

# Confronting with Care!

## Session 3

You remember that the way we initiate dialogue, the way we start the conversation with our prospect, is to ask that question, "Jim, how are you and the Lord doing? What if He were to come right now, would you know, nothing doubting, that you'd go home to be with Him to live forever?"

Now, if he's a typical, evangelical, precious, fundamentalist, he will say, "Oh yes! Praise the Lord! I know I'm going to heaven!" Then you'll want to ask him, "Well, great! Are you a Christian?" "Oh Yes!", he will say. You see how the flowchart flows. Then ask him; now you remember the one who asks the questions is the one who controls the conversation. So ask him the details of his experience. "Well, how old were you? Where did it happen? Was it here in town? Was it somewhere else? Was it on a Sunday morning? Was it at home? If you went down to the front pew, what did the preacher do? What did he say in that prayer? Were you saved in that prayer? If you had a heart attack right after that, I mean, if you had died on your way home that night; going home from church services and would have died in that car wreck, do you believe you'd gone to heaven?" "Oh yes!" Find out the details. Pinpoint the place where that person actually believed he got saved, and then just simply turn it around. "Well, thank you, Jim. I was not saved that way. May I share with you my story? May I tell you how I was saved?"

Now, what is our story? By the way, that response I've given to you is a typical evangelical. If, instead, you are talking to a high church; if you're talking to an individual who was sprinkled as a baby, then that person does not have an experience he or she remembers. So, it's a quicker trip! When you ask the question, "What if the Lord were to come right now. Would you know without a doubt that you'd go to heaven?" "Oh yes!" "Well, great! Are you a Christian?" "Yes." "Well, how old were you?" That person may say, "Well, I've always been a Christian." "You've always been a Christian?" "Yes. Ever since I was a baby." "Oh. You were sprinkled as a baby?" "Yes!" Now, that person doesn't have an experience he or she remembers. So, just simply go to the bottom of the flowchart. "Thank you for telling me your story. I wasn't saved that way. I didn't come to have eternal life that way. May I tell you my story?" "Sure." It's a much quicker trip, because that person doesn't have an experience that he or she remembers.

Now, "May I tell you my story?" What is our story? My particular story is I that I was raised by Christian parents, and I wanted to find out one time if what they were telling me was the truth. And so I will tell my prospect that very thing. Or course I knew what they were telling me was the truth, because all my growing up years they would show it to me in the Bible. But as I am sharing this with my prospect, I will say, "I wanted to find out if what they were telling me was the truth, and so I opened up God's Word, and look what I found." Now, my first reference is 1 John 5:13, in your Bibles; you might want to go there. In 1 John 5:13, John says, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may KNOW that you HAVE eternal life." In other words, the Bible says that we can know we have eternal life!, by the things that are written.

In We Care Ministries, we have put together a little chain-reference New Testament. Our question is engraved in gold on the outside front cover. "What if the Lord were to come right now? Would you know for sure, nothing doubting, that you would go to heaven?" Then, engraved in gold we have the words, "Please turn to page 362".

When you go to page 362 in this little New Testament, your transition statement is at the very top. Here's what you say. Then you go to the verse that is underlined and read that to your prospect. Then, you go to the bottom of the page, and in a script type that is different from the block type of the text; in script, then, is your next transition statement and your next page number. There are 27 references in this little New Testament. So, that first reference is 1 John 5:13. At the bottom of the page then, we simply ask, "Then, what has been written?" Next, I take them to John 8:24, and at the very top of the page, there is the transition statement, "Isn't this a life-and- death statement?" Now, there's a reason I ask that question. I want to show my prospect that in the Bible there are some life and death statements that are so clear and so precise, they don't need an interpreter. I will ask my prospect, "What is a life and death statement?" I will give this kind of an illustration. I will say, "What if someone were yelling in your bedroom window at three o'clock in the morning, 'Get out of the house!

The house is on fire!" Isn't that a life and death statement? And it's not just a life and death statement, it's a CLEAR life and death statement. You don't need someone to come over and interpret it for you. It demands ACTION! Get up and get out of the house!

