

SECRET CHURCH™

KNOW HIS WORD. KNOW HIS PERSECUTED.

For many believers around the world, following
Christ is not simply unpopular or discouraged.
It's dangerous.

KNOW HIS WORD.
KNOW HIS PERSECUTED.

Each year's Secret Church gathering consists
of over four hours of intense Bible study, as
well as a concentrated time of prayer for our
persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ
around the world.

We hope you'll not only believe these truths, but
also share them with others. The goal of Secret
Church is to serve the church in making disciples
of all nations, all for the glory of God.

secrechurch.org

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Why Is This Called Secret Church?

The idea behind Secret Church comes from time David Platt spent teaching and ministering among underground Asian house churches. Due to hostility from the government, from the surrounding community, and even from their own family, many of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world are forced to gather in secret, sometimes at the risk of their lives.

The plight of our persecuted brothers and sisters also explains why prayer for the persecuted church is a major part of every Secret Church gathering. We remember those who cannot meet openly, asking God to sustain their faith, to change the hearts and the actions of their persecutors, and to use their witness for the spread of the gospel. We also pray for the unreached, those who have little or no access to the gospel.

Why So Much Teaching for One Night?

We realize that each Secret Church study contains too much biblical teaching—over four hours worth!—to digest in one sitting. That's one reason we make it available in bite-size segments at radical.net. However, this deluge of teaching is meant to remind us of the hunger for God's Word that exists among many underground churches around the world.

With few opportunities to gather and little access to biblical teaching, our persecuted brothers and sisters may meet for eight to twelve hours at a time simply to sing, pray, and study God's Word. This God-centered focus is a helpful corrective to the desire for entertainment that characterizes many church gatherings in the U.S.

What's the Goal of This Study?

We hope your faith will be strengthened as you encounter teaching from God's Word in this study. However, the truths you hear are not meant to stop with you. You are encouraged to teach them to others as you meet one-on-one or as you gather in small groups and churches. Secret Church is intended to be a resource for making disciples both locally and globally.

We urge you to consider the role God may have for you and your church as you take the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ to those in your own communities and to unreached peoples among the nations. For more Secret Church resources, go to radical.net.

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CULTS AND COUNTERFEIT GOSPELS

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

(Galatians 1:6–9)

Common Myths

- Cults and counterfeit gospels are very small.
 - Many are very _____.
- Cults and counterfeit gospels are normally isolated.
 - Many are extremely _____.
- Cults and counterfeit gospels are clearly immoral.
 - Many are quite _____.
- Cults and counterfeit gospels are far from me.
 - Cults and counterfeit gospels are right _____ me.
- Cults and counterfeit gospels are merely a matter of personal preference.
 - Cults and counterfeit gospels are ultimately a matter of eternal _____.

Clear Purposes

- We want to _____ the gospel in our lives.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
(John 3:16–18)

- We want to _____ the gospel in our churches.

Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you. (2 Timothy 1:13–14)

- We want to _____ the gospel in the world.

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
(Matthew 28:18–20)

THE ONE TRUE GOSPEL OF THE ONE TRUE GOD

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

(Ephesians 2:1–10)

The gospel is the good news that the only true God, the just and gracious Creator of the universe, has looked upon hopelessly sinful men and women and has sent His Son, God in the flesh, to bear His wrath against sin through His substitutionary death on the cross and to show His power over sin and death through His resurrection from the grave so that everyone who turns from their sin and themselves and trusts in Jesus alone as Savior and Lord will be reconciled to God forever.

THE ONE TRUE GOSPEL

Gospel Thread #1: The Character of God

- God is the holy, just, and gracious Creator of all things.

| *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.* (Genesis 1:1)

- God is _____.

- God is perfectly unique, completely separate, and absolutely pure.
| *I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.*
| (Isaiah 43:15)

◦ God is _____.

- God justifies the innocent and condemns the guilty.

| *He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous
are both alike an abomination to the LORD. (Proverbs 17:15)*

◦ God is _____.

- God shows the guilty free and unmerited favor.

| *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all
people . . . (Titus 2:11)*

Gospel Thread #2: The Sinfulness of Man

- We are each created by God, but we are all _____
by sin.

| *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:26–28)*

| *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (Genesis 3:6–7)*

| *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin*

indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. (Romans 5:12–14)

- We have _____ against God.

All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one. (Romans 3:12)

- We have all turned away from God to ourselves.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:5–8)

- Manifested in self-indulgence.
- Manifested in self-righteousness.
- What we thought would lead to freedom has led each of us into _____.

Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin." (John 8:34)

- We are _____ from God.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God . . . (Romans 3:23)

- The effects of our sin are varied . . .
 - Guilt.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. (Genesis 3:6)

- _____.

