

The Gospel According to WALL-E, Part 1: God's Love for Human Life

Dr. Jason Lief

A significant misunderstanding of the Christian faith is that it is primarily about some eternal, spiritual life in some far away heaven. Using the story of *WALL-E*, this session will explore the story of Jesus Christ as God's love to this world. We'll explore the bible and theology to help us see how the salvation God brings in Jesus frees us to live as human beings in this world.

How do You Introduce the Bible in an Hour?

Dr. James Mead

If you were given one hour to say the most important things that can and should be said about the Bible, what do you think would be necessary to share? You couldn't explain everything about the Bible, but you could tell someone the most important things to know about the Bible. In this session we will explore the Bible as a book, a story, a message and an invitation. We will describe the basic structure and literature within the Bible, state the overall storyline of the biblical drama, articulate the Bible's central message about God and humankind, and accept the Bible's invitation to study its details without losing our appreciation of its larger story and message.

Where did the Bible Come From?

Dr. John Vonder Bruegge

Every person, every event, every book has a historical context. Just like any other book from history, the Bible is best understood only after we have explored the historical context in which it was produced. In fact, the Bible, which was written by different people in different times and in different places, has many different historical contexts. One thing that those contexts have in common is that they are all different from our own historical context. In this session, we'll begin to explore the difference that historical context can make when we study God's word, and we'll learn about different resources that can help you understand those contexts better.

Missional Theology

Dr. Michael Andres

How do we live for Christ in order to heal our world? We will look at the overarching redemptive story of Scripture and the meaning of the gospel and will culminate with how to live this story out in holistic witness. From biblical narratives of reconciliation and redemption, we will explore ways we can engage in witness, evangelism and justice today. Through missional church and Christian community development models, we

will learn how we can participate in God's redemptive work through living incarnation, practicing reconciliation, and leading processes of empowerment to renew communities and individuals.

Thinking About God's Mission, Part 1

Dr. John Hubers

This session will guide students in an exploration of the biblical theme of Christian mission, noting that this is not only the primary theme of Scripture, but the best way to describe what the Bible is: a handbook describing God's mission in the world. Major biblical themes on mission will be explored noting how this links together the entire message of the gospel.

Stepping Further into the Bible

Dr. James Mead

Now that we have stepped into the Bible and its historical, dramatic and theological world, it's time for us to practice a deeper engagement with its smaller units, called passages. Although there are several legitimate ways to *begin* digging into a passage of the Bible, there are nevertheless a few necessary methods that we should use to grasp what is happening in a passage, what its original author may have intended, and how we might describe its theological message and application to our lives. We will use this time to build upon the initial study you have done in a passage.

What Does the Bible Really Say?

Dr. John Vonder Bruegge

By this point, you've learned about the Bible as a whole. You've also learned about how to study a specific passage of the Bible using good research tools. What now? In this session, we'll discuss how to translate what that biblical author wrote many centuries ago into a message for us today. To do this well requires that you've already done some serious work—and some serious thinking—regarding how that ancient context is different from and similar to our own. By the time we're finished, you'll have a better idea of what good, responsible and faithful application of the Bible really is.

Thinking About God's Mission, Part 2

Dr. John Hubers

The predominant theme in this session will be what theologians call "Missio Dei"—God's mission versus our response to that mission which defines Christian missions. This session will also explore what is described as "missiology," which is the study of Christian missions, recognizing that this is, in a certain sense, the study of what God is doing in the world.

Christ and Identity

Dr. Michael Andres

We live in a culture where it can be confusing to know who we are and how to be authentic. After consideration of a Nicene view of Christ as divine and human, our union with Christ through the Spirit, and our creation in the image of a Triune God, we will explore how this shapes who we are in Christ. How does the Christian view of human identity differ from gnostic and modern notions of the true self "getting out" or

expressing itself (which are notions that assume we define ourselves however we want)? How does it differ from traditional performance-based societies that say we earn our acceptance? We'll explore how for Christians our identity is received not achieved and talk about the difference that makes for how we relate to others, how we find value and how we view our calling.

The Gospel According to WALL-E, Part 2:

The Theology of Julian of Norwich and St. Francis of Assisi

Dr. Jason Lief

Building off of the first session that focused on the movie *WALL-E*, this session will explore a creation affirming theology using two medieval figures: Julian of Norwich and St. Francis of Assisi. Both Julian and Francis emphasize God's love for the world in Jesus Christ, using a variety of metaphors and practices. Ultimately, we will focus on what it means to see the created world and our own humanity as a sign of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ.