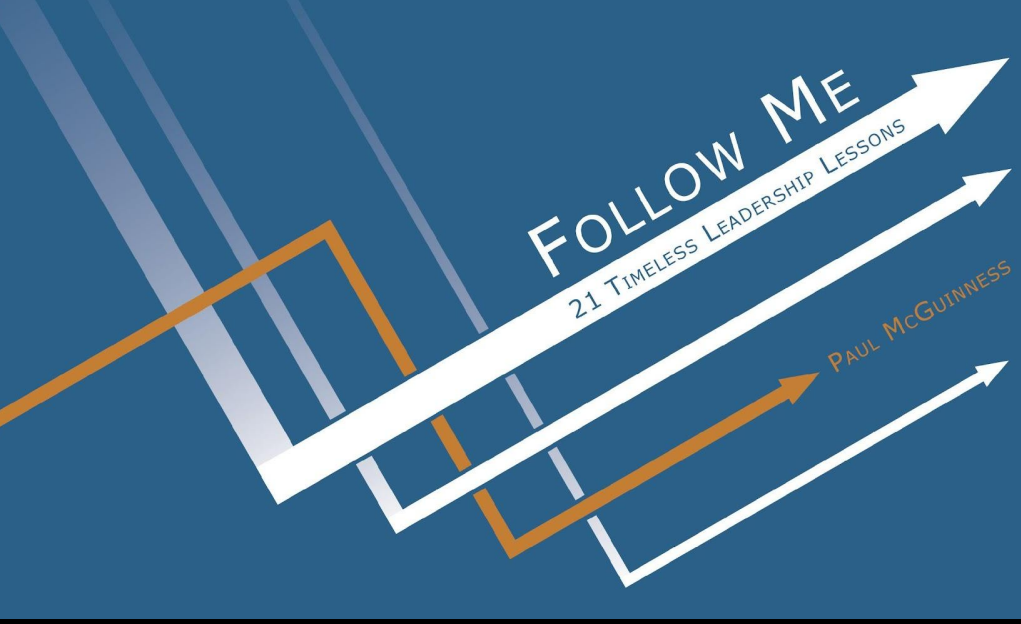
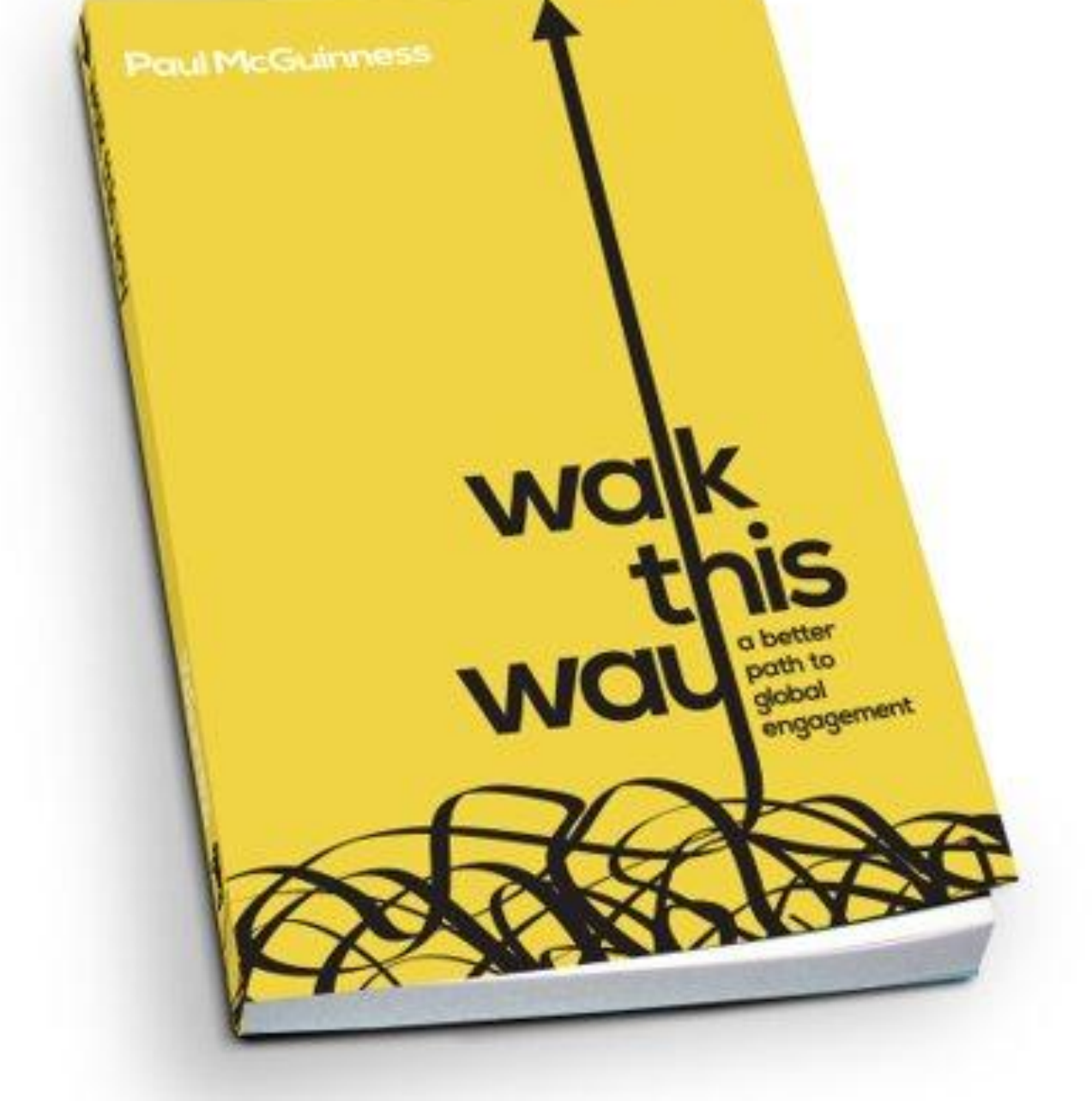


drpaulmcguinness.com
@dr_pmcg





seeing **the story . . .**

Act 1
CREATION

Act 2
FALL

Act 3
REDEMPTION

Act 4
RESTORATION

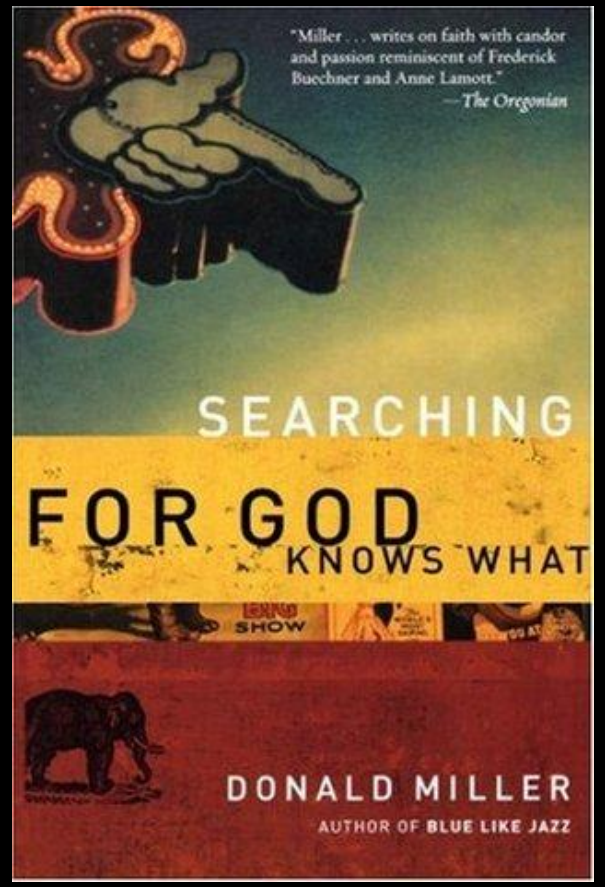




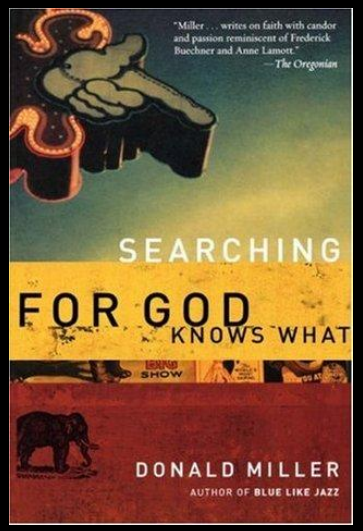
sharing **the story . . .**

What's missing?



