

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

**CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS**

**2: THE FRAGRANCE OF FRIENDSHIPS**

**2a The Aroma of Christ**

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

### THE HOPE OF HISTORY

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

### CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS

<i>The CHALLENGES TO CONNECTING</i>	<i>The separated and the assimilated</i>
	<i>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</i>
	<i>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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## **CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS**

### **2: THE FRAGRANCE OF FRIENDSHIPS**

#### **2a The Aroma of Christ**

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Is there a danger in our online social media driven world to neglect physical person to person evangelism
2. Do you know any Jewish friends? Where do you think you might meet some?
3. Why is the Jewish area of a city often next to Chinatown? How can we use food in the development of friendships?
4. Cross cultural ministry demands cultural / ethnic understanding. In what ways has this course helped you in that?

## 2a THE AROMA OF CHRIST

### INTRODUCTION

When the Apostle said 'we are the aroma of Christ' what did he mean? What does it look like? What does it smell like?

In previous papers we have spoken of some of the challenges to connecting, and the necessity of tender logic and empathy. There is real fear and mistrust of Gentile Christianity which we must address with conversational clarification. There are 'Questions' we must address about God, Sin, Sacrifice and Salvation. We may get deep into apologetics and address some of the objections Jewish people have; we might delve into the depths of rabbinic Judaism and talk through issues in the Talmud.

But the bottom line is that truth will be conveyed through personality, whether we like it or not! There is an unavoidable connection between the message and the messenger. So in 2 Corinthians 2:14,15, we find the apostle saying that the fragrance of the knowledge of God is coming through us. We are 'the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.' (v14) That is a scary thought, to the extent that he later says, 'Who is sufficient for such things?' (v16).

One of the concerns I have with online ministry, or social media ministry, or even simply magazine or tract ministry, is that it detracts from personal ministry. It is easy to mailshot a 1,000 gospel booklets or handout a 100 broadsheets. It is harder to spend an afternoon in selfless gospel conversation with a single individual. Which is better? Which, actually has 'an aroma'?

When someone is known for their perfume, or their aftershave, you will often smell them before you see them. Or

if you have been in their presence for some time, others may even smell their strong scent from you! Peter Naylor writes, *'The apostle claims that an infinitely precious perfume, the Christ whom he preaches, has been diffused upon his person...'*

That will be smelt, felt, and even tell't!

I make no apology for some of these thoughts to be in the realm of the general rather than the specific. I have repeatedly stated that bare apologetics will never win anyone, but Christ-like character and Christ-like aroma, will elicit a response – for good or ill. Jewish people (indeed most people) do not come to faith because we have argued the case and they fall down convinced. It is a work of the Spirit of God, and it is often by the aroma of Christ that we are given a trusting welcome hearing.

So while we have considered the 'O's (Orthodox/Observant) and the 'A's (Agnostic/Atheist), and sought to think through some specifics pertaining to gospel progress in the conversation, in these next two papers we are returning to a more general strategy of witness and words: Christlikeness and carefulness in our communication. In short, forming friendships, and watching our tongues.

## **FROM FEARS TO FRIENDSHIPS**

We have already made clear that a Gentile Christian making a connection with a Jewish person will draw forth certain fears; they will feel threatened. Their ethnic 'belonging' is at stake (at least in their mind). So Gentiles need to go the extra mile to bring them from fear to a real friendship.

### **(i) An Appropriate Attitude**

If you're studying this resource, I guess you've all got a good attitude towards the Jewish people! It is a great place to

start, however, even those who have been involved in Jewish evangelism haven't always maintained a good attitude.

In our historical studies (see AC#9) we not only saw replacement theology in its ugliest form, (Roman Catholicism's inquisitions, tortures and expulsions), but also displacement theology, (Augustine's '*Let them survive, but not thrive*' quote is haunting). The aroma of Christ was certainly not present in John Chrysostom's '*God hates the Jews, therefore I hate the Jews.*'

Instead then, we must exhibit a right attitude, appropriate to an ambassador for Christ. Come to the subject and the people, with that gratitude that we've mentioned. Gentiles, we must come to this people group with a sense of debt. (Salvation is of the Jews.) Come with humility in your friendship building. You're a sinner and the churches and the particular form of Christianity that you come from is not perfect. You have been blessed by God with various providences that have brought you to where you are now. Do not be arrogant. (Romans 11:18) Let us come with humility to the Jewish people.

## **(ii) Spiritually Social**

I repeatedly make the point that Jewish people are all around us in the USA, 6 million give or take, and 42% of the world's Jewish population, no less! While we want intentional outreach, there is also a sense that we will of necessity come across Jewish people. In Northern Ireland, where I lived most of my life, we had 100 Jewish persons, in one synagogue. Needless to say, I didn't meet many in my daily life! But in the USA you will!