And I will ask my prospect, "Doesn't the Bible have some statements like this?" I will tell my prospect there was a time in my life when I went to the Lord, and I just simply said, "Lord, I'm looking for some life and death statements. Don't you have any such life and death statements that tell me what I need to understand, what I need to do to go to heaven?" And do you know, the Bible says there are some? This 1 John 8:24 is one of them. Especially in the second part of that verse. Jesus said, "Except you believe that I am HE, you will die in your sins." Now, that ought to be underlined, it ought to be plugged in; and it ought to blink on and off like a neon sign. "You'll die in your sins if you do not believe that I am He," Jesus says, "you will die in your sins."

Now, I will always find the common denominator with my prospect. I will say, "Here, I was a human being just like we are human beings. And I read that statement, and Jesus is saying that I have to believe He is who He says He is. If I don't, I will, what?" And I will put my finger right under those words in the Bible and make my prospect read them. "I will, what?" "Die in my sins." I will say, "So, I went exploring. I knew what my parents had taught me to believe concerning the identity of Jesus Christ, but I wanted the Bible to tell me so. So I went exploring."

Next, I go to Matt 16:13 and following, where Jesus is on the coast of Caesarea Philippi and He asks His disciples, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" They gave Him various answers. "Well, Jesus, some say you're John the Baptist, other's say you're Elijah, or Jeremiah or one of the prophets." And then Jesus asked, 'Alright, now who do you say that I am?' And Peter said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.' Then Jesus said, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but My Father which is in heaven.'

Who's in heaven? God. So Jesus is planning to be the Son of Whom? Of God. Jesus claims to be the Son of God. Now, in our next transition statement, I will ask, "Is His being the Son of God all we must believe concerning His identity?" And we will go to John 1:1. Now you know what that verse says. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Then I take them to verse 14, where the Bible says, "And the Word became flesh." So who's the Word? Well, Jesus is the Word in the beginning, and as the Word in the beginning, He was not only with God, that He was God. What is that talking about? I will then ask, "Well, when Jesus came to the earth, did He leave His Godhood in Heaven and just come to the earth as a man?" I will take them next to Colossians 2:9, where the Bible says, "For in Him, in Jesus, dwells all the fullness of the Godhead", how? "Bodily." So Jesus didn't leave His Godhood in Heaven, He is still God! He is simply God, Who put on flesh, and dwelt among us.

I will next then take them to Hebrews 1:8, by the way, which is a quote from Psalm 45:6, where God the Father, calls His own Son God. The quote is, "But of the Son He sayeth, "Thy throne, O God, lasts forever and ever." So God the Father calls His Own Son God.

Now, I will take them next, in our little chain-reference New Testament to John 8:58, where Jesus calls Himself something very, very special. He says, "Before Abraham was, I AM." Jesus actually calls Himself the great "I AM". Now, where did He pick up that term? Back over in the Old Testament, in Exodus chapter 3; do you remember the story? Moses is standing before the burning bush. And the voice in the burning bush tells Moses to back to the land of Egypt and free the children of Israel. And Moses asks, "Well, who are you? What's your name?" And what does the voice say? "I AM," said I AM. Jehovah your God. Jesus picks up on that very name and applies it to Himself. He says in John 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I AM." Go back to John 8:24, which is that life and death statement. You remember, where Jesus said, "Except you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." Look at that statement a little closer. Jesus actually leaves the pronoun "He" out. It's in italics. That's a little script kind of writing different from the block type. That's just the translator's way of showing they added it. What Jesus really said was, in this life and death statement was, He said, "Except you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins." So you see there? Jesus is saying something very, very specific concerning what we must believe; if we don't believe it we're going to die in our sins. He's saying we must believe He is Jehovah-God in the flesh. If we don't believe that we're going to die in our sins.