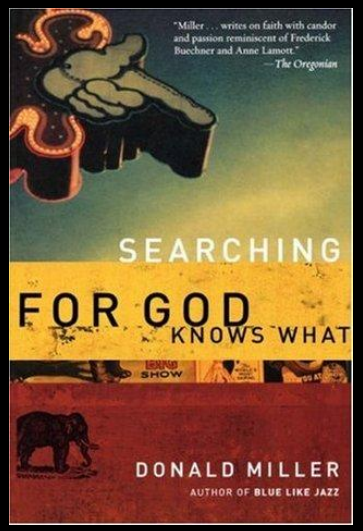


While teaching a class of Bible college students, I presented a form of the gospel, but left out a key element, to see if they would notice. I told them in advance that I was going to leave out a critical element of the gospel, and I ask them to listen carefully to figure out the missing piece.

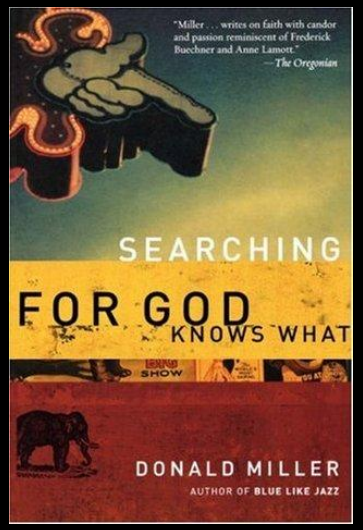


I told them man was sinful, and this was obvious when we looked at the culture we live in.

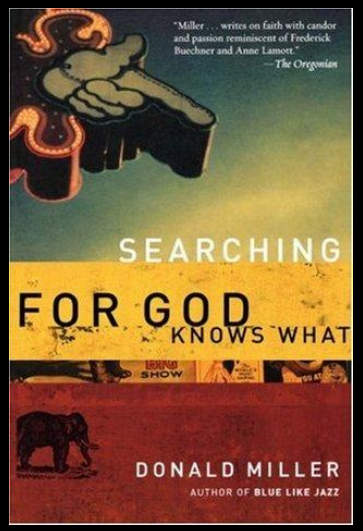
I pointed out specific examples of depravity, including homosexuality, abortion, drug use, song, lyrics on the radio, newspaper, headlines, and so on. Then I told the class that , men must repent, and showed them scriptures that spoke firmly of the idea.



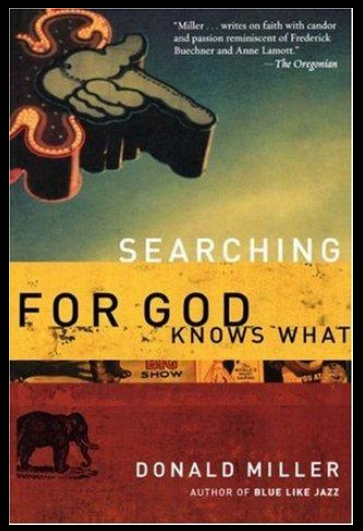
I gave the class statistics regarding teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, going into detail about what it is, they would be saved from if they would only repent, and how their lives could be, God-honoring, and God-centered , and this would give them a sense of purity, and the feeling of fulfillment on earth, and that God would provide for them in relationships, and in finances and in comfort.



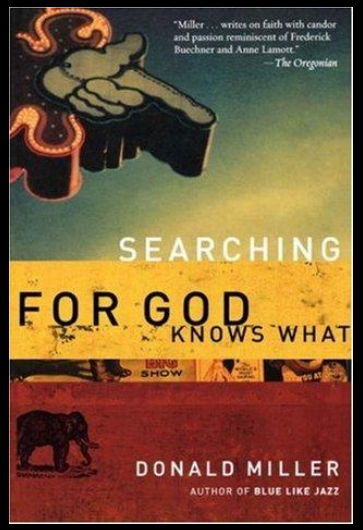
I used the true life example I heard from a preacher about a man in Missouri, who, warning people of a bridge that had collapsed, shot a flare gun directly at oncoming cars so they would stop before they drove over the bridge to their deaths. I said I was like that man shooting flares at cars, and they could be mad at me and frustrated, but I was saving their lives, because the wages of sin is death, and they had to repent in order to see heaven. I then pointed to scripture about the wages of sin, being death, and talked at length about how sin separated us from God.



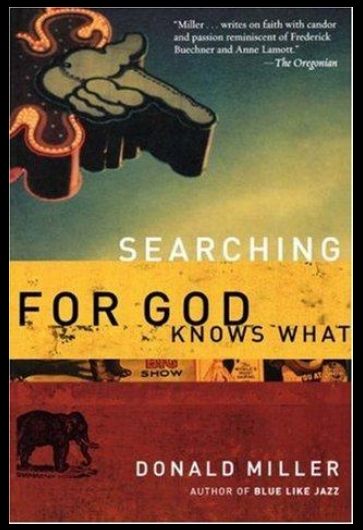
Then I spoke of the beauty of morality and told a story of a friend who chose not to cheat on his wife, and so now enjoyed the fruits of his marriage, committed in love to his wife, grateful that he never betrayed the purity and beauty of their relationship.



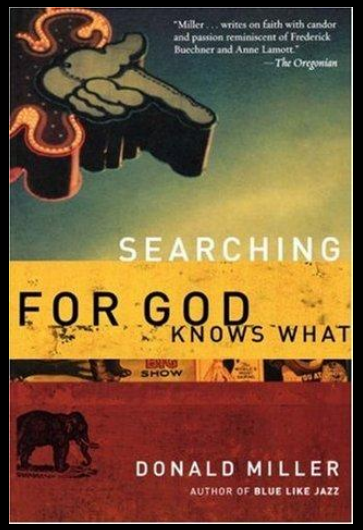
I talked about heaven and how great it will be to walk on streets of gold, and how there will probably be millions of miles of mountains and rivers and how great it will be to fish those rivers, and sit with our friends around a fire beneath a mountain peak that reaches up into Stars so thick we could barely imagine the beauty of the expanse.



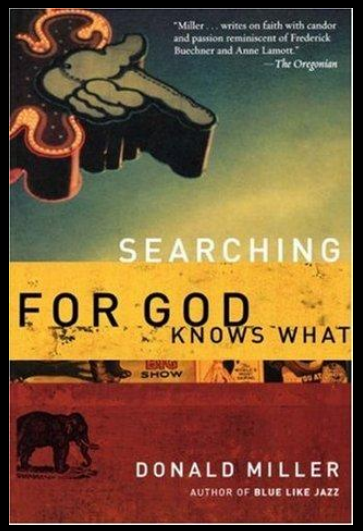
When I was done, I rested my case, and asked the class if they could tell me what it was I had left out of this Gospel presentation.



I waited as a class of Bible college students –
who that year, had read several textbooks about Christian theology,
who had read the majority of the Bible,
all of whom had taken an evangelism class only weeks before
in which they went door-to-door to hundreds of homes,
and shared their faith using a pamphlet that explained the gospel,
who had grown up in Christian homes,
attending strong, evangelical, churches,
who had taken both New Testament Introduction and Old Testament introduction –
sat there for several minutes in uncomfortable silence.



None of the 45 students in the class realized that I had presented a gospel without once mentioning the name of Jesus.



The story bares repeating: I presented a gospel to Christian Bible college students and left out Jesus. Nobody noticed, even when I said, I was going to neglect something very important , even when I ask them to think very hard about what it was I had left out, even when I stood there for several minutes in silence.

