

Mission,
Relationships
and Evangelism

2026-01-25

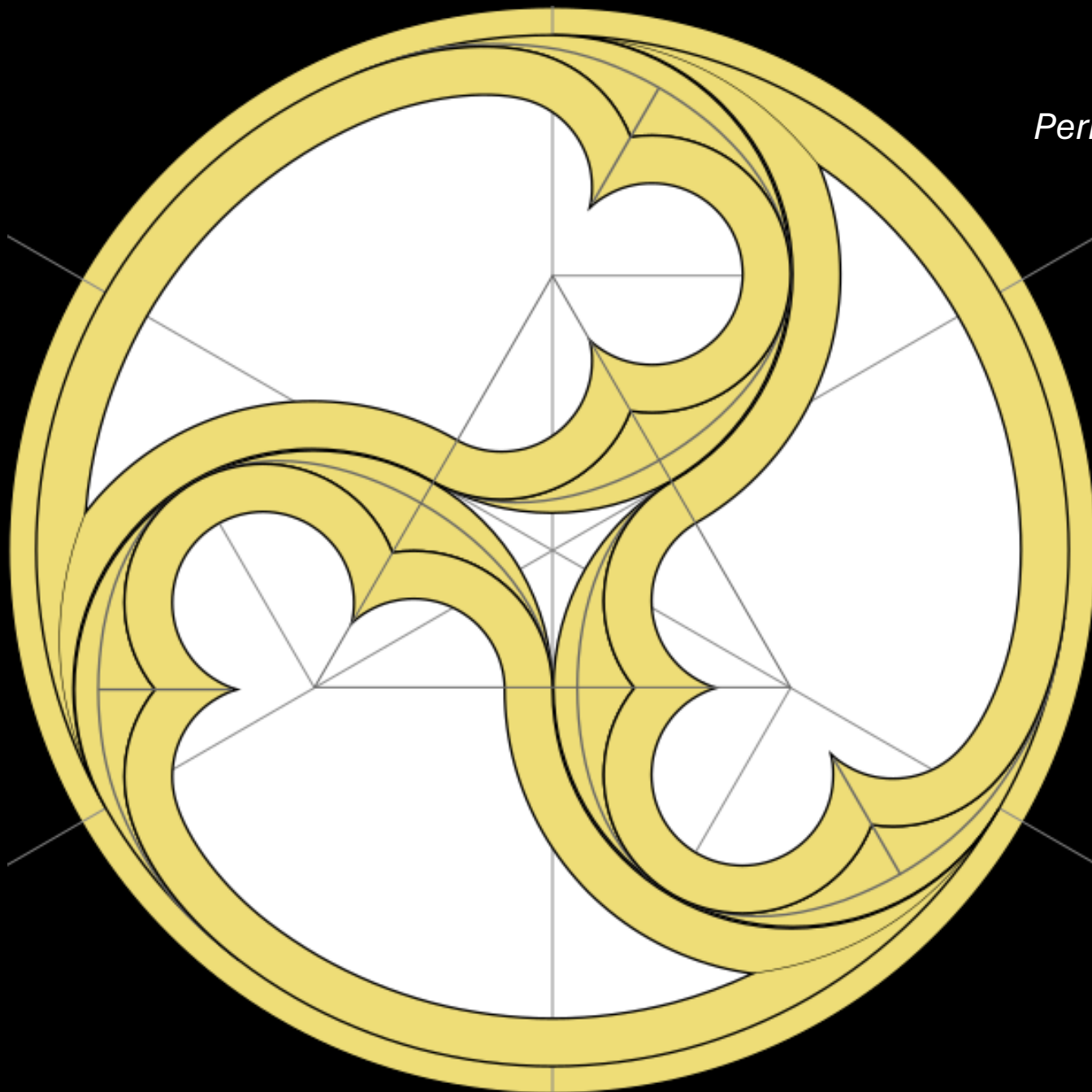
Chris Greenhalgh

How important are relationships to God?