In business you will find you come across secular and religious Jewish people. A friend here in Arkansas working

in the world of finance had a study group of a few folks from various parts of the country. They affectionately called themselves, 3 Jews and a Hillbilly! And he got opportunity to share his testimony, engage in hospitality, and even was specifically sought out on one occasion to talk to one of the Jewish persons, (when the others were not present)! That conversation was then followed up by a joint reading of Edith Schaeffer's 'Christianity is Jewish', with further discussion.

Maybe you have a Jewish dentist you can talk with – at least before things are put in your mouth! Or a Jewish lawyer has greatly helped you in a certain case, and you can talk law, righteousness, justice, and Bible! Maybe you have a friend from high-school and you have earned her trust over decades of friendship. Maybe you have discovered a Jewish family at the local store, or the school gate, or they've just moved down your street. One lady told me of her connection with a Jewish lady over a love of fine wine. (I kinda like that form of ministry!)

Someone once said, *'Be spiritually natural and naturally spiritual'*. It is a good piece of advice for any kind of evangelism and particularly for Jewish mission. In all the normal natural things of life, do them spiritually in a way that is pleasing to God and just when you're being spiritual, be natural about it. Don't just switch it on because Jewish people are cautious and perceptive and will see through that.

### **(iii) Friend of the Family**

Jewish life is usually very much community life. If you are privileged to have and grow a friendship you may find you get invited to some community events. Go in a heart beat! You might get invited to a wedding or a bar mitzvah. You might get invited to synagogue for a particularly high holy-day celebration. Go as a visitor, listen and learn, and enjoy

the food! And as we've previously said – assume nothing, and ask lots of questions. Don't go as a preacher. Aroma, in this instance, simply needs smelling.

Synagogues will often run events that are open to Gentiles. Learn of these and go along with your friend. Maybe this will even be a way of furthering the friendship, as you ask about a certain Holocaust Memorial Day meeting. Maybe the synagogue is doing a Hebrew class, and you'd like to learn Biblical Hebrew. (Be aware though that this is often seen as a place where Christians will seek to evangelize, and so there are already suspicions. Do not go as a linguistic illiterate, in the hopes that you will be able to speak about Isaiah 53! That will be spotted a mile away. The aroma will soon start to smell bad!) Therefore... make sure you have a...

#### **(iv) A Transparent Testimony**

The aroma of Christ is obviously that unspoken reality that Jewish people will find among true Christians. They have probably never met or experienced someone with the Shalom of God. We have commented already on Jewish paranoia, and unfulfilled 'searching for the secret'. To come across someone who has 'found' life's meaning and answer in the Jewish Messiah, will be unusual to them, but also somewhat attractive. Will the aroma then be allowed to talk? Yes! Indeed the pleasing aroma will draw forth questions, and you can then freely answer.

But first a little advice. Be natural. There will always be a desire to hear life experiences. Tell your story, naturally. Tell of challenges you faced, needs you had unfulfilled, or your own 'search'. Draw forth their own story and compare. Sensitively, with empathy, and tender logic, display how you got the answer.



The method of Gentile evangelism will include 'provoking to jealousy'. You might be able to share that you love the Hebrew Scriptures. If they are not very religious, you can open them up to them. Tell how they changed your life. *'I'd love to go through some special passages with you. This psalm spoke to me when I was... This wisdom book of Ecclesiastes is so relevant for the 21st century! ... What a King David was... look at the mess of his life, yet God was merciful. ... Poor Jeremiah, and all the prophets for that matter... how many of them were actually listened to. Do you feel like that sometime? But what did they say.. and what promises of God did they hold onto... I heard this preacher once talk about Psalm 67. He said the Jewish people 3,000 years ago were praying for the Gentiles to come to know the God of Israel and his salvation. Can you believe that?'* (Reference them to AC Course #1!)

Your transparent testimony and walk through the Bible and its Jewish Savior, will make an impact. That fragrance will be noticeable! Hopefully they will realize that that perfume actually originated in Israel! In fact, it was originally theirs! Maybe they should read their book sometime.

### **(v) Food glorious food!**

I've often said that the summary of the Jewish festivals is: 'They tried to kill us, God saved us, let's eat'.

Jewish people love Chinese food! Did you know that? Why is Chinatown usually next to the Jewish area? Take them out to your favorite Chinese restaurant.

Or... what's not to love about Jewish cooking? Ask your friend to help you with some recipes. *'What is so special about Matzah Ball soup? What are the particular memories you have as a child with your mother's Jewish cooking?'* They will love to respond and help you understand the deep impact Jewish

food has upon Jewish life. Grow the friendship over food.

Hospitality is a great means of developing friendships. Jews are 'people' people and they like visiting over a meal. But check if they keep kosher. (They may even prefer to be a little more lax when visiting with you! *'Oh, you're making shrimp – delicious!'*)

I often ask if they would prefer me to get disposable plates or get some food from the Jewish deli. Always best to ask, and maybe they'll bring desert! Some may be simply happy your dish-washer has steam-cleaned away the milk and meat mix that might have been on your plates! Or they may indeed prefer disposable. Your thoughtfulness and sensitivity really matters. The Aroma of Christ continues to have effect.