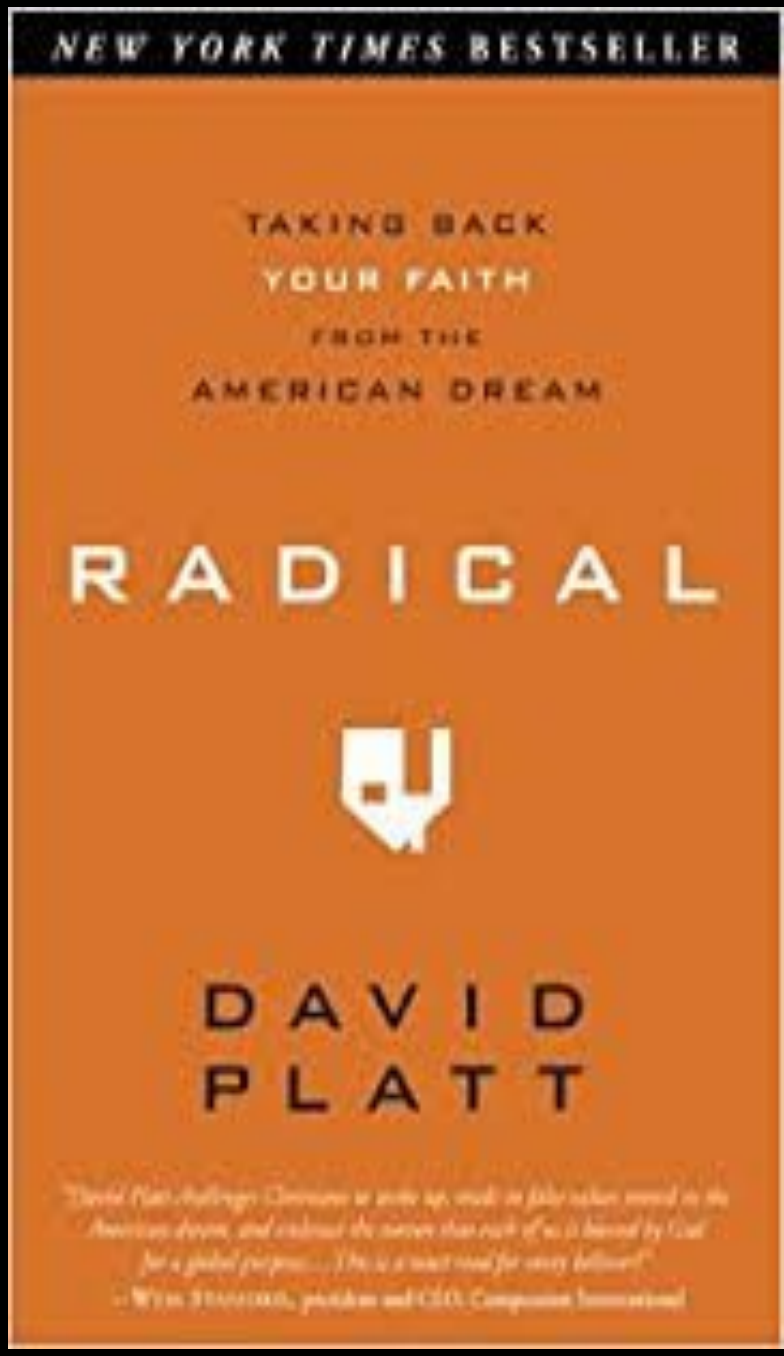
If we tried that at Lodestar, do you think the same thing could happen?

Why or Why Not?

GAP YEAR
AT LODESTAR


From orphan to Your child
From a stone to running wild
From a seed in the ground to breaking out

How could you communicate the distinction between Christianity and other religions?



I remember sitting outside a Buddhist temple in Indonesia. Men and women filled the elaborate, colorful temple grounds, where they daily performed their religious rituals.

Meanwhile, I was engaged in a conversation with a Buddhist leader and a Muslim leader in this particular community.

They were discussing how all religions are fundamentally the same and only superficially different.

“We may have different views about small issues,” one of them said,
“but when it comes down to essential issues, each of our religions is the same.”

I listened for a while and then they asked me what I thought. I said, “It sounds as though you both picture God (or whatever you call god) at the top of a mountain. It seems as if you believe that we are all at the bottom of the mountain, and I may take one route up the mountain, you may take another, and in the end we will all end up in the same place.”

They smiled as I spoke.
Happily, they replied,
“Exactly! You understand!”

Then I leaned in and said, “Now let me ask you a question. What would you think if I told you that the God at the top of the mountain actually came down to where we are?

What would you think if I told you that God doesn’t wait for people to find their way to him, but instead he comes to us?”

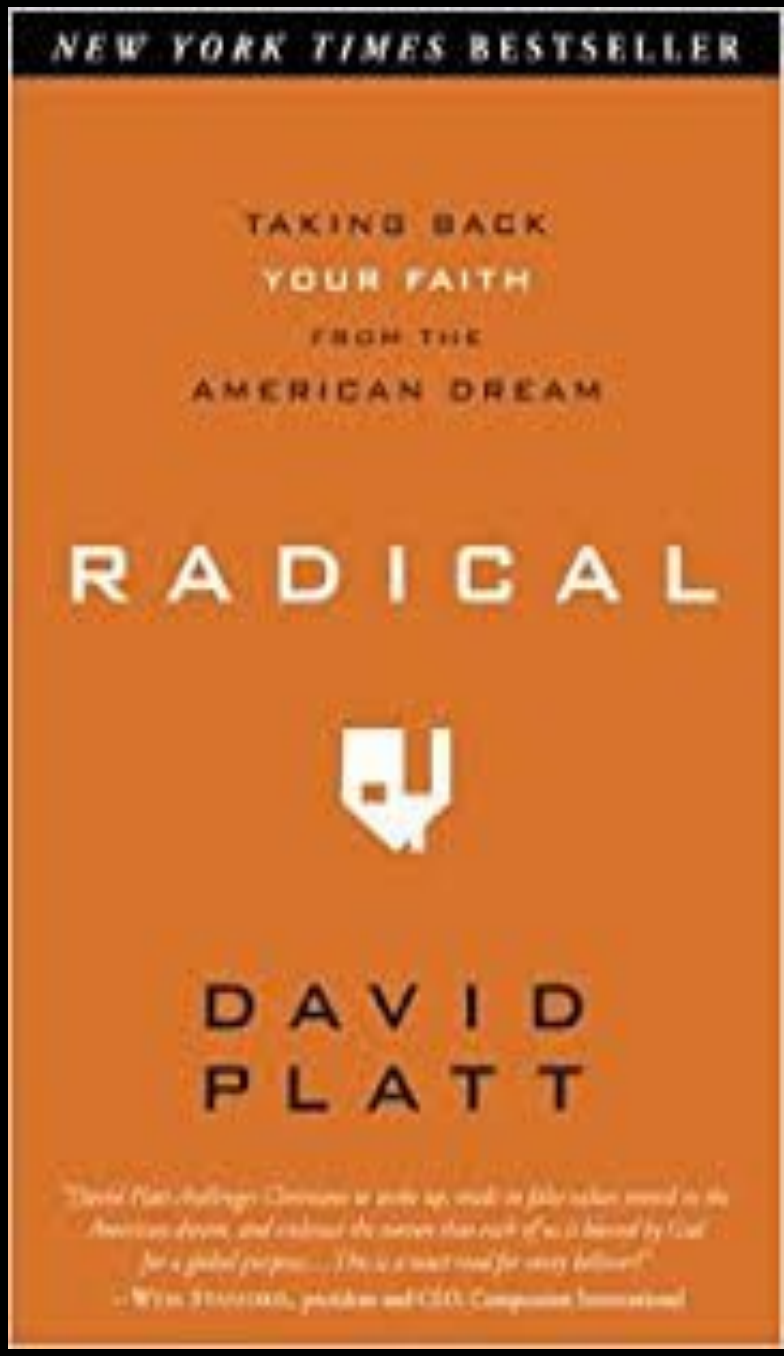
They thought for a moment and then responded, “That would be great.”

I replied, “Let me introduce you to Jesus.”