³⁶ ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’

³⁷ Jesus replied: “**Love** the **Lord** your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: “**Love** your **neighbour** as yourself.” ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’

Matthew 22 (NIVUK)



Perichoresis

Mission

Strong

Evangelism
as saving
souls for
heaven

Helping to
Build God's
Kingdom,
with God

Negative

Positive



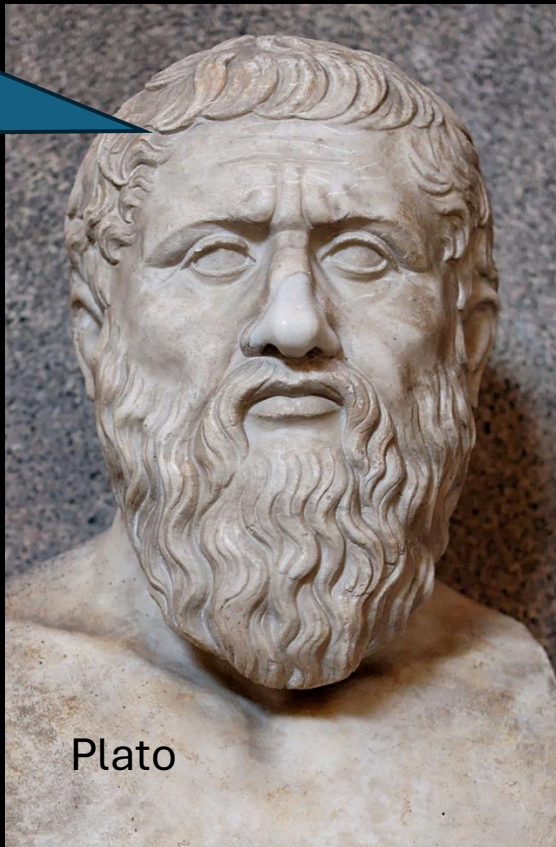
Social
Action
without
God/Jesus

Weak

God's mission is not to destroy the world!

Greek OVER-Emphasis on ideas, non-physical

Note large brain



Plato

Real Good News



Note physical presence

Evangelism

- = Spreading the Good News
- But what is the news?

Good news?

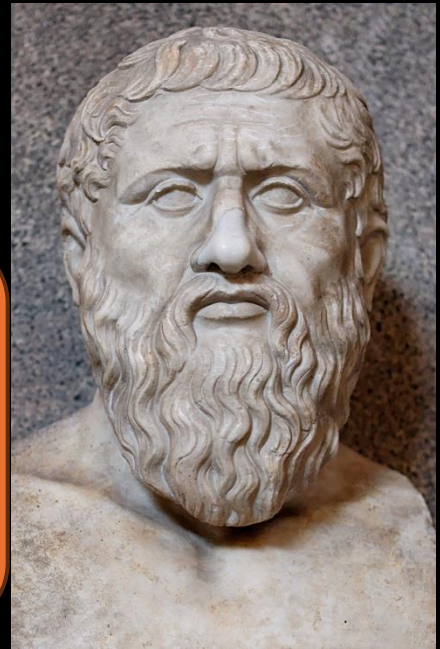
Greek OVER-Emphasis on ideas, non-physical

- God: Pure and Perfect
- Problem: Personal moral failures a.k.a. “sins”
=> Judgement
- Solution: An innocent man (Jesus) is punished in our place
- Response: We pray the “Jesus prayer”
- Outcome: Get your soul into heaven

First,
a lot of
bad news

A “rational”
choice

good news at the end...
some time in the future



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Plato-style Evangelism

- = Spreading the Good News
 - ~ “You can be saved”
- = Convincing people of
 - (a) a lot of bad news
 - (b) some good news (for your soul) and
 - (c) to make an intellectual choice = “convert”
- Danger: Relationships are just a means to an end
 - i.e. a way to “get” potential “converts”
 - Perils of policing who is “in” (-> legalism & hypocrisy)

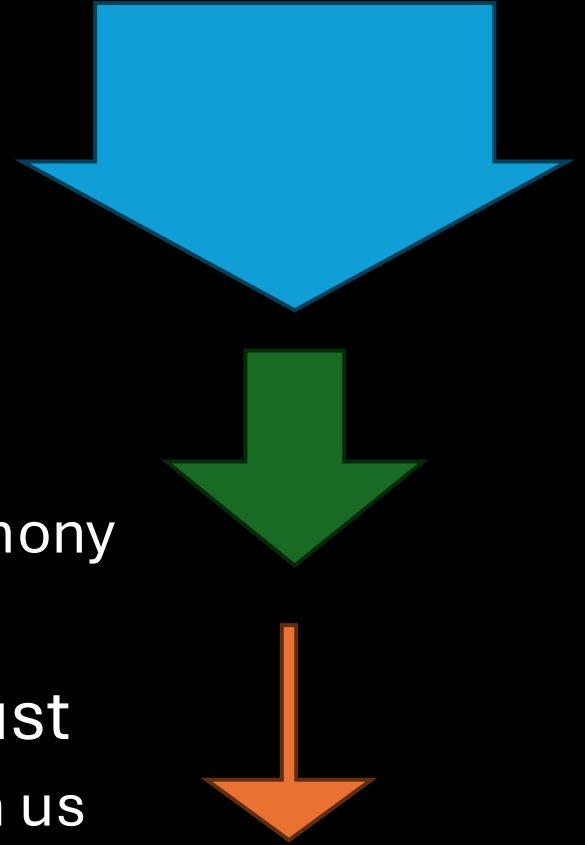


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Three kinds of “belief”