**(vi) Recognize and enjoy cross cultural conversations.**

There is sadly a kind of anti-race mindset that would glory in a uniformity of multi-ethnic communities. We all need to get along so let's not talk about racial differences. But the truth is, we are divinely made with racial differences. Inequities of strength, stamina and size are not social constructs to be destroyed – they are divinely ordained. The Church needs to celebrate racial diversity, in the way the Scriptures celebrate it. Further, we need to engage in cross-cultural ministry, recognizing the beauty, as well as the challenges, thereof.

I came to live in the USA almost 9 years ago. I soon became bi-lingual, calling it a trunk, not a boot; a windshield, not a windscreen; an interstate and highway, not a motorway; a truck, not a lorry; an elevator, not a lift... and so on. You get the picture. I still have an accent, particularly when I preach passionately, though it is diminishing. And I still use wee phrases like... wee phrases. People still introduce me as coming from Ireland, upon which I need to correct with a 'I

*come from Northern Ireland. That's a whole different country from Ireland;* and then I give a historical and geographical reason why that is important. *'Wars have been fought over that distinction!'*

Part of your growing the friendship may be to seek to understand better Jewish culture and history in order to engage better in cross cultural ministry. Make the mistakes of saying Ireland, so I can correct you and then we can laugh together and grow together. Your (lack of) understanding of Jewish life and culture will mean many mistakes, but done within an orbit of a pleasing aroma, it may draw forth a laugh and a deepening of friendship.

...

So these are a few ways to take down some of the challenges, with tenderness, empathy, sensitivity, and real godliness that is sensed on multiple fronts - ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hand! In short, when this happens, your initial connecting, and initial casual friendship can develop into real friendships. And in a real friendship you will want something more. A real friend is someone who will not leave alone matters of ultimate significance, namely, eternal issues. You will want them to come to know their Messiah, by repentance and faith, in the finished work, of Yeshua ha Moshiach.

## **AN INVITATION TO MEET THE MESSIAH**

In addition to our *'Awakening the Conscience'* Course, we are also developing a small group, or one on one, study outline that may be helpful if your friendship evangelism has developed to the point of being able to sit down and consider some deeper issues, perhaps by way of a small bible study.

Our *'Meeting the Messiah; Making Him Master'* Course is

still at an early stage of development as I write this, but our suggested outline is for a 12 week study that looks at Prophetic Matters, Personal Matters, Penitence Matters, and Perseverance Matters.

Meet the Messiah: Make Him Master - we've called it affectionately, **The M&M Course!**

What is the Bible all about? What is life all about? Can you achieve righteousness by mitzvot? Among other things, we look at: 'A question a Jewish leader didn't understand (John 3); A conviction of a Jewish fisherman turned preacher (Acts 2); a confession that a Jewish lawyer points out (Romans 9).

While our AC Course has full script pdfs for you to read through as well as YouTube videos, in the M&M Course I am endeavoring much more to give a skeleton outline, that is adaptable to your own situation, whether one on one, or small group. Your relationships with your Jewish friends will be a very different levels, so it is not easy, nor advisable to give you a one size fits all. Furthermore, the pace at which you want to proceed is also entirely up to you and your friend(s).

Feel free to use my opening words from that course, to see if there might be interest from your friends to take things to the next level:

(Introductory Words in the Meet the Messiah Course):

*'Whether you are a Jewish atheist, agnostic, observant or chasid, in this course of small group study and reflection we want to honestly walk with you through some Scriptures and Jewish traditions, seeking that you will encounter the Jewish Messiah. His name is Yeshua.*

*We also want to assure you this message is Jewish, and the*

*first messianic (Christian) missionaries were Jewish. We are not presenting to you a Gentile Gentle Jesus, but a Jewish Moshiach, declared by Jewish prophets, spoken of by Jewish leaders and lawyers who declared himself sent 'to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'*

*We want you to meet the Messiah; we want you to make him Master.'*

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**Conclusion:**

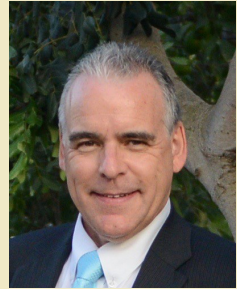
The aroma of Christ can be experienced over the aroma of food, both physical and spiritual. But our ultimate desire is that our divinely ordained friendships will result in Jewish people feasting on the Bread of Life.

I trust that this will be of help to you as you lead your Jewish friend to 'the children's bread' - yes, again, his name is Jesus. (Matt 15:26)

# 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'.



## International Mission to Jewish People

Internationally we have 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.



**CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO ISRAEL (N America)**

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