

GOSPEL PRESENTATION

Ask, "Tell me about your spiritual background or your spiritual journey."

Follow up by asking, "My journey has been special. It has brought a real fullness to my life."

We all want to have a full life.

- What do you think it means to live life to the fullest?
- What are you doing to live life that way?

Let them talk about whether or not they can find happiness in the world, then ask the following questions:

- Will these things give you fulfillment and happiness?
- What prevents you from having fulfillment in your life?
- Do you have any regrets?

We are all seeking fulfillment. But I think that we are looking for fulfillment from things that cannot satisfy us. We cannot find it in people, sex, prosperity, nature or religion. I've found that these things only temporarily fill the void in our lives. We are meant to find our fulfillment in our relationship with God. Everything else cannot give us fulfillment we seek. And after the thrill is gone, we are left with a sense of guilt or shame. But God is not indifferent to us. He did not leave us in our frustration and regret.

Jesus Came To Give Us Fulfillment

God has no regrets. Instead He saw our frustration and took action to solve our problem. God is not some impersonal divine energy, but the Bible tells us that God became flesh. His name was Jesus. Jesus was also given the title Immanuel. Do you know what Immanuel means? It means God with us. God came to be with us in the person of Jesus so we can know ourselves and know God. He lived a perfect life being true to Himself and His life's purpose. Jesus loved those who were bullied by religious people by giving them compassion rather than judgment.

On one occasion when Jesus was teaching He said something really interesting. He said, "I came that you might have life and life to the full." What did Jesus mean by that? To understand it we need to remember what happened when God created the world.

Why Aren't We Fulfilled? (Adam and Eve Story)

The diversity and elegance of His creation is truly breath-taking. God created the universe out of nothing. He created earth and made it beautiful, full of all sorts of plants and animals. Then God created man and woman and put them in the garden of Eden. The names of the first people were Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were made different from all other created things because they were created in the image of God. Although they were not divine, they were

created in God's image. This meant that they were made to express who God is. Since God is loving and just, Adam and Eve were to reflect those characteristics in their relationships with one another. God is fully satisfied in Himself so He wants us to be satisfied in Him too. Humanity was created as the climax of creation to reveal God. They were made with honor and put on earth to rule over it. Yet they were forbidden to do one thing. Adam and Eve were told by God that they could not eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Sin, Guilt, Shame, Fear = Leaves for Clothes

But the first humans were not satisfied being the climax of creation. They wanted to be God. They wanted to control of their own lives and be independent. In their minds, they could never be fulfilled if they were not God. The Devil knew this and tempted them. God had told them that they could eat of any tree in the garden except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Devil told them that if they ate the fruit of that tree then they would become like God. So they ate and their eyes were opened. They realized they were naked so they made clothes from leaves and hid from God because they were afraid. No longer could they have perfect community with God and each other. Their disobedience caused them to be ashamed and afraid. And God punished them for their wrong by expelling them from the garden.

That is interesting, because as far as we know, Adam and Eve were responsible, good people; maybe better than us. Adam and Eve only did one wrong thing, committed one small sin, before God judged them. They hadn't killed anyone, bullied people, or stolen anything. They merely ate fruit from a tree which God told them not to eat. Sometimes we think that being good enough will cancel out any of the bad things we do. But that is not what the Bible says.

Promised Savior and New Clothes

God still loved the people that he had created. Before Adam and Eve were thrown out of the garden, God did two things. First He changed their clothes. Previously, they wore leaves for clothes. Do you know what kind of clothes God gave them? God replaced their clothes with animal skins. Humanity lost their identity when they hid from God. God sacrificed an animal so we could recover that identity. Without a sacrifice they can no longer be in God's presence.

Then, after judging Adam and Eve, God also judged the serpent (Satan) who had deceived them. God promised that a Savior would be born of a woman's seed, defeat Satan, and suffer to redeem people from their sins. God would defeat Satan, the Deceiver, who is keeping us from a relationship with God.

"Jesus is the Life giver"

One day a prophet named John said this about Jesus, "Look, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world." *That is interesting*, isn't it? A person was called God's lamb. Why? Because a lamb is a sacrificial animal. Jesus came to be God's sacrifice to once and for all remove the sin that is keeping us from being fulfilled. Jesus was the only person who was born

of a virgin. That is interesting; Jesus was a woman's descendent. Jesus told His followers that the Devil came to destroy but He came to give a fulfilled life to us. Jesus defeated the Devil so we might live.

Therefore, Jesus surrendered himself to evil people. They crucified him and his blood poured out. Before Jesus died, He said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and died. He removed the sin that kept us from experiencing the life that God intended us to have. Then Jesus came back to life on the 3rd day after his death. Jesus did not come back to life in some new form or as a different being. He was not reincarnated but resurrected. He appeared to his followers for 40 days, and then He was taken up into heaven. Someday Jesus will return to the earth as Judge of all men.

I Have Life To The Fullest

Life to the fullest is found only in Jesus. It is not found in ourselves or the world. Jesus not only said He was God, but he proved that by rising from the dead; He is the only God. The Bible tells us that if we surrender to Jesus as Lord and believe that He paid for our sins through his sacrifice and was raised from the dead, we will be given life to the fullest. The Bible says, "To all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God," We don't get it because of anything that we did, but because of what God did. It doesn't matter what sins we may have committed in the past. God loves us so much that He saved us and wants to make us His children.

Finish by asking them to respond to the following questions:

1. "Does this make sense that we cannot have a fulfilled life because our sin has separated us from God and that God had to make a way for our sins to be forgiven through Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection?"
2. "Do you believe what I have told you: that Jesus died for our sins and was raised again?"