Now, with my prospect, I am very quick to go to Matthew 3:16-17, where Jesus is being baptized by John. On the same scene, all of a sudden, the Spirit descends in the form of a dove; and then, number three, a voice speaks out of the heavenlies saying, "This is My Beloved Son." The reason I go there is to show there are three "persons" in the Godhead. There is Jesus standing in the water, there is the Spirit in the form of a dove, and then the Father speaks out of the heavenlies. There are all three. There are three persons in the Godhead. The reason I do that is because I have come across some precious oneness, holiness, that when they hear me say that Jesus is God, they think that I am agreeing with their doctrine, and their doctrine says there is only one person in the Godhead. That's not what I'm saying at all. There's not just one person in the Godhead, there are three. There are is Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and all three of them show up on the same scene, right there, in Matthew chapter three. Now, have you noticed that all we've done here is to handle that first life and death statement, where Jesus says, "Except you believe that I AM He, you will die in your sins." So we simply want to show who Jesus is.

I next take them to 1 Timothy 2:5, and ask them to see there in that verse, what is Jesus called here? Now the verse is, "THERE IS only one God and one Mediator between God and man, who is Himself man, Christ Jesus." What is Jesus called here? He is called a mediator. Now what's a mediator? Isn't a mediator a go-between, a middle man? I give this illustration. Between Monroe, Louisiana and West Monroe, where I live, there is the Washita River. There are five bridges that span that gap. One day not long ago, there was a barge that came down the river and hit one of the pylons of one of the bridges and knocked half that bridge off into the water. The highway department came along and closed off both sides. Now why would they do that? I mean, after all, they only hit half of it. The other side hadn't even been touched. It was sticking out there, but it was still good. Because a bridge is worthless unless it touches both shores. Jesus, because He is God, He touches God's shore; because He's man, He touches our shore. You see, it wasn't good enough to believe that Jesus was John the Baptist, or Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. They were good men. They were God fearing servants. But the problem was, their identity was wrong. They couldn't save themselves. They couldn't get out there past half way; they couldn't get out there half way. They couldn't get themselves to heaven. You see, all the way to the other side; much less get anybody else. But because Jesus is man He touches our shore; but because He is God He touches God's shore. No wonder He is our one and only way home. All the way to heaven. Now, why do we even need a mediator? I mean, what's the problem? Is there a problem between us and God?

I take my prospect to Isaiah 59:1,2; and those verses show that there is a separation between us and God. That we have been separated from God because of sin. Because of sin in our own lives! We have been separated; therefore there is a gap between us and God that needs to be breached. So, I will ask, "What can save us?"

I next take them to another life and death statement, this being more of a life promise than a death threat. I take them to Romans 1:16. You know what that one says. Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto...", now what's the magic word? Salvation. That's what we're talking about here, isn't it? Salvation dialogue. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation." I love to ask my prospect, "What is the gospel?" I find all kind of precious, but different, answers. I find my prospect to say things like, "Well, it's living the Christian life." No, it's not living the Christian life. That's response to the gospel. I often hear my prospects say, "The gospel? Well, yea, it's the Bible, isn't it?" Well, it's found in the Bible. So I'll say to my prospect, "I'll tell you what. Let's let the Bible interpret itself." Now, I will say this early on in our study. Let's let the Bible interpret itself. You know why? Because I want to set a precedent here in our conversation to show that all the way through it, the Bible will actually interpret itself. So that when I get to baptism, I will have set the stage so that it will be difficult for them to say, "Oh. Baptism. Well, now, baptism is just your interpretation." So early on here, I will show how the Bible interprets itself; time after time after time.

I will take my prospect then to 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, and I will show them that first verse, where Paul says, "I declare to you the gospel." In other words, Paul is simply saying, "I am going to remind you; I'm going to tell you what the gospel is. In verse 2 he says, "By which you are saved." So what saves us? The gospel! Paul says, "I declare to you the gospel ... by which you are saved." In verses 3 and 4 he says how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, how He was buried, and how He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Now, the Bible then, interpreting itself, tells us that the gospel, being God's power to save us, is the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That, then, is the gospel!

Next, I will take my prospect to Ephesians 1:7. I will ask my prospect this question. "Have you ever wondered why Jesus had to do each of these things in order to save us?" Brethren, listen to me. Jesus has told us to go into all the world and preach the gospel. Let's talk the gospel first! Let's help our prospect to understand why He had to do each of these things in order to handle the problems that separate us from God. In Ephesians 1:7 the Bible says, "In Him, in Jesus, in Him, we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." So, what is it that we get in the blood of Jesus? Specifically, redemption and forgiveness!, according to that verse. I will ask my prospect, "Do you realize how sweet, how wonderful, how beautiful this forgiveness really is?"