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (Genesis 3:7)

- Fear.

And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." (Genesis 3:10)

- What we think is a relatively minor issue is actually an _____ major problem.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

- We are _____ without God.

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses . . . (Colossians 2:13)

- What we thought would lead to life has led each of us to death.
 - Eventual physical death.
 - Eternal spiritual death.
- We are _____ unable to save ourselves.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. (Ephesians 2:1-2)

Gospel Thread #3: The Sufficiency of Christ

- Jesus _____ is able to remove our sin and restore us to God.

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)

- Because of _____ He is.
 - His humanity: See His humble character.

But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:43–45)

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5–8)

- His deity: Hear His extravagant claims.

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.” (John 6:35)

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

“One of the most extraordinary things Jesus did in his teaching (and he did it so unobtrusively that many people read the Gospels without even noticing it) was to set himself apart from everybody else. For example, by claiming to be the good shepherd who went out into the desert to seek his lost sheep, he was implying that the world was lost, that he wasn’t, and that he could seek and save it. In other words, he put himself in a moral category in which he was alone. Everybody else was in darkness; he was the light of the world. Everybody else was hungry; he was the bread of life. Everybody else was thirsty; he could quench their thirst. Everybody else was sinful; he could forgive their sins. Indeed, on two separate occasions he did so, and both times observers were scandalized. They asked, “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone? (Mark 2:5–7; Luke 7:48–49).” If Jesus claimed authority to forgive the penitent, he also claimed authority to judge the impenitent. Several of his parables implied that he expected to return at the end of history. On that day, he said, he would sit on his glorious throne. All nations would stand

before him, and he would separate them from one another as a shepherd separates his sheep from his goats. In other words, he would settle their eternal destiny. Thus he made himself the central figure on the day of judgment.” – John Stott

- Because of _____ He has done.
 - Jesus _____ the life we could not live.

You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5)

- He was fully tempted by sin.
- He fully triumphed over sin.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

- As perfect man, He alone is able to substitute for human sin.
- As perfect God, He alone is able to satisfy divine judgment.
- Jesus _____ the death we deserve to die.

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

- The essence of sin: Man substitutes himself for God.
 - Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be.
- The essence of salvation: God substitutes Himself for man.
 - God sacrifices Himself for man and puts Himself where only man deserves to be.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

- At the cross, God _____ His judgment upon sin, _____ His judgment against sin, and _____ salvation for sinners.

- Jesus _____ the enemy we cannot conquer.

... and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. (Revelation 1:18)

- He is Lord over life and death.

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes. (John 20:1–10)

- He is Lord over sin and Satan.

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. (Colossians 2:13–15)

- He is Lord over _____ and me.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified. (Acts 2:36)

Gospel Thread #4: The Necessity of Faith

- We can be restored to God only through _____ in Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8)

- We can be restored to God . . .

- We can be _____ before God the Judge (He will cancel our guilt).

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

- We can be _____ by God the Father (He will remove our shame).

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (Romans 8:14–17)

- We can be _____ by God the King (He will overcome our fear).

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38–39)

- Only through faith in Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8–9)

- Jesus is the basis of salvation.
- Faith is the _____ of salvation.

- Works are the evidence of salvation.

◦ We _____ from our sin and ourselves.

| *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel. (Mark 1:15)*

- We confess our sinfulness.

| *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)*

- We die to our selfishness.

| *And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." (Luke 9:23–24)*

◦ We _____ in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

| *Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)*

- We believe in Jesus as the Savior who died for us.
- We submit to Jesus as the Lord who rules over us.

• An initial _____ of faith in time leads to inevitable _____ in faith over time.

| *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)*

| *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:12–13)*

Gospel Thread #5: The Urgency of Eternity

- Our eternal _____ hinges on our response to Jesus.

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matthew 10:28)

- _____ is a dreadful reality for those who turn from Jesus.

- A place of continual rebellion, final separation, and eternal duration.

... when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might. (2 Thessalonians 1:7b–9)

- _____ is a glorious reality for those who trust in Jesus.

- A place of full reconciliation, complete resurrection, and ultimate reunion.

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ . . . (Philippians 3:20)

- Will you turn from Jesus, or will you trust in Jesus?

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

- Will you _____ Jesus?

- Live without Christ now.
- Die without Christ forever.

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea

gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11–15)

- Will you _____ Jesus?
 - Die with Christ now.
 - Live with Christ forever.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:1–4)

End of Session I

THE ONE TRUE GOD

The Trinity in Three Truths

- Truth #1: God is _____ persons.
 - Scripture refers to God with _____ pronouns.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:26–27)

Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech. (Genesis 11:7)