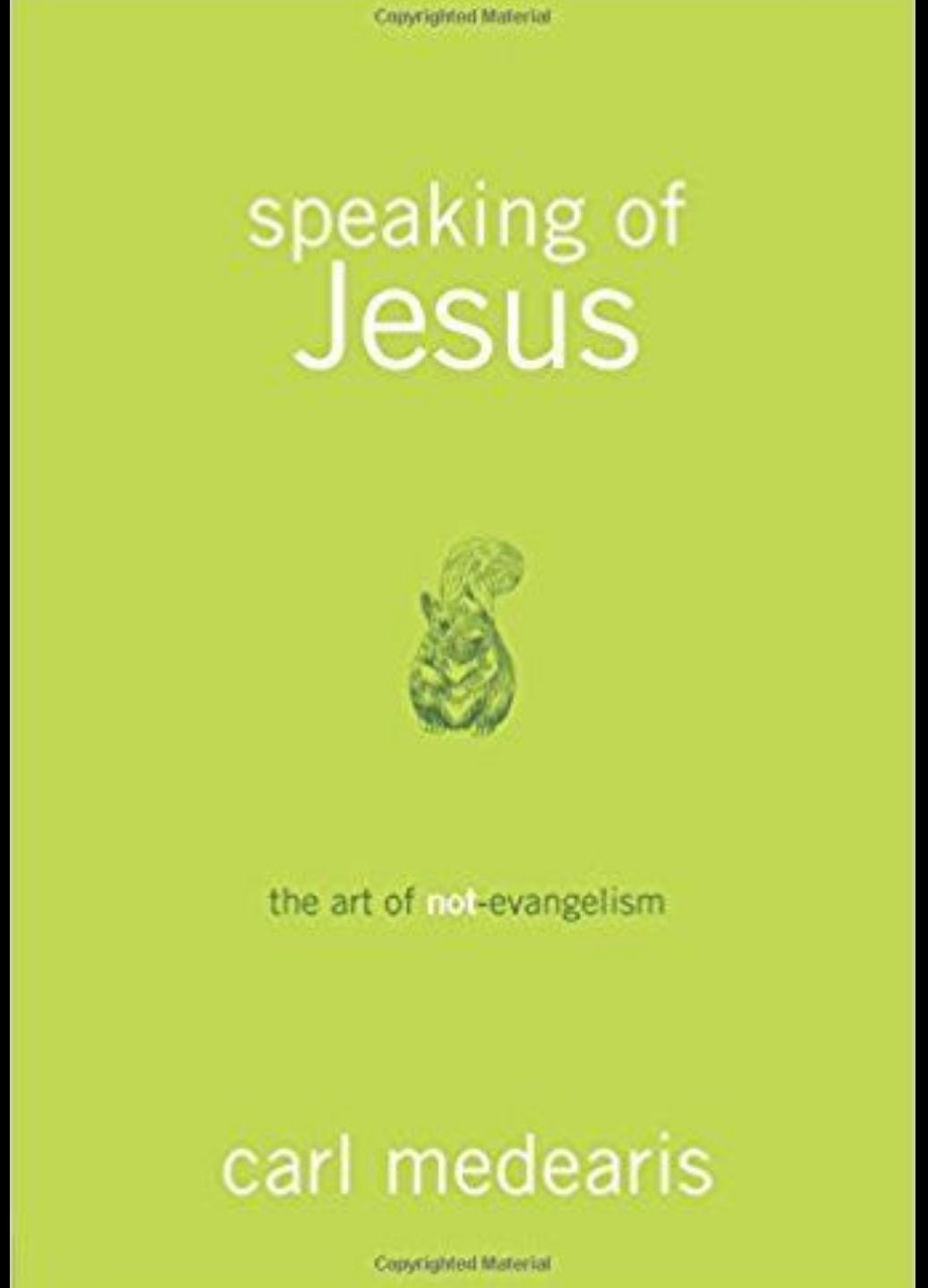
This is the gospel. As long as you and I understand salvation as checking off a box to get to God, we will find ourselves in the meaningless seas of world religions that actually condemn the human race by exalting our supposed ability to get to God.

On the other hand, when you and I realize that we are morally evil, dead in sin, and deserving of God’s wrath with no way out on our own, we begin to discover our desperate need for Jesus.

What worked well in that interaction?



What are some ways we could approach a conversation about faith in Jesus?



One day I saw my Muslim-Arab friend sweating as he talked with my other friend, a fine, conservative-minded evangelical Christian. It looked like the two had locked horns in a battle to the death. It happened here in Colorado this past summer. We hosted a gathering of some of our longtime friends from the Middle East and brought in a bunch of American Christian friends to talk about God, the Middle East, and how to bring hope to Muslim countries. There were about forty-five of us together for three days.

We were having a great time—until I looked over and saw these two all tangled up. The next thing I knew, my Muslim friend (not yet a follower of Jesus) had gone out on the deck and was smoking a cigarette like his life depended on how fast he could suck it down. I walked out and nonchalantly said, “What’s up, bro?” His response: “Why the $%&^@ do these people want to convert me? Why can’t they just leave me alone? I know that you don’t want to convert me. Right?” Talk about a loaded question full of semantic nuance.

Here’s my answer and what happened. I asked him what he thought my other friend wanted to convert him to. He said, “He wants me to be a Christian, but I’m a Muslim.” I asked him what he thought this friend meant by becoming a Christian. “He wants me to stop living in the Middle East and loving my family.” I told him I was pretty sure that’s not what this friend meant, but if that’s what “conversion to Christianity” is, then I agreed—he shouldn’t convert.

“See,” he said to me, “I knew you weren’t into conversion.” “No I’m not,” I said. “Not like that. Not at all. I think you should stay in your country, love your family, and be who God has made you to be.” Then I asked him this: “What do you think God thinks when He looks down at all 6.5 billion people on earth?” “He thinks they’re all screwed up,” he said. “Yep, that’s what I think God’s thinking too. So what do you think God would like to do with all these messed-up people? Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, nothings, everyone?”

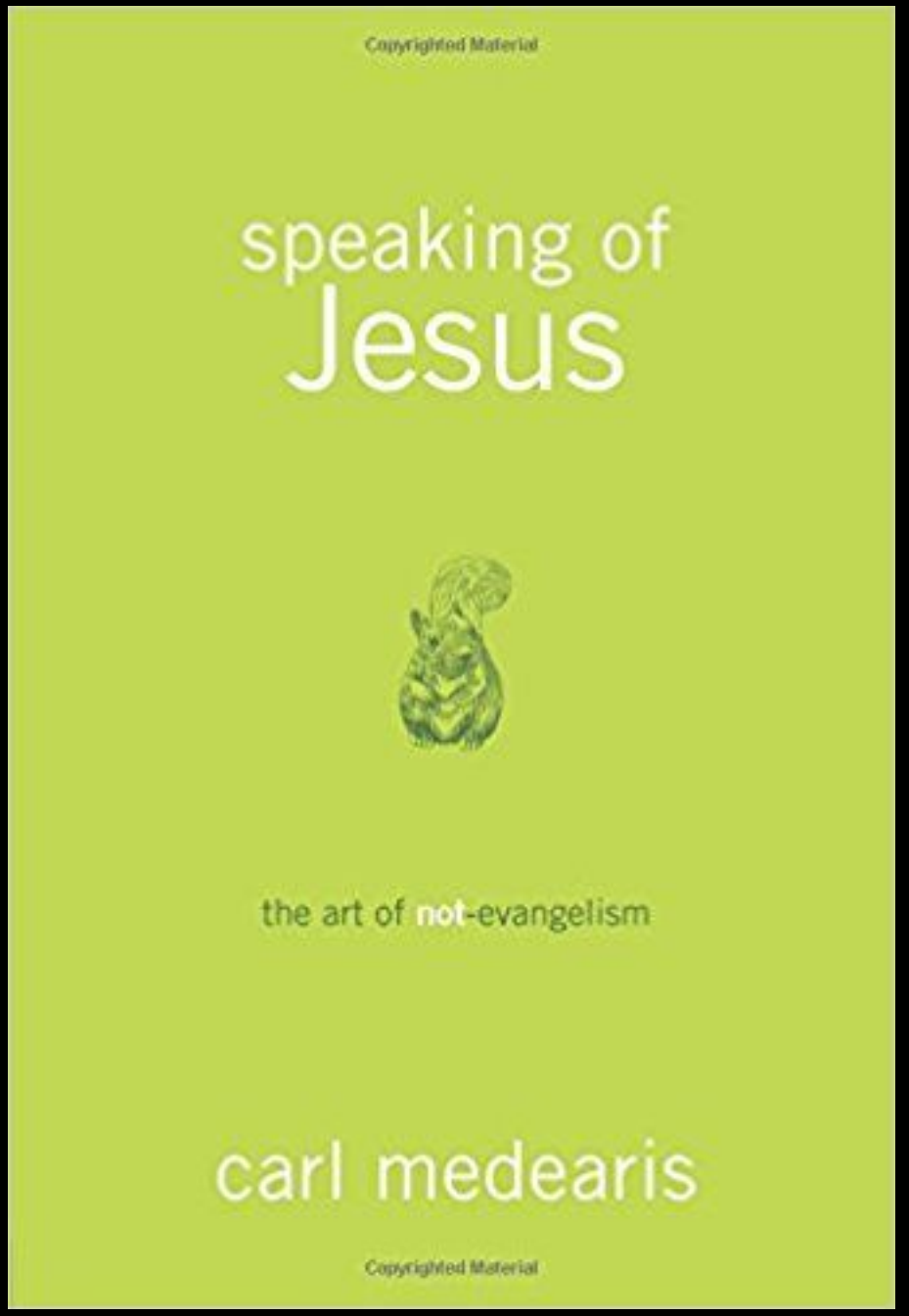
He had never thought of that before, so he wasn’t sure. But he did say God would probably want to “help them not be so screwed up.” I agreed. “So you might say that God would like to convert all 6.5 billion people on earth. Not to a religion, but to Himself. He would like everyone to be like Him. To be converted into Him. But how would He do that? He’d need a converter.”

