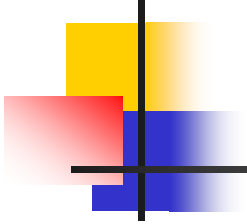


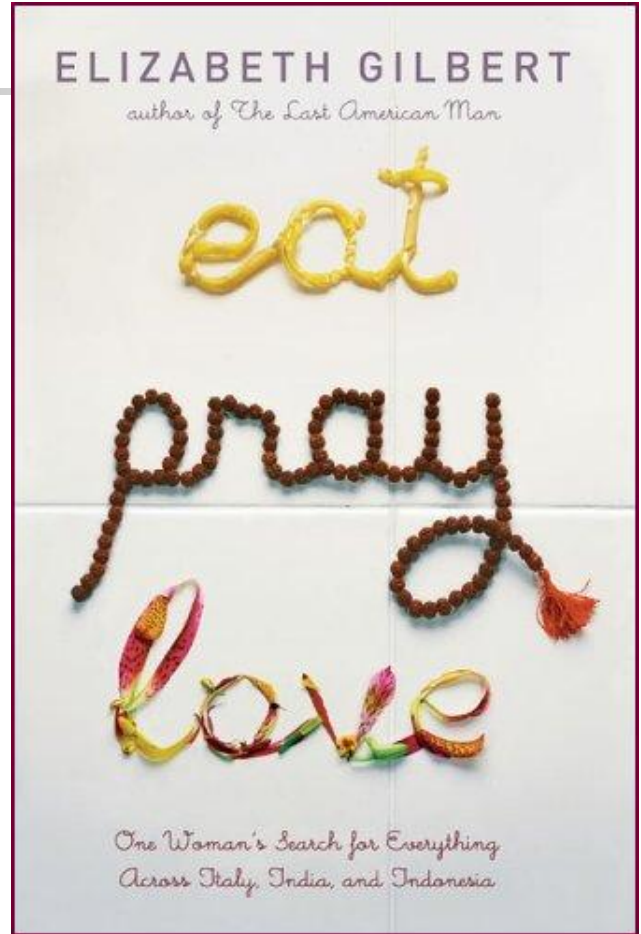


# “Spiritual But Not Religious”

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The Challenge of  
Ala Carte Spirituality







**April 21, 2009**  
**Harrin Hall**  
**Room 225**  
**7 PM**  
University of Central  
Arkansas



**Dr. Monte Cox**  
Dean of College of  
Bible and Religion  
at Harding  
University



**Dr. Clayton Crockett**  
Head of Religious  
Studies Program at  
University of Central  
Arkansas

**Religious Debate**  
Does God Belong in a Religion Class?







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**phar·i·see**

**Etymology:**

- Middle English *pharise*, from Old English *farise*, from Late Latin *pharisaeus*, from Greek *pharisaios*, from Aramaic *pěrishayyā*, plural of *pěrishā*, literally, “separated”



## Luke 7:39

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<sup>39</sup>When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."



## John 14:6

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<sup>6</sup>Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."





# Christian View of Non-Christian Religions?

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## 1. Exclusivism:

- Jesus is the unique incarnation of God, fully human and fully divine.
- Salvation is found only in Him.
- Bible is true, unique, authoritative revelation.
- Claims incompatible with the Bible must be rejected as false.



# Christian View of Non-Christian Religions?

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## 2. Inclusivism:

- The basic claims of Christian faith are true, and Jesus is unique, but God reveals Himself and, *through Christ*, saves people through other religions as well.



# Christian View of Non-Christian Religions?

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## 3. Pluralism:

- Jesus is *not* unique; God (whatever “that” is) reveals “himself/herself/itself” in all religions and “saves” (whatever that means) all pious people (however they define “piety”).



