would acknowledge this in their ministries. Peter Naylor further points out the magnificence of this 'old' ministry, *'because it originated with the God of Israel, and exhibited his righteousness'*. How easily preachers and Christians will denigrate what originated with God and exhibited his moral magnificence!

What magnificence is indicated in the opening verses of the letter to the Hebrews (or letter to the Jewish people!) Hebrews 1:1 – *'In the past God spoke to our forefathers...'*; and we quickly move on to the wonders of God speaking through his Son. But slow down! GOD SPOKE TO THE JEWISH FOREFATHERS.

Pause and meditate on that reality! The theophany of Sinai with shaking mountain, fire, cloud, and trumpet and ultimately the giving of the Law; all this was with a weight of

glory that must never be forgotten or undervalued.

It showed the moral ideal and so it identified most clearly the moral failure, because it was and it is, morally magnificent.

Paul did not despise 'old glory' nor did Christ, nor must we.

But then what we must do is see...

## **(ii) The Terminal Transience of this Testament**

It is called here '*a ministry of death*', a ministry of condemnation. While Moses face shone having visited with God, yet the sheen would fade. It would not continue; it would be temporary; transitory. The function of this glorious 'old' morally magnificent covenant was to convict of sin and drive to the solution which was to come with a greater glory.

Romans 2&3 would speak of this more specifically. In Romans 3:5 we read '*Our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God*'. In Romans 3:9 the word is clear, '*None is righteous... No one does good...*' In Romans 3:19,20 the purpose of this is specifically laid out: '*that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by the works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin*'.

One of my Jewish friends wrote to me after attending synagogue at one of the festival times.

*'I looked around the room. I watched the sway of those praying. I took note of how intently my people were trying to pray. Desperately seeking forgiveness. Trying to reach heaven. Some have begun to perform acts of charity to seek that atonement and peace in their souls. Some were content with praying these beautiful but mostly empty prayers. Is this what it was about?... Why were we even there? To perform a ritual? Was this what HaShem wanted of us? A group of lukewarm half-hearted people thinking of when it is time to eat?'*



It is a ministry of death! It is terminal and transient. God is Glorious. There is a Moral Magnificence to the Law, but for us (and for Jewish people), it also is terminally damning – without a solution. We might also add therefore that rabbinic Judaism remains terminally damning.

## **2. Veiled Glory unto the Ancient People**

2Corinthians 3:8 says *'the Israelites could not gaze at Moses face because of its glory'*. Further, in v13 we read that *'Moses would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome (telos) of what was being brought to an end.'* Then in 14-16 we read, *'to this day, when they read the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away'...* *'whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord the veil is removed.'*

It is an interesting study, worthy of more time than we have presently, to consider why Moses was veiled. These verses suggest that the physical veil was symbolic of a greater spiritual veil over spiritual eyes. We might even suggest that this was a divinely appointed hardening (as we read in Romans 11), a sovereignly ordered 'non-seeing', so that the Lord would later bring about his salvific plan to the whole human race.

Peter Naylor again (pardon the pun) nails it! *'In denying Israel the spectacle of a cancelled glory, Moses prevented them from appreciating that the Sinai covenant would in due course come to an end. There was, so to speak, a cover up of both the prophet's face and the governing principle.'*

There are things that we hide from our kids. There are things that are for adult days. We want children to be children for a while. (Sadly, all too many are being robbed of their childhood.)

The 'old glory' ministry was to be a 'veiled glory' ministry for the days of infancy prior to the coming of Christ.

I want to say two things here concerning the Jewish people then that also remain largely true today. They are:

**(i) Insensible to their privileges**

**(ii) Inadequate in their practices**

I was at synagogue for one of their festival services. I heard a very boring sermon about a divine spark within us all. I heard the rabbi break into a secular song at one point, which had no relevance to the 'sermon' (or maybe I had just dozed off prior to this!). I saw the ornate scrolls being displayed and prayerfully honored at several times through the service.

My emotions moved from sadness at the emptiness of the sermon, through laughter at the intrusion of an apparently irrelevant song, and ultimately to that of anger. Why anger? In Romans 3:1 we read – *'What advantage has the Jew?... Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.'*

I sat in synagogue, sad and yet angry. As I was a visitor, I did not want to abuse the situation. But I couldn't help wanting to cry out - *'You guys are entrusted with the oracles of God!'*

There's a veil. The glory is veiled. They are insensible to their privileges. So too, they are inadequate in their practices.

Let me read again from my Jewish friend: *'I'm ashamed of the lack of passion in myself and my people. We were given the Torah. We spend two days praying 600 pages of prayers, bowing, standing, sitting, rah rah rah, ugh!'* Do you hear her sense of the inadequacy of the religious practice?'