I went on to tell my friend that if he bought an appliance here in the States and took it back to the Middle East, he'd need something to change the current from 110 to 220 volts. "What's that called?" I asked him. "A transformer or converter," he said. "That's right. So what is God's transformer to get us all back the way God wants us to be? To change us? To convert us?" He gasped (literally) and said, "It's Jesus. I never thought of that—but it's Jesus. He's the converter."

He got so excited he called his wife out and told her the whole conversation. She started to cry. We sat on the deck and prayed that God's "converter" or "transformer" would change us into the current that can be connected to God.

And that He would do this with all of our friends. It was a profound moment. Amazing that just a half hour earlier he was about to bite this other guy's head off for "trying to convert" him and now he sat with me in tears praying.

What were some differences between those two approaches.



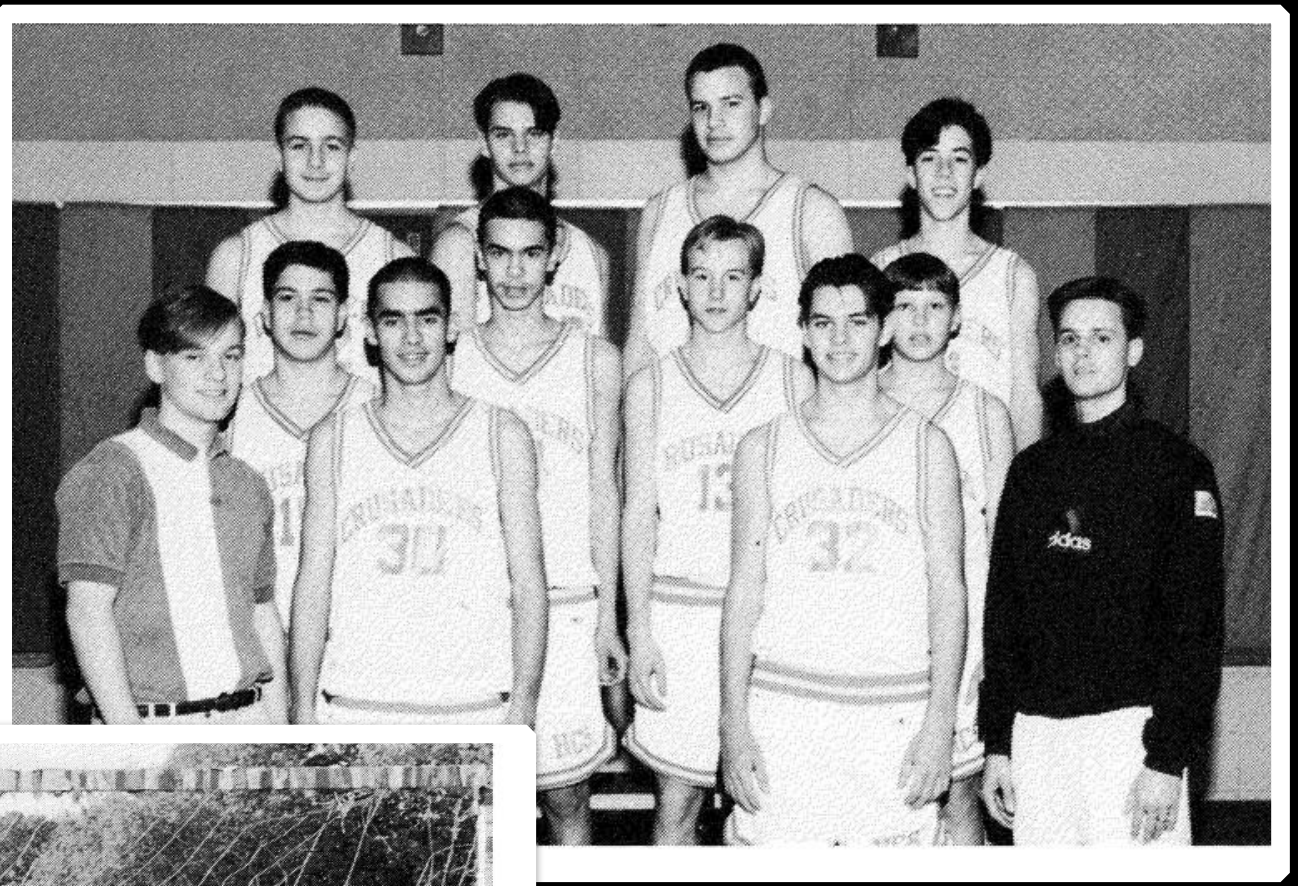

Take a Break


WHAT CHRISTIANS
BELIEVE
...IN 90
SECONDS


MTV
Movie
&TV
Awards
CHRIS PRATT




Take a Break


adidas



Acts 1:8
You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

near us

not near us

like us

Jerusalem

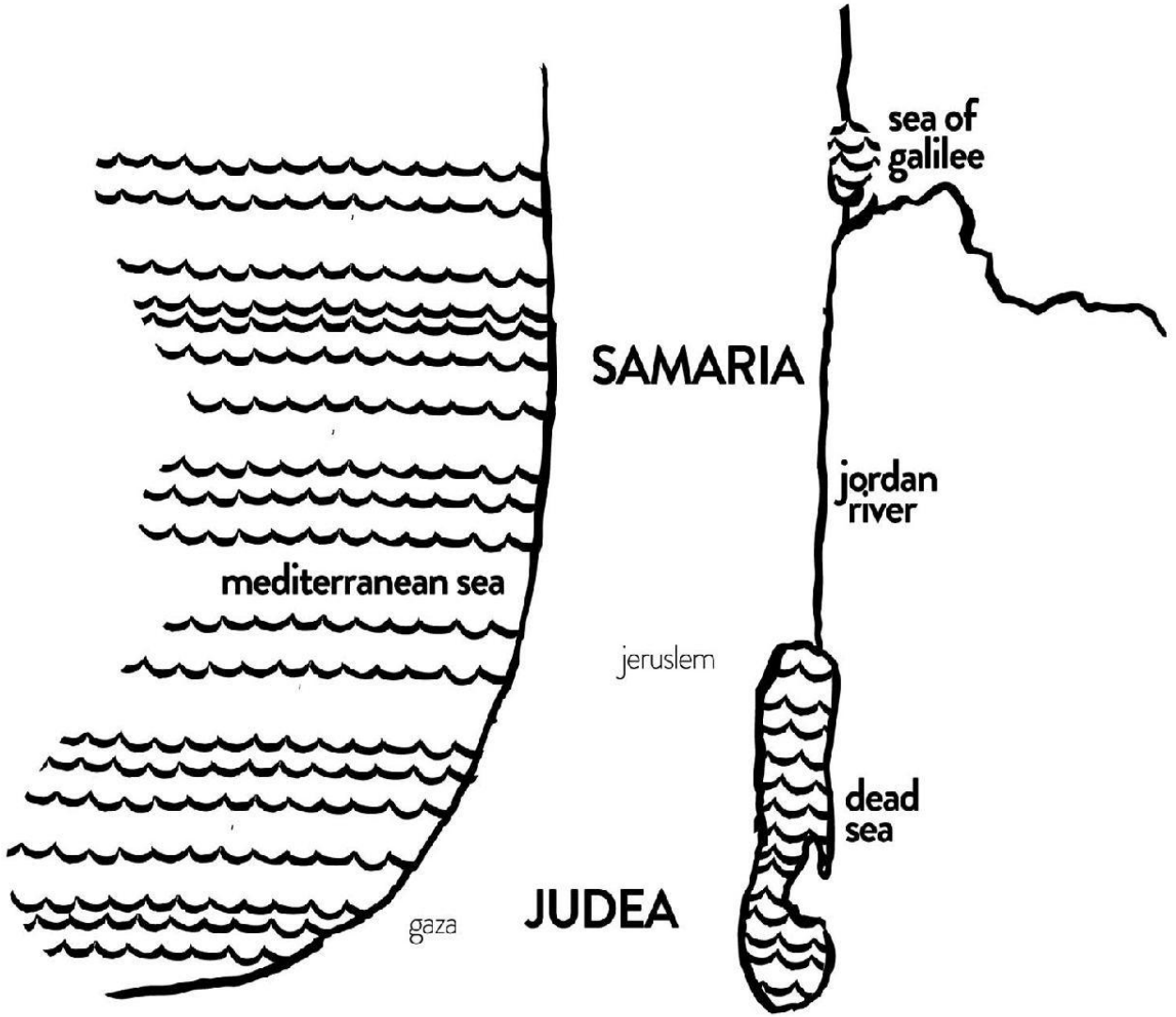
Judea

not like us

Samaria

Ends of the Earth

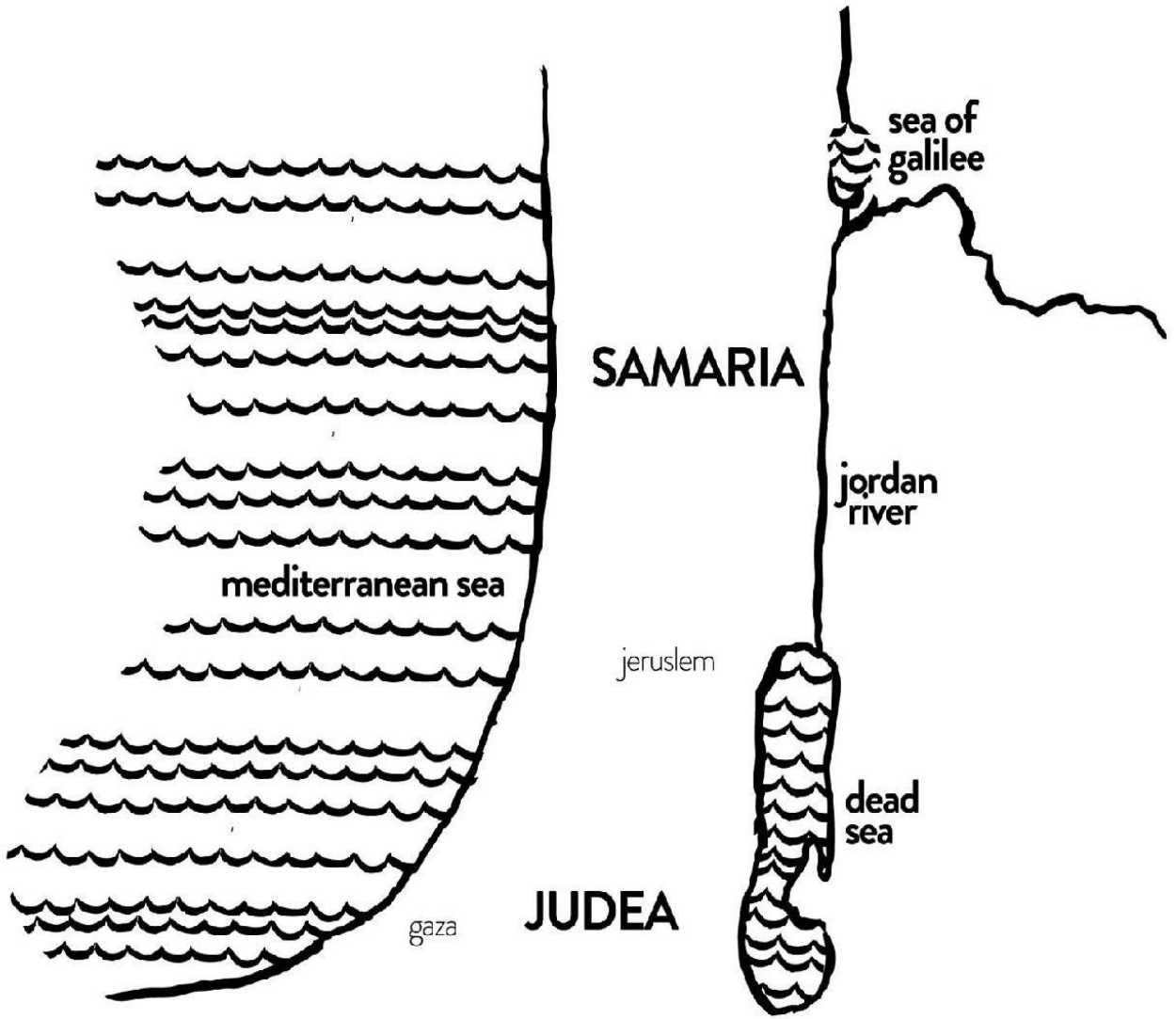
Acts 8:1
On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in **Jerusalem**, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout **Judea** and **Samaria**.
[4] Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.



Acts 8

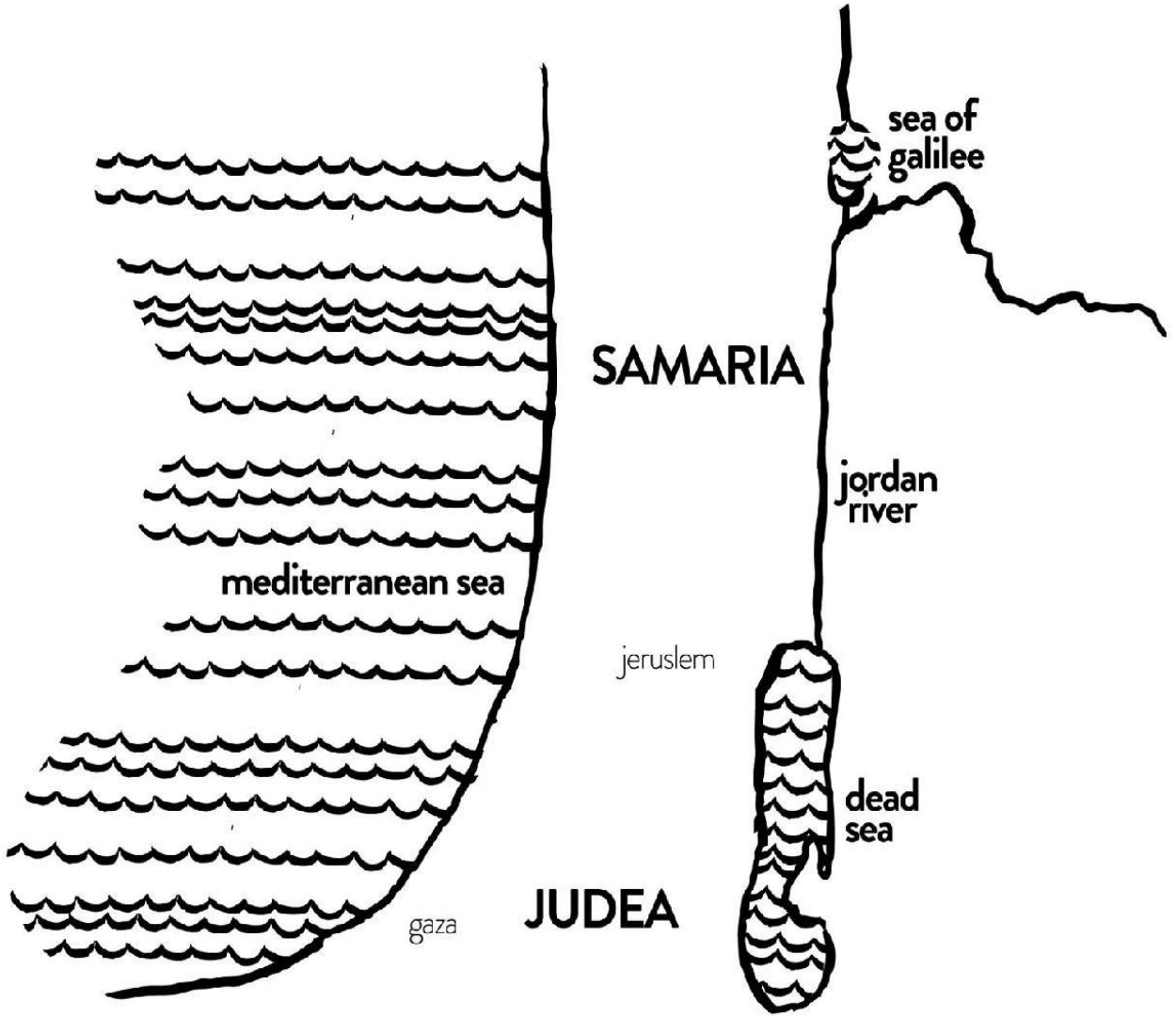
5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there.