# Christian View of Non-Christian Religions?

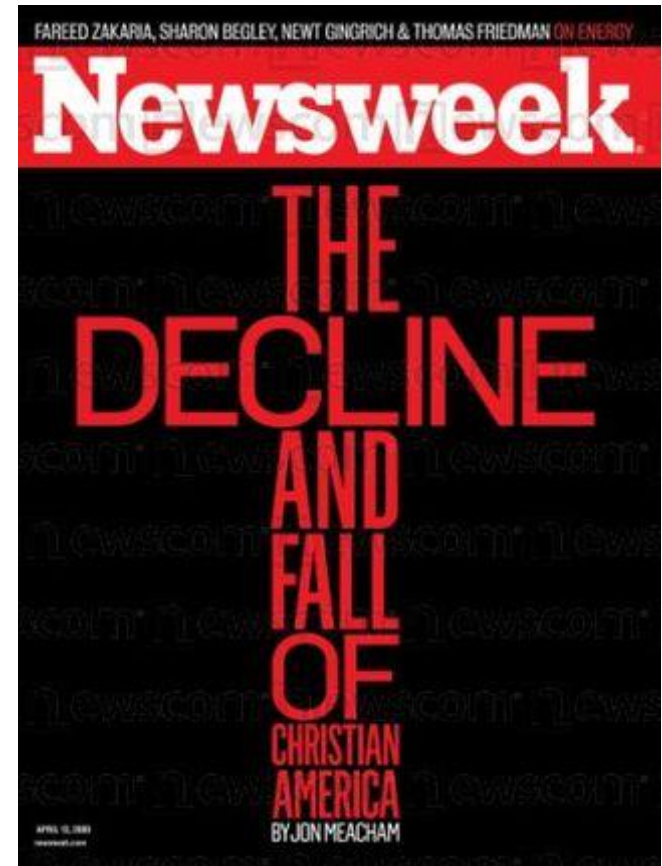
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## 4. Universalism:

- All people will be “saved” regardless of what they know or how they live.

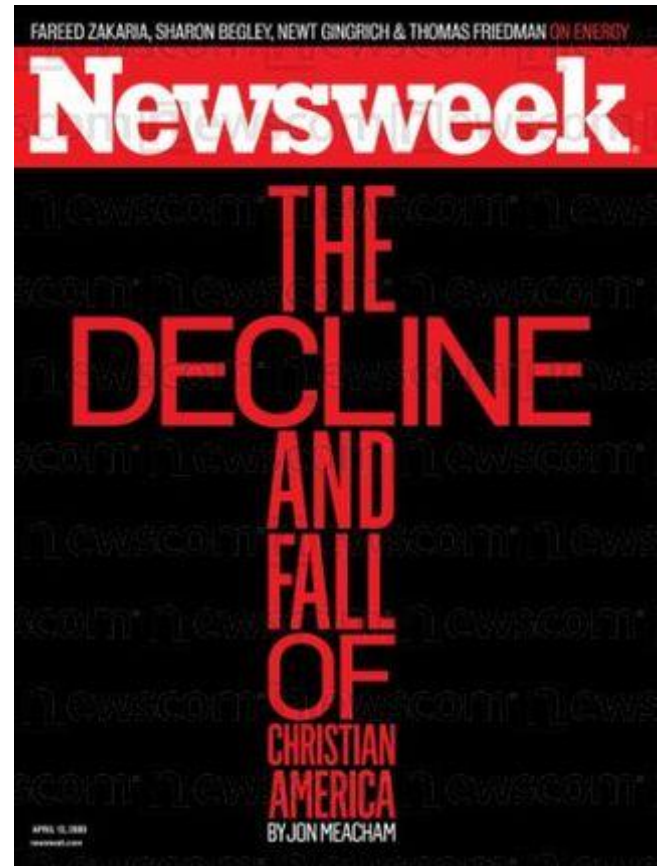
# American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS)