Does it not break your heart, as you think of this people as sheep without a shepherd? O yes, we should have anger, and

righteous indignation against the empty rabbinic ramblings. But these poor people, are also a privileged people. In the divine narrative they are broken off branches so that Gentiles might be grafted in! It is a verse that should cause deep empathy among Gentiles to consider that Jewish people are *'enemies of God FOR YOUR SAKE'* (Romans 11:28).

In divine sovereign purposes they have been veiled; they did not recognize His appearing. The prophetically promised Messiah was crucified in order that His salvation would be made known to the whole world; and the Jewish loss meant riches for the Gentiles.

So even today when Moses is read... the veil remains. But not forever... They have experienced a 'partial hardening' (Romans 11:25). Of course, partial, means partial doesn't it? Maybe that's another verse worthy of consideration by some 'replacement' pastors and churches. It is not a complete hardening; it is not a 'cast away forever' hardening. So when they turn to the Lord; when they are grafted back into their own olive tree, (2Corinthians 3:16), the veil is removed!

My Jewish friend again comments on her synagogue musings, *'Rabbi read from the Torah about the Akeida... you know the story of Isaac being placed on the altar, and HaShem providing an offering to atone. Isn't that what he did for me? He provided a lamb, the Lamb of God. For my people? For the world?'*

*The shofar sounded, I cried. Wake up from your slumber, O Jews. Wake up! My heart cried out. He heard me and cleansed my heart and hands. I also cried because some of the people around me may never experience this total cleansing... I found forgiveness in something other than myself. I found peace in Yeshua.'*

### 3 Surpassing Glory known by Christian Believers

Old glory, yes. That old clunker had some spirit but the new model is superb. My old Amstrad computer had quite a 'weight' to it! But now I look at my Macbook Air!

An increased understanding of the glory of the old, will result in an even greater appreciation for the surpassing glory of the New Covenant. A few comments will have to suffice as we dip into these verses. But our comments must be accompanied by godly pause. 2Corinthians 3:8 – *will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory.* v9 – *the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.* v10 – *the glory that surpasses.* v18 – *we, unveiled, behold the glory, are being transformed from one degree of glory to another.*

Wow! Pause and meditate.

**(i) Christ is surpassingly superior**

**(ii) The Gospel is transformingly glorious**

Christian... if the veil has been removed from you, whether Jewish or Gentile, you truly need to have a greater recognition of the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ. Christ is surpassingly superior!

I remember asking some American friends who were missionaries in Ireland, what would be our greatest challenge, or greatest danger, as we were moving across the pond in the opposite direction to them. What could they teach us about that transition? Without hesitation, I got their answer in one word - Distractions. In church, in programs, in the great god Sport, in life's busy-ness; they warned me that distractions are the greatest danger. Having lived here for 8 years now, I can firmly say, they were right.

With an abundance of broken families, broken homes, perversions, and addictions... in Christian households! – we need what the old puritans spoke of as, ‘the expulsive power of a superior affection’. Christ MUST be known and appreciated as surpassingly superior! We, with unveiled face, may be graced to behold the GLORY OF GOD! When you have that affection, that superior affection, it is expulsive; it expels... sin, distractions, addictions...

I often lament the extremely insubstantial nature of much evangelicalism in the USA. I am saddened by the ‘Jesus’ that is being presented in pulpits, and mission. But our missiology must be driven by the glorious nature to the ministry: His Name is Jesus. May we pause more to examine the surpassingly superior nature of Jesus to all human religion. May we grow in understanding of the nature of the New Covenant in His blood. May we spend more time gazing upon the beauty of the Lord... (Psalm 27).

I remember a computer geek visiting me in my home in the 1990s, amazed at my new computer that had an encyclopedia on a CD! We both were amazed but in different ways. I was amazed at all the information that bit of circular plastic contained. He was amazed at all the bits and bytes of computer technology that made the disk display historical narrative in video form! No-one today is fascinated by the technology that allows us to ‘google’ something. No-one is stunned by the technology within our phones that is surpassingly greater than that used to put a man on the moon! We have become so familiar with the surpassing glory of new technology!

So too we have become so familiar with the surpassing glory of Jesus. He’s now your buddy, your life coach, your pick me up pill, your therapist, your genie of the lamp. Fill in the blanks!

No, instead pause on those Scriptures above: the ministry of

righteousness... the surpassing glory...we... transformed from one degree of glory to another. No, your genie of the lamp is too small. Christ is surpassingly superior.

Not only is He surpassingly superior, the gospel is transformingly glorious. As the hymn says: *Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love and praise.*

In Jewish mission we have contact with several messianic fellowships. My colleagues and I will sometimes preach in them. But let me state one of the concerns I have with such. I have no problem with Hebrew sensitive worship (if we permit Chinese Churches, and Korean Churches, we must permit ethnically Hebrew Churches or fellowships). My concern is when Philo-semitic Gentiles, with a fascination for all things Jewish, place their love and affection upon Jewishness, rather than upon THE JEW, called Jesus. If Judaism or Jewish Roots holds a higher fascination than Jesus, Houston we have a problem.

