

A large iceberg floats in a deep blue ocean under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The iceberg's tip is above the water, while its much larger, jagged base is submerged. The water surface is slightly rippled. The word "Culture" is written in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font with a black outline in the upper right quadrant. The word "Worldview" is written in the same style in the lower right quadrant.

Culture

Worldview



Language

Celebrations

Folklore

Culture

Dress

Food

Arts

Beliefs

Body Language

Work Ethic

Values

Worldview

Humor

Manners

Beauty Ideals

Gender Roles

Personal Space

7 WORLDVIEW QUESTIONS

1. *God* - What is prime reality?
2. *Context* - What is the nature of the world around us?
3. *Identity* - What is a human being?
4. *Crisis/Experience* - What happens to a person at death?
5. *Knowledge* - Why is it possible to know anything at all?
6. *Morality* - How do we know what is right and wrong?
7. *Purpose* - What is the meaning of human history?

from *The Universe Next Door* by James Sire



The Secular Society



Authority Shift

GOD → **PROJECT "SELF"**



4 Types of Secularist

Radical

Pragmatic

Moderate

(Traditional)

Spiritual

Media's "disciplining" of culture has undermined 3 basic needs of humanity:

Security

Significance

Self-Worth

Security

An increased sense of **fear from all of the dreadful images seen in quantity and detail has penetrated hearts.**

Significance

The celebration of celebrity (fame**) rather than a person's contribution to society has distorted the view of human significance and led to a desire to be appreciated by thousands of strangers.**

Self-Worth

The promotion of self-hatred thru
comparison in advertising:

“You won’t be happy, complete, or loved
until you have this, experience that, or look
like him/her.”

These 3 areas are the **currency
of secular culture and at the root
of most **discipleship** issues.**

In discipleship of culture from a
Kingdom perspective, COUNTER:

FEAR with **FREEDOM**
(Security)

FAME with **LOVE**
(Significance)

COMPARISON with **CONTENTMENT**
(Self-Worth)

Mountain-top discipleship

Go on high pilgrimage of global and historical context
(engender gratitude for those who have gone before)

Face-to-Face discipleship

We are created to know and be known at deep levels
(honest, open, vulnerable)

Physical discipleship

Flee to nature away from screens, media, demands on time,
to be alone, with others, and with God

Removing “Defeater Belief” Obstacles

Building “Gospelizing” Bridges

Deconstructing Defeater Beliefs by Tim Keller

DEFEATER BELIEFS

**“BELIEF – A”, that if true, means “BELIEF – B”
*cannot be true.***

**Every culture hostile to Christianity holds to a set of
“common sense” beliefs that automatically make
Christianity seem implausible to people.**

Small Group Exercise 1

A “defeater belief” is a belief that makes Christianity seem impossible or undesirable.

What’s a common reason people you know reject Christianity?

What’s a reason you personally used to reject Christianity or struggled with?

Implausability structures

In some cultural contexts, implausibility structures are **eroding** so Christianity seems credible.

In other cultural contexts, implausibility structures are **very strong** so Christianity seems ludicrous.

“Sandwich” approach to sharing the Gospel

1. **The Attractive Gospel** – brief and connected to baseline narratives
2. **Why Christianity Can Be True** – dismantling doubts and defeater beliefs
3. **The Biblical Story of the Gospel** – a more thorough telling

1. **Brief Gospel summary** that's attractive, compelling, and relevant to culture: *"It would be wonderful if that were true, but it can't be!"*
2. **Deconstruct implausability structure(s)** by presenting objections to Christianity in a clearer and stronger way than they would have.
3. **Longer explanation of the person and work of Christ** is much easier once defeaters are already dismantled in a listener's mind

Small Group Exercise 2

"A vs. B" Sorting Game

A) Show their defeater belief is not as airtight as they think

B) Show Christianity has resources for their concern better than alternatives

Label each statement **A (Challenge the Belief), **B** (Show Christianity plausability / beauty), or **Both****

- 1. "You can't prove that science disproves God—science can only test natural causes."**
- 2. "If there's no God, you still have to explain why human rights matter."**
- 3. "Christianity doesn't ignore suffering—it says God entered into it."**
- 4. "Every culture has moral blind spots; it's hard to claim you're morally superior."**
- 5. "Even secular people live by faith in unprovable things—like the value of human life."**
- 6. "The cross is the only place where God loses power to save you."**
- 7. "Your view assumes religion causes violence, but secular ideologies have too."**
- 8. "The Christian view of forgiveness is uniquely powerful in healing."**

“Both” Statements (A + B)

1) Science / Proof

“Science can’t disprove God, because science can only test the natural world—but Christianity actually explains why the universe is orderly and intelligible in the first place.”

 **Both**

2) Human Rights / Meaning

“If there’s no God, it’s hard to justify why human rights are real—but Christianity grounds human dignity in the fact that we’re made in God’s image.”

 **Both**

3) Suffering

“The problem of suffering assumes evil is objectively real—but Christianity not only agrees it’s real, it says God entered into suffering through Jesus and promises to end it.”

 **Both**

4) Moral Superiority / Blind Spots

“Every culture has moral blind spots, so no one stands above judgment—but Christianity uniquely says the way forward isn’t moral superiority, it’s repentance and grace.”

 **Both**

5) Faith / Secular Assumptions

“Even secular people trust unprovable things like human worth—but Christianity offers a coherent reason for why humans matter: we are loved and created by God.”

 **Both**

6) Cross / Power

“If you think God wouldn’t allow weakness, you’re assuming real power means control—but Christianity says real power is sacrificial love, and the cross is where God saves by giving himself.”

 **Both**

7) Violence

“It’s true religion has caused violence, but secular ideologies have too—which suggests the deeper problem is the human heart; Christianity addresses that root issue through forgiveness and transformation.”

 **Both**

8) Forgiveness

“If forgiveness seems unrealistic, it assumes people can’t truly change—but Christianity says real forgiveness is possible because God forgave us first, breaking the cycle of revenge.”

 **Both**

Listen for CULTURAL NARRATIVE CLUES

Outside of Framework	Things that are confusing
Narrative Connection	Things that resonate
Verbal Disconnect	Things that offend unnecessarily because of miscommunication
Idols	Things that offend because they are understood
Commitment	Things that happen at transition and crisis

Goal: Listen well, identify underlying assumptions, and connect objections to the gospel with humility.

3 Steps:

1. **Affirm** the concern (name what's valid).
2. **Defuse** the "airtightness" (ask questions; show assumptions).
3. **Offer** Christ (how Christianity addresses the concern better).

Conversation Rules

Lead with curiosity. Don't correct too fast.

Ask more questions than you make statements.

Avoid jargon (sin, grace, salvation) unless you define it.