- Self-identified “Christians” has dropped from 86% to 76% since 1990



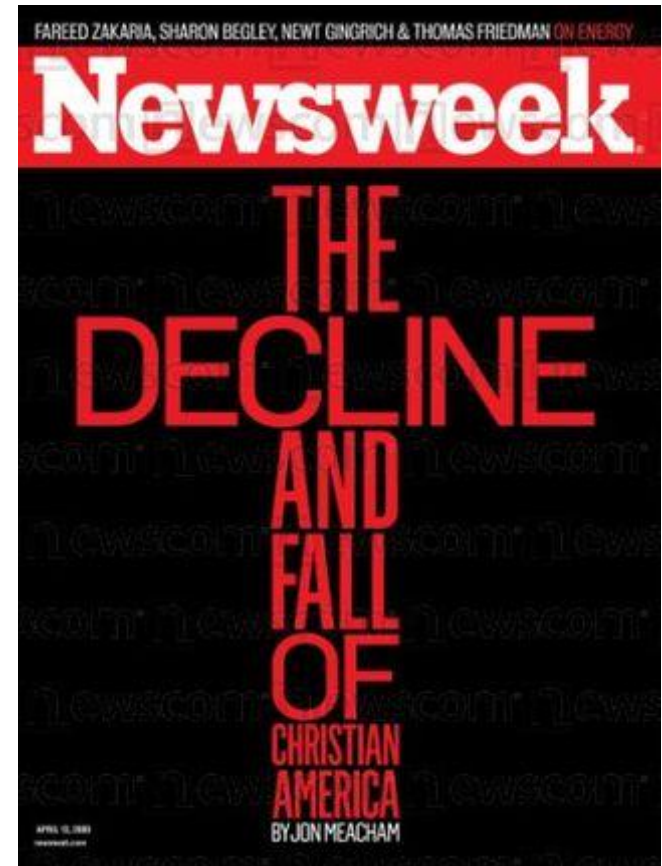
# American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS)

- Number of “unaffiliated” rose from 8% to 16% in recent years



# American Religious Identification Survey (ARIS)

- Self-identified atheists or agnostics rose from 1 million in 1990 to 3.6 million in 2009