I might say I have similar concerns for the fascination with blood moons and raptures, instead of affection for Messiah and Redeemer! Our superior affection must expel all superficial, nonsensical, rabbit-trail, star-gazing Gnosticism that is in church today! ... with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord. Need we anything else?

(Note: Some of these matters are taken up in two later papers - The Lie of the Land, and Rewriting the Rapture.)

## **CONCLUSION: COMMENDING TO THE CONSCIENCE.**

*2Cor 4:1-2 'Therefore having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful underhanded ways. We refuse to practise cunning or tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we*

*would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.'*

I want to be clear. Our missiology is driven by a ministry that declares the surpassing excellence of Christ, the God-man, the Messiah of Israel, and the Suffering Servant of God. We would speak of Him, and declare him, in Jerusalem, Judea and unto the ends of the earth.

But my closing point is this: This ministry (of the surpassing excellence of Christ), is commendable by transparency. In other words, the truth of the gospel's transformation is to be transparent.

It is interesting that Paul says 'we commend ourselves'. Christ is the surpassing one, the superior one. But here Paul says, we commend ourselves. Why should that be Paul? Because the transformation Christ makes within and without us, is to be clearly seen by others. Paul is as much as saying 'Look at me and see the gospel'. Note the strong words Paul uses concerning those who would have a different 'missiology': underhanded, cunning, manipulative.

We must then check ourselves. Are we pragmatists or do we live by principle? Are we a living letter; an open book? Sadly all too often in church, and perhaps even more in para-church mission, we have become diplomats and strategists, instead of heralds. We have become crafty marketeers, selling Jesus; or even exaggerating story writers selling our mission to the funding church. Brethren this should not be!

Regarding 'Israel' ministries, there are far too many using underhand methods. Mention 'Israel' and you get the dollar. Mention Israel and people get their warm fuzzy feelings. I read in a recent magazine article that \$230m is given each year to 'Israel based ministries'. But most of it is not going where it should be going! There are far too many crafty deceivers in Israel ministries. Some CEOs of these 'not for

profits' are receiving a salary of \$500,000 or more. 'So, send your \$20 to bless Israel, (and also bless my bank account)!'

I want you to be more discerning. Look at us! Check out our staff! Challenge us to prove our worth. Examine the ministry of CWI (N America). Traveling missionaries are good at playing the 'market'. We come in and deliver one sermon and can hit it out of the park with smooth talk and exotic accents. Don't be deceived! Yes, with the apostle, I am commending myself to you, as I commend the ministry for your interest and support. So you must ask: *'Is this guy the real deal?'*

Finally, finally, when witnessing to Jewish people, we are to make them jealous. How? By the truth which transforms and by being transparent. The recipients of our gospel conversations aren't stupid. They can see through Gentile nonsense and slick evangelical sales pitch. Our work is to make an irresistible impression.

I end with a comment from my Jewish friend: *'Thank you Stephen. Having you and Wendy by our side as we walk this Yeshua thing out – I must say you have truly been sent for such a time as this. Thank you for not trying to change us, nor push us to do something we simply were not ready to do. You have been a wonderful example of what it means to lead not push.'*

So, we commend ourselves, but of course, we don't preach ourselves. 2Cor 4:5-6. *'What we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God who said "Let light shine out of darkness" has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'*

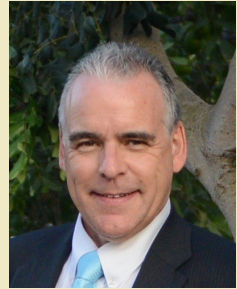
**And therefore glory, glory, yes all glory, is unto the One with surpassing glory, even Jesus. AMEN!**



# WHO ARE WE? WHAT DO WE DO?

## DIRECTOR: STEPHEN ATKINSON

As **Director of Ministry** and 35 years of preaching experience, Stephen has been engaging with churches on behalf of CWI since 2004. With a Biblical mandate, historical reasoning, and present day missionary urgency, Stephen makes the case that every Church must have Jewish mission on its agenda!



## MISSIONARY: MITCH TEPPER

As a **Jewish believer** Mitch has the apostle's burden for his own 'kindred after the flesh'. A graduate of Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, his Scriptural knowledge and personal passion drive him in his street evangelism, one on one relationships, and household bible studies, with the singular purpose of 'Telling Jewish people about Jesus'.



## CWI International

**Christian Witness to Israel** has been sharing Jesus with Jewish people for almost 180 years. Today we have missionaries in the USA, UK, Israel, France, Holland, Hungary, Australia, all faithfully witnessing to Jewish communities across the world.



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