- Accepting statements as true
 - E.g. apples fall due to gravity
 - God exists, Jesus was raised, ...
- Explicitly agreeing / affirming
 - E.g. saying “I do” in a marriage ceremony
 - Affirming that we need Jesus’ help
- Acting accordingly, A.K.A. faith, trust
 - E.g. allowing a surgeon to operate on us
 - ~~Living every day with Kingdom priorities~~
 - Going to church and other markers of group identity
 - Following a purity code to “avoid sin”

Emphasis on “orthodoxy”
 (“right belief” ~ ideas)



God's mission is not to destroy the world!

Real Good News

- God: Loving and Good
- Problem: Rebellion and idolatry, including “satan” & sin
=> Broken relations
- Solution: God deals with our debt, heals our sickness and disarms sin
- Response: We live as part of God's family under God's new rule on earth
- Outcome: God reconciles ALL THINGS to God

A lot of good news

Some (fairly obvious) bad news

A “relational” choice 😊



Three kinds of “belief”

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- Explicitly agreeing
 - E.g. saying “I do” in a marriage ceremony
 - Affirming that we need Jesus’ help
- Acting accordingly, A.K.A. faith, trust
 - E.g. allowing a surgeon to operate on us
 - Living every day with Kingdom priorities



Emphasis on “orthoproxis”
 (“right action”)

Jesus-style Evangelism



- = Spreading the Good News
 - “God loves you... and all that God has made!”
“God’s rule is near”, “Jesus is Lord”
- = Doing like Jesus did
 - (a) Being Jesus’ apprentice everywhere, all the time
 - (b) valuing (and loving) people like God does
 - (c) being open & honest about God & faith
 - (d) Jesus-style: humble, gentle & vulnerable
- Relationships are the substance of the Kingdom
 - “The medium is the message!”

1 Pet. 3:15-16

¹⁵ But in your hearts revere **Christ as Lord**. Always **be prepared** to **give an answer** to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the **hope** that you have. But do this with **gentleness** and **respect**, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against **your good behaviour** in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (NIVUK)

Live in a way that invites questions,
i.e. **live** the Kingdom of God

Answer when asked,
i.e. **talk** the Kingdom of God

Why/how did the first disciples invite questions?

- Cared for the poor – not just their own
- Included those who were "different", especially Jews with non-Jews
- Acted with integrity rather than exploiting privilege or position

- In the Roman empire that was a big deal
- But if that's all we do today are we just being "nice"?

Five habits of missional people (Michael Frost): BELLS

Live in a way
that invites
questions?

- **Bless** 3 people this week, at least one non-Christian
=> More **Generous**
- **Eat** with 3 people this week, at least one non-Christian => More **Hospitable**
- **Listen** for the spirit's voice at least once this week => More **Spirit-led**
- **Learn** about Jesus at least once this week
=> More **Christ-like**
- **Sent**: Journal each day how you have been sent
=> More **Missional**
 - (or seen/been **Signs** of the Kingdom)

How should we talk about the Kingdom of God?


Answer
when
asked?

- **My Personal Experience...**
 - Life & Relationships
 - Hopes, Values & Aspirations
 - God, Prayer & the Spiritual / transcendent
 - Church, The Bible & Traditions
 - **Questions, Worries & Doubts**
- AND listen to **theirs**, i.e. ask & listen!
- And try to be attentive to **God** at the same time
 - (live the Kingdom of God in the conversation)

Encountering
God together

Not
winning intellectual
battles

It's not just me!



God's mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reconciliation• Renewal
The church's mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worldwide...• RBC
My mission & calling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individually• Collaboratively

Verse for 2026

**“Do not be afraid,
little flock, for your Father
has been pleased to give
you the kingdom.”**

And the Kingdom of God
IS GOOD NEWS!



Mission and Relationships - conclusion

- God is inherently **relational**, and our relationships with God and other people are the heart of the Kingdom of God
- The Plato-style gospel of “souls saved for heaven” easily leads to evangelism as **argument** and nominal conversion (and hypocrisy & legalism)
- Apprentices of Jesus work with God to **love and value people** like God does
 - **Live the Kingdom** of God in a way that invites questions, e.g. **BELLS**
 - Ready to give the reason for the hope that you have, i.e. **talk the Kingdom** of God