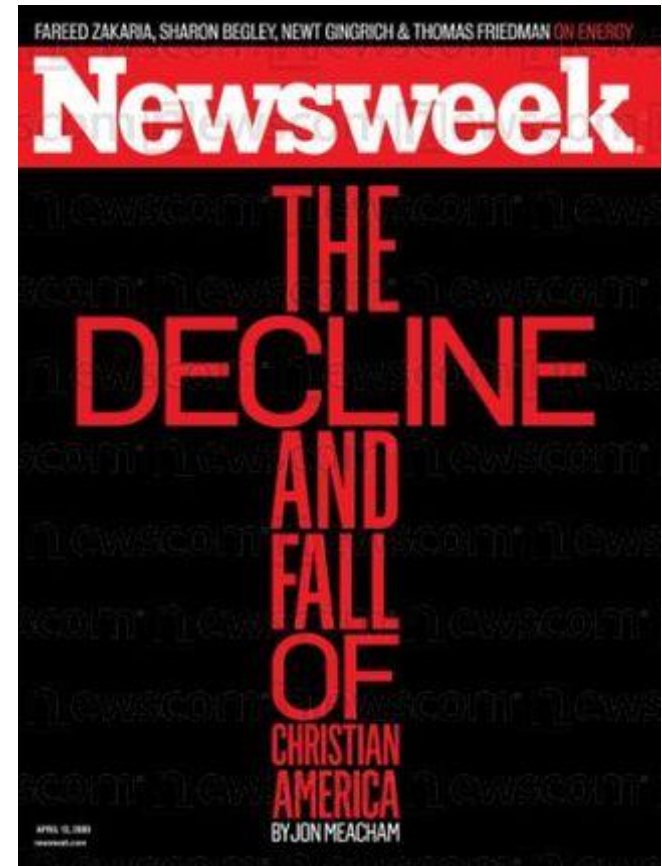




# Newsweek Poll

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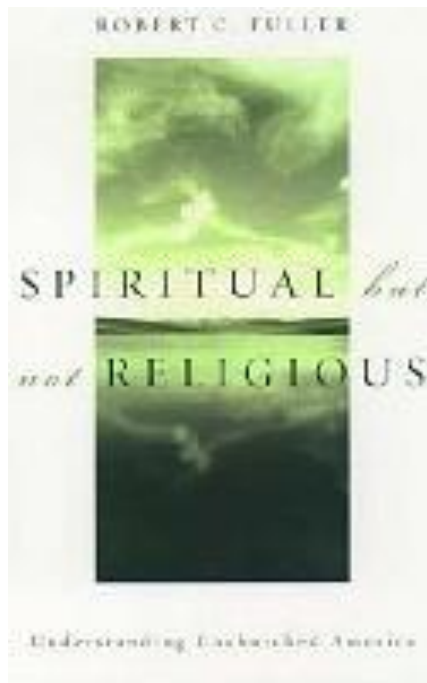
- Self-identified “spiritual but not religious” rose from 24% in 2005 to 30% in 2009.



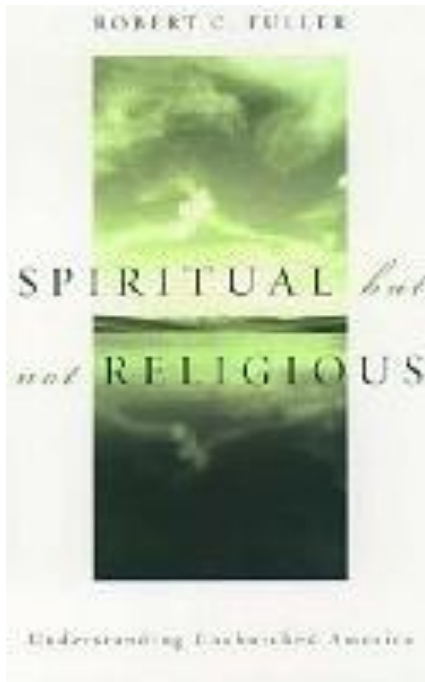


# “Spiritual But Not Religious”

- There is an experiential core common in all religions.

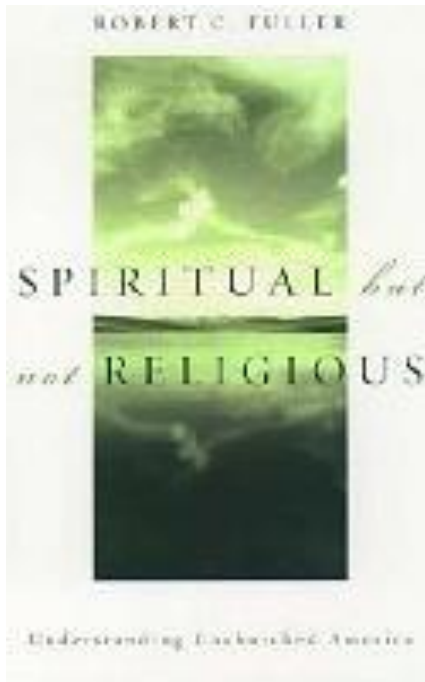


# “Spiritual But Not Religious”



- That core is spiritual energy, described in personal terms by some and impersonal terms by others.

# “Spiritual But Not Religious”

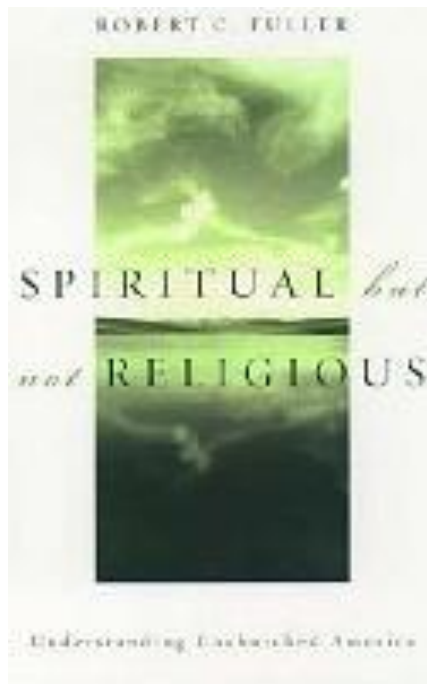


- Human beings have unlimited spiritual potential which must be actualized to achieve success in life.