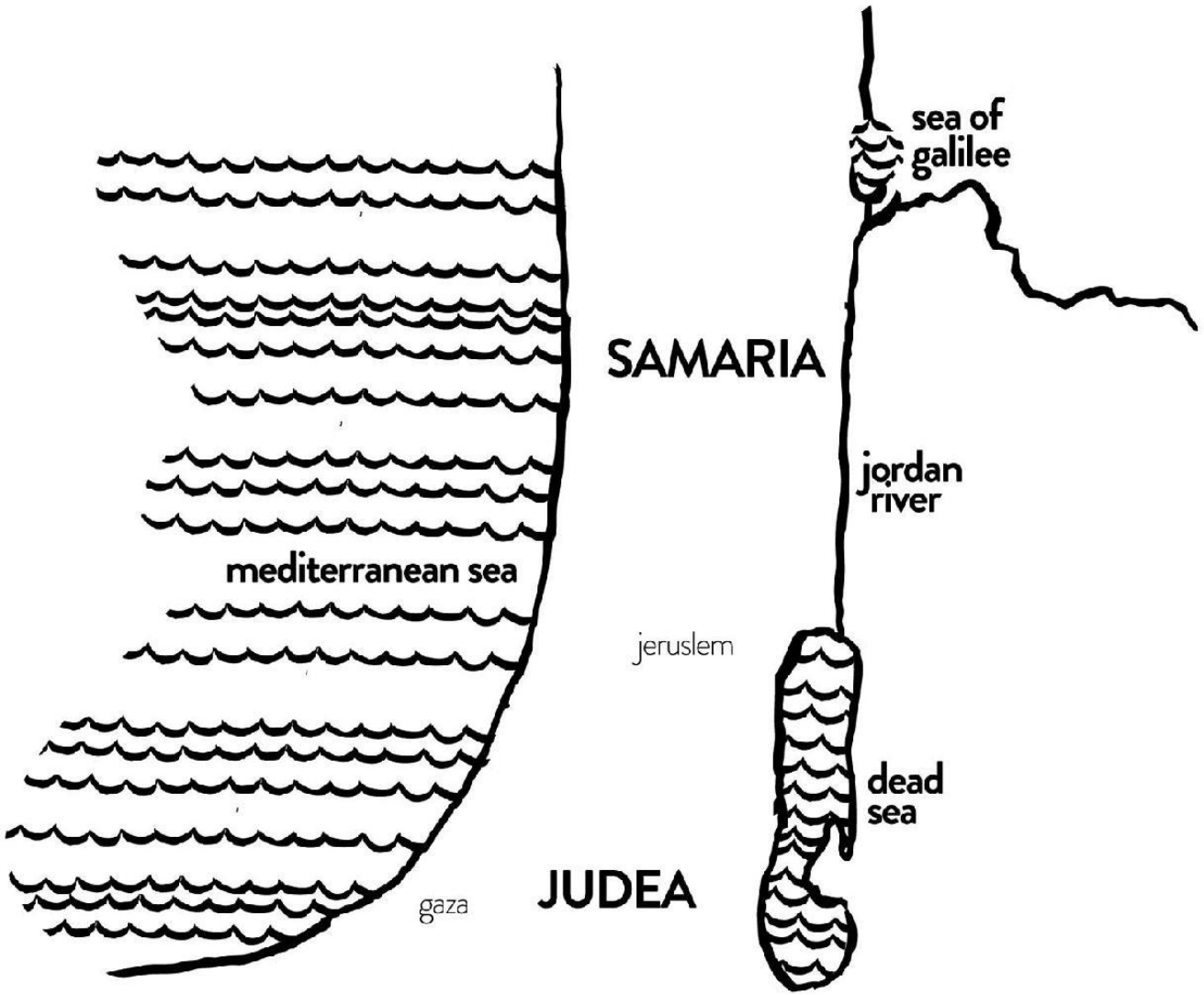
8 So there was great joy in that city.



Acts 8

[26] Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.”



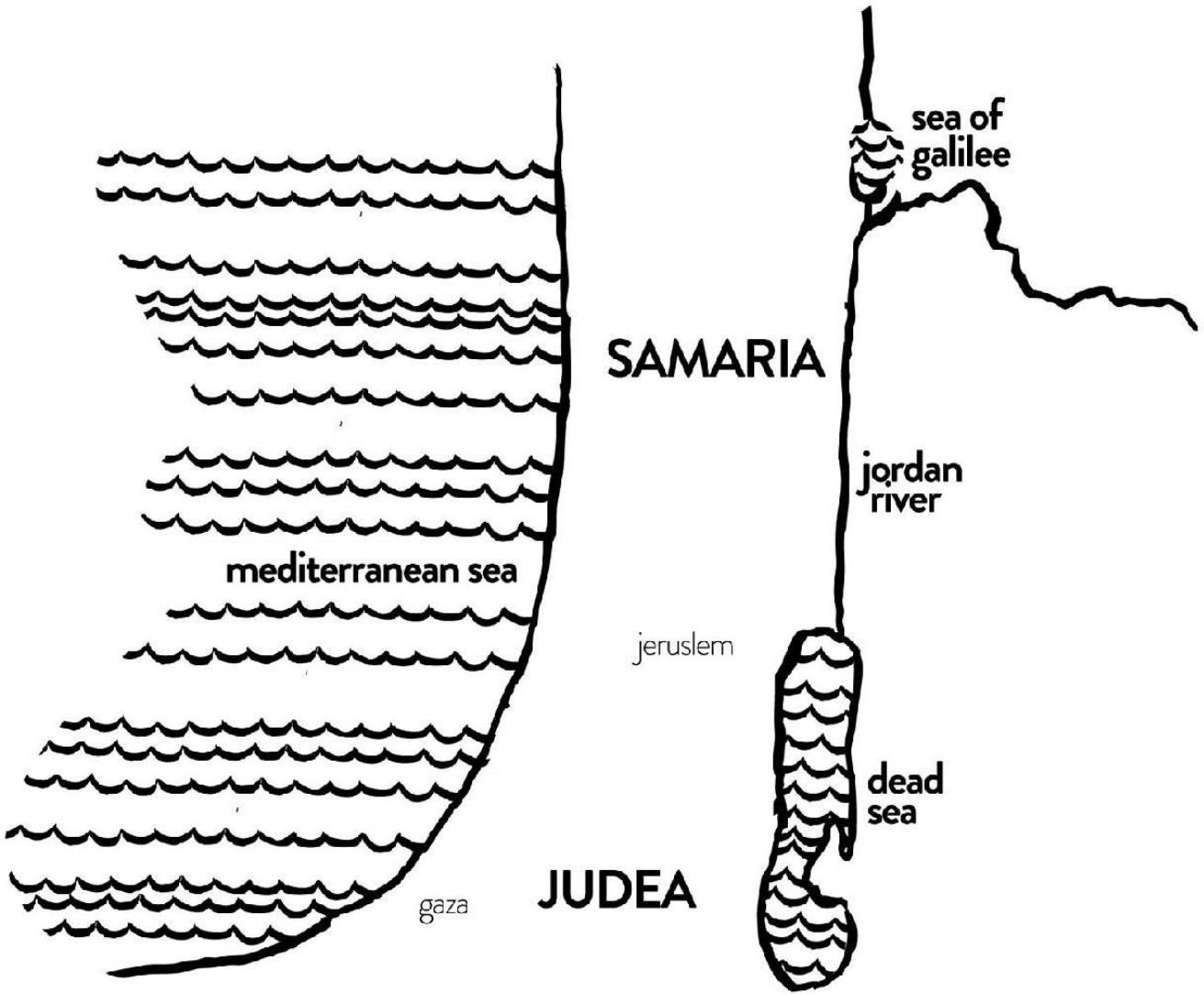


Samaria

Jerusalem

Gaza

Judea



Samaria

Jerusalem

God is at work,

not just here,

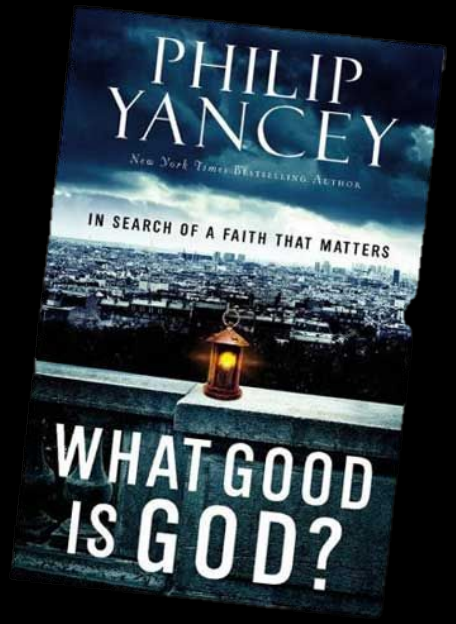
Gaza

but everywhere!