I next take them to Jude 24, and show them, that in the blood of Jesus, it is possible for us to be presented faultless; faultless. Did you know; I know we sing some songs that use the words, but I'm afraid that we're singing an untruth. We are not pardoned from sin in the blood of Jesus Christ. I've looked it up. There's not a Greek word for pardon in the New Testament. We're not pardoned. You see, pardon brings forth the idea that as the governor steps up to the criminal, so to speak, and opens up the cell door, and he says, "I pardon you." What he is saying to that criminal is, "You don't have to pay the consequences of your crime. You can go free." He doesn't remove the criminal's guilt. He can't do that. But Jesus, in the shedding of His blood, not only removes the penalty, but He removes the guilt! He cleanses us. We are able to be presented faultless before the Father. Without fault! I'll tell you, in Romans 5:9, the Bible says we are justified. Justified. Yes, it is just as if I had never sinned the first time!, before my God. I don't know about you. But I find that incredibly good news! I mean, as my God looks at me, of course, only through the blood of Christ; God puts on His shades. They're not black, blue, or brown. They're red. And as He puts on His red shades, and looks at me, and us; as He looks at us who are Christians; and He sees us through the red blood of Jesus Christ, it wipes away our all crimes, all our sins, and we are able to be presented to Him faultless. Now, I know in reality we are sinners. In fact, if we say we have no sin, we are what? Liars. And the truth is not in us. That's right. We are liars, the truth is not in us. We know in reality we are sinners. We compute sin. In reality, what is it? Garbage in, garbage out. We know in reality we are sinners. But God imputes righteousness through His own precious Son. We are justified through the blood of Christ, and He is able then to present us faultless, because of the blood of Jesus Christ. Oh! Wow! I don't know about you, but I find that exciting! I am not just forgiven, I am clean! I am faultless! Because of Jesus Christ, forgiveness is so, so sweet. Well, that's what the death of Jesus then, presents to us.

Now, why did Jesus have to come out of the grave? Why was He resurrected? Is it just a history lesson? Basically, Jesus was raised from the grave for two reasons. One, to prove His claim that He is the Son of God. We've had a bunch of men and women even who have claimed to be God in world history. We've had a lot of Jim Joneses. We've had a lot of Herods. Well, here steps up Jesus. Here is another human being! He also claims to be God. What makes him different from Jim Jones? Well, Jesus came out of the grave! Jim Jones is still in his. So, that's one reason why Jesus came out of the grave. There is another reason, though. And that second reason is to show that Jesus conquered the grave for the rest of us human beings who are Christians. In your Bibles, if you will, turn the 1 Corinthians chapter 15. I want you to run your eyes on down to verse 20. Now, it's amazing; the first four verses of chapter 15, Paul tells us what the gospel is, and then he spends the rest of the chapter dealing with one aspect of the gospel; mainly, the resurrection of Christ. In verse 20 the Bible says, "Now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep." Maybe your footnote will say those of you who have died. It goes on to say, "For since by man CAME death, also by Man CAME the resurrection of the dead." Why did he say that?

In fact, what is he saying? Well, I will point out to my prospect, "Isn't it amazing how the Bible again interprets itself. Verse 22 interprets verse 21. Verse 22 says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." You see, Adam is that first man he's talking about in verse 21; Christ is the second man he's talking about in verse 21. Verse 23 says, "Each one in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then those WHO ARE Christ's (apostrophe s, possessive case, those who belong to him) at His coming." Now, you know what these four verses are telling us? They are telling us that Jesus is the first human being that conquered the grave, and in His conquering the human grave, He opened the door for the rest of us humans, who are Christians, to see our own grave conquered that we might experience life in heaven. Of course in John chapter 5 the Bible says all the graves will be opened; all will come forth from the grave. Those who have done evil to a resurrection of judgment; those who have done right and who are Christians who are God's, to a resurrection of eternal life. The point is, Jesus has opened our grave to life.