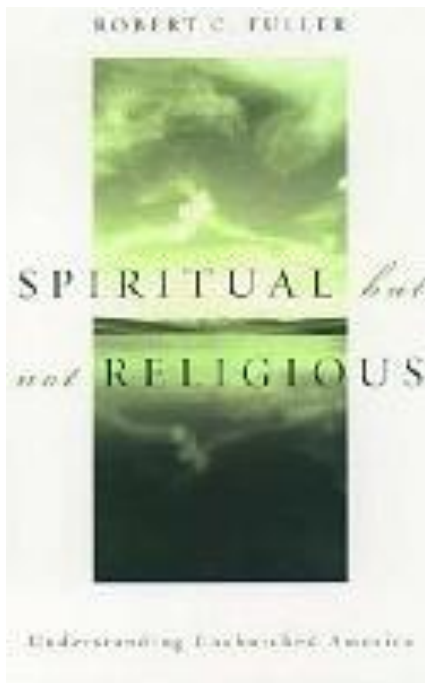
# “Spiritual But Not Religious”

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- Experience, not truthfulness, is the proper test of any worldview.

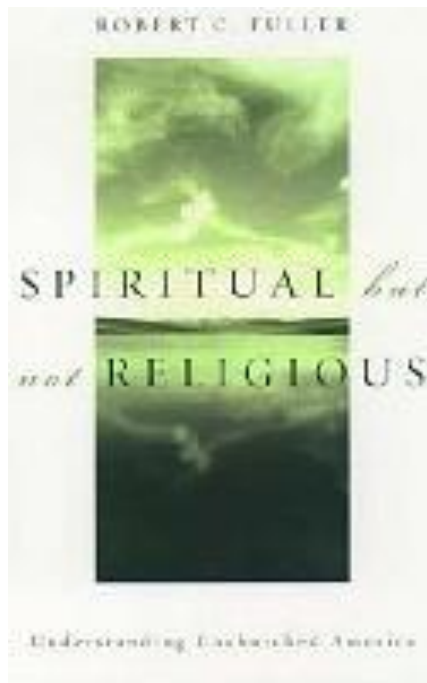
# “Spiritual But Not Religious”



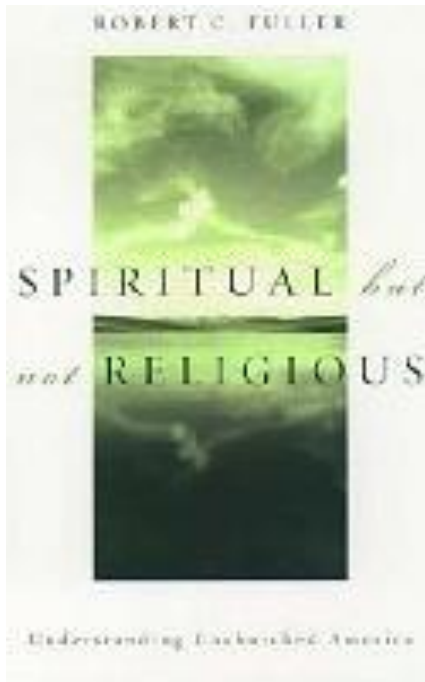
- Spirituality has more to do with a general “openness” to multiple spiritual realities than a commitment to a particular set of creeds.

# “Spiritual But Not Religious”

- Those who are “spiritual but not religious” are very suspicious about institutional religion.