Judea

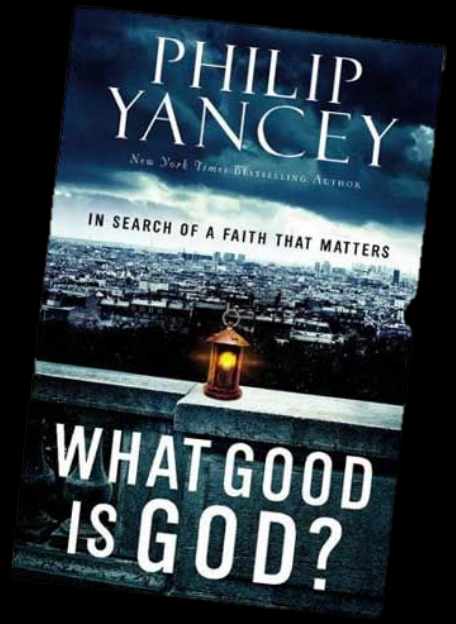






“These guys are monsters-rapists, murderers. And from what I see you were simply holding Bible studies, playing trust games and having prayer meetings.

What really happened to transform Pollsmoor prison?”



Joanna looked up and said, almost without thinking,

“Well, of course Philip, God was already present in the prison.

I just had to make Him visible.”


UNITED STATES
CANADA
CANADA
UNITED STATES
UNITED STATES
MEXICO
CUBA
GREENLAND
GREENLAND
ICELAND
RUSSIA
RUSSIA
RUSSIA
RUSSIA
KAZAKHSTAN
MONGOLIA
CHINA
CHINA
CHINA
JAPAN
UKRAINE
FRANCE
SPAIN
ITALY
TURKEY
IRAN
IRAN
IRAQ
PAKISTAN
ALGERIA
LIBYA
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
YEMEN
INDIA
MYANMAR
THAILAND
LAOS
VIETNAM
PHILIPPINES
MALAYSIA
INDONESIA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
MALI
NIGER
CHAD
SUDAN
SOMOLIA
UGANDA
KENYA
ANGOLA
ZAMBIA
NAMIBIA
BOTSWANA
SOUTH AFRICA
MADAGASCAR
VENEZUELA
COLUMBIA
BRAZIL
PERU
BRAZIL
BRAZIL
BOLIVIA
BRAZIL
ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRALIA
NEW ZEALAND

Acts 8

26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip,
“Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down
from Jerusalem to Gaza.”

27 **So he started out . . .**



God is at work,
not just here but everywhere.

Go where God is leading.

Jesus did not come to
build a monument.



He came to
start a movement.

Acts 8

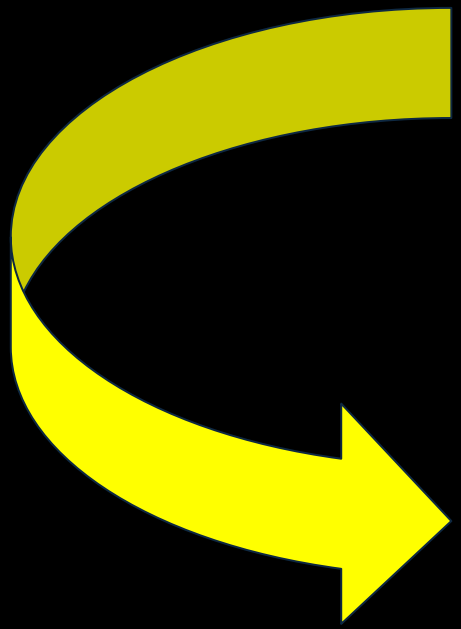
27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian
eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury
of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”).
This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his
way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of
Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that
chariot and stay near it.”

Acts 8

30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

31 “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.



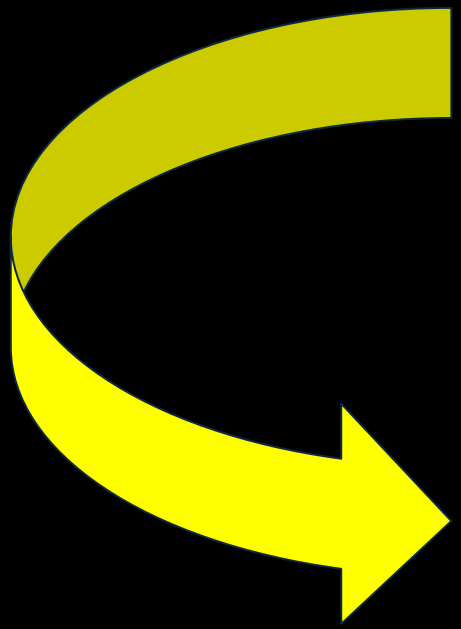
God is at work,
not just here but everywhere.

Go where God is leading.



Join what God is doing.





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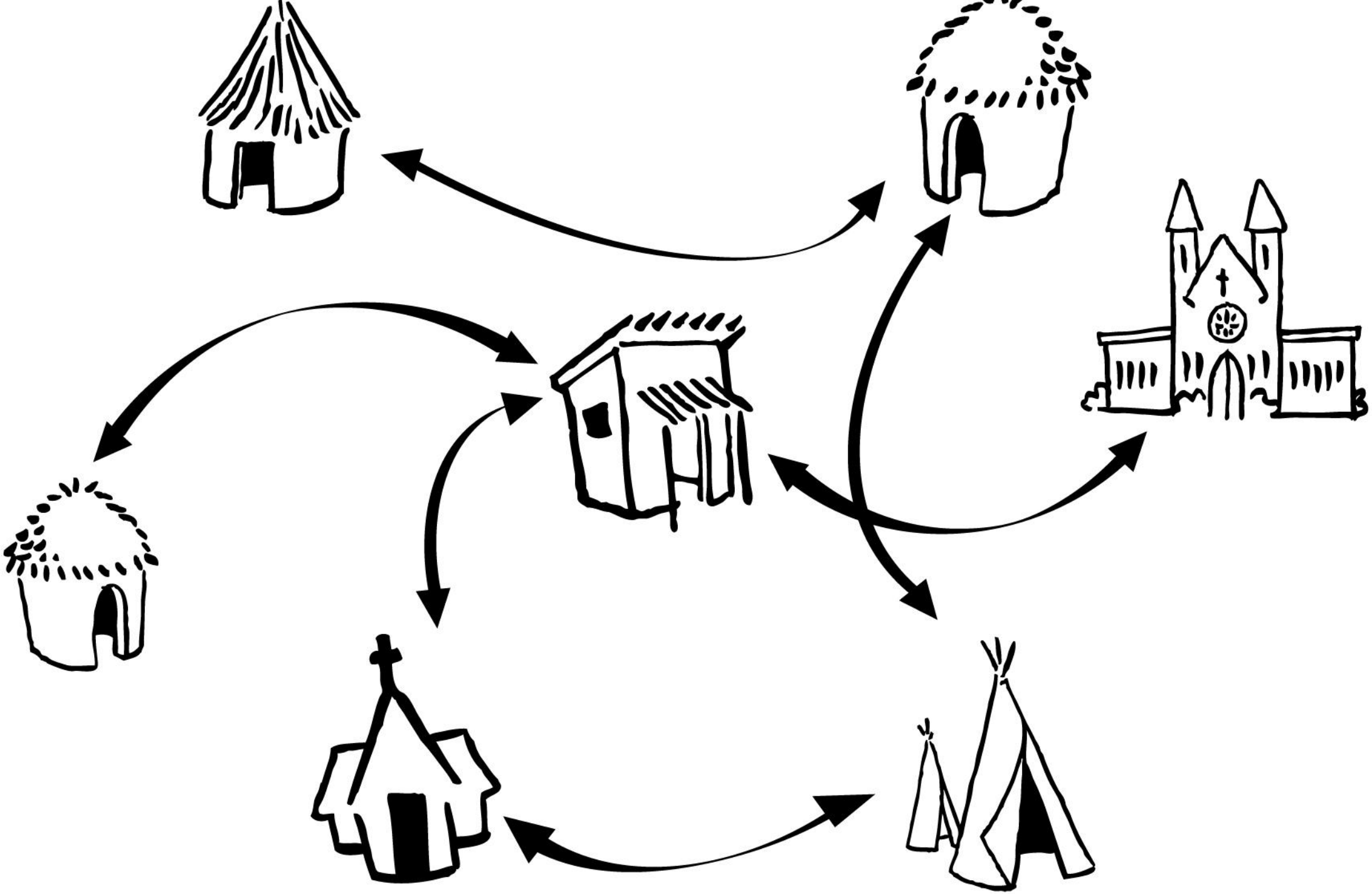










God is at work,
not just here but everywhere.
Go where God is leading.
Join what God is doing.


Real Hope for
2026
THE WORLD BLESSING