I wish I had time to talk about the resurrection of the human body. Over here in 1 Corinthians 15:35, Paul asks, "Someone will say, 'How are the dead raised up? With what body do they come?'" And then he shows that in our own realm, there's different kind of flesh. There's one kind of flesh of men, another of beast, another of fish, another of birds; there are the stars, the moon, there in that celestial realm. Those things in the celestial realm are different from those things on the terrestrial plane; that is, on the earth. But he's showing that even in our own realm, he says, "You already know you have different kind of flesh. And in verse 42 he says, "So also is the resurrection of the body! The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." Over here in the last part of chapter 15, he says now, "We must all be changed." Don't miss that point. We must all be changed. But brethren, the body that is sown is the body that will be raised. In 1 Corinthians chapter 6 he says that the body that can now commit fornication is the body that will be raised." In other words, you are not you without your body. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Paul says that God wants to save the entirety of us, and we are not whole, we are not entire until we are body, soul, and spirit. So Jesus conquered the human grave in order to conquer our human grave! That body you have now you'll have forever. It'll be changed. Don't miss that! It'll be changed. He goes on to say in verse 53, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption. And this mortal must put on immortality." And then he repeats himself to emphasize his point in the very next verse, verse 54. He says, "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory! O Death! Where is your sting? O Hades! Where is your victory?'" He says in verse 57, "Thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." But he says, "This mortal must put on immortality."

In a nutshell the gospel, then, brings us two things. It brings us life and immortality. I take my prospect to 2 Timothy 1:10, where the Bible says that Jesus Christ has abolished death. There are only two kinds of death. There is physical death and spiritual death. That's all there is. Do you know of another kind? The Bible says Jesus Christ abolished death. Frankly He abolished the whole category of death. He abolished physical death and spiritual death. How do we know? Because that verse says so. Read on. It says, "And He brought life and immortality to light (He exposed it) through the gospel." Now, what is the gospel? It is the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I want you to notice something here. He brings life and immortality through the gospel. The death and the resurrection from the grave of Jesus Christ. Now watch how it fits hand in glove. He brings us life specifically through the death of Jesus Christ. How is that? Well, Isaiah 53, He takes our place in death. Our place. Yea. Romans 6:23, we deserve to die. The wages of sin is death. Isaiah 53, He takes our place. Now Jesus is life. God is life. When we walked with God we walked in life. But Isaiah 59, when we separate ourselves from God, we not only gave up our relationship with Him, but we gave up on life. But through the gospel we are forgiven. Our sins are forgiven in the blood of Jesus Christ. Therefore our sins are done away with. Our sins is what separated us from God in the first place. If that's done away with, we're no longer separated. If we're no longer separated, we're back with God. And we're back with God, we have life. So we get life through His death. Is that beautiful? And then he says, through His resurrection, we can get in on immortality. You see, one of these

days in the future, whenever that is, God is going to come back in Jesus Christ. These bodies of ours are going to come from the grave. He will clothe them with immortality, and then we'll be able to go all the way home to heaven with Him. This mortal will be clothed with immortality. And that's made possible because Jesus, who is man, but He's more than man, He's also God; but as man He conquered man's grave. Opening the door for us who are Christians to be able to come out and be clothed with immortality, that we might be able to go all the way home to heaven.

I love Romans 5:10. The Bible says there, "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His son." He is going to bring us back through the death; yea. Because it's in His death that He shed His blood. Through His blood we have forgiveness of sins. If our sins are done away with, He brings us back. We are reconciled in our relationship. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His son; much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. He came to life again. He is going to bring that grave-conquering to us so that our bodies will come out, and we'll be saved to the utmost in the resurrection; clothed with immortality bodies, ready for heaven. That's the gospel. And that's what the gospel brings to us. That's motivational, isn't it? Making us want to get in on Jesus Christ, and what He has come to bring to us. The death and resurrection brings us life and immortality. Brings us reconciliation and salvation.

Now, I will ask my prospect, "Don't you want to get in on it?"