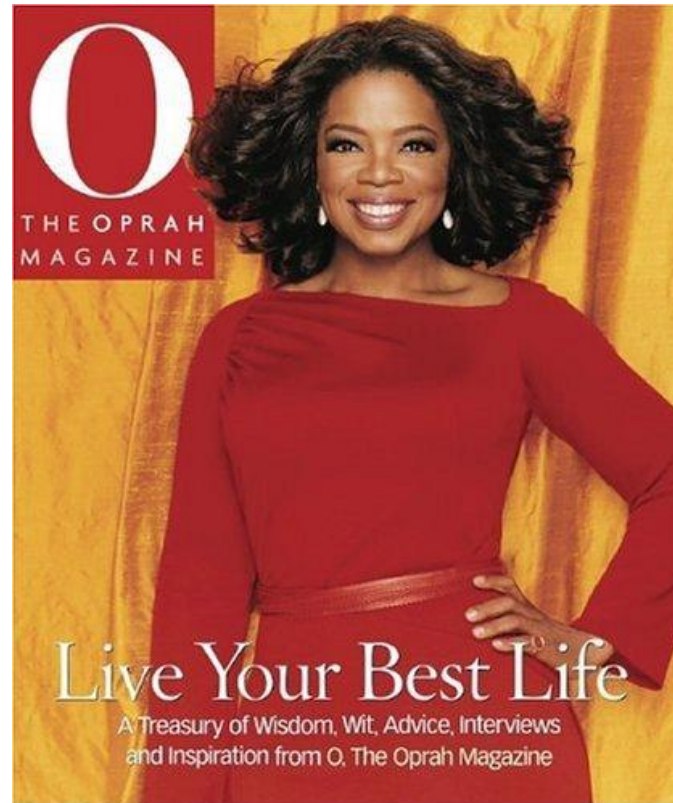


# “Spiritual But Not Religious”



- Jesus, if he is included at all, is seen as a highly evolved spiritual being who can aid us in our own spiritual evolution.

# “Spiritual But Not Religious”





# “Spiritual But Not Religious”



“Zen Christianity”



# “Spiritual But Not Religious”

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“The trouble when people stop believing in God is not that they thereafter believe in nothing; it is that they thereafter believe in everything.”

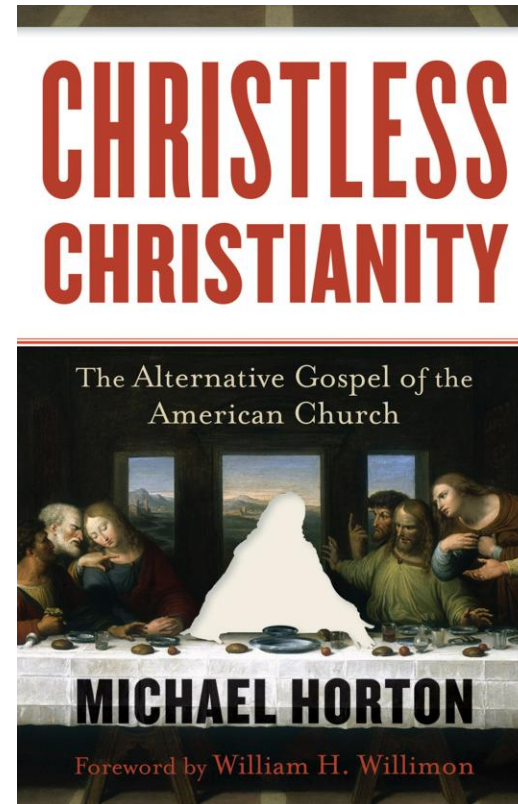
G. K. Chesterton



# “Christless Christianity”?

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“Moralistic  
Therapeutic  
Deism”





# “Speaking the Truth in Love”

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1. We must begin with the question of truth, not pragmatic experience.
2. We must be more informed about the alternatives.
3. We must stress the uniqueness of Christ and his “exclusive” kingdom without ridiculing other religious figures or beliefs.



# “Speaking the Truth in Love”

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4. We must replace the traditional “monologue” approach to evangelism with genuine dialogue.
5. We must live lives that are consistent with the truth.



# “Speaking the Truth in Love”

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6. We must not overstep our authority as messengers; we are not judges.
7. We must bathe all of our efforts in prayer.



# Calling all “exclusivists” to:

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Humility . . . because

- “We know in part”
- We are messengers
- We follow Jesus

Confidence . . . because

- “We know in part”
- We are messengers
- We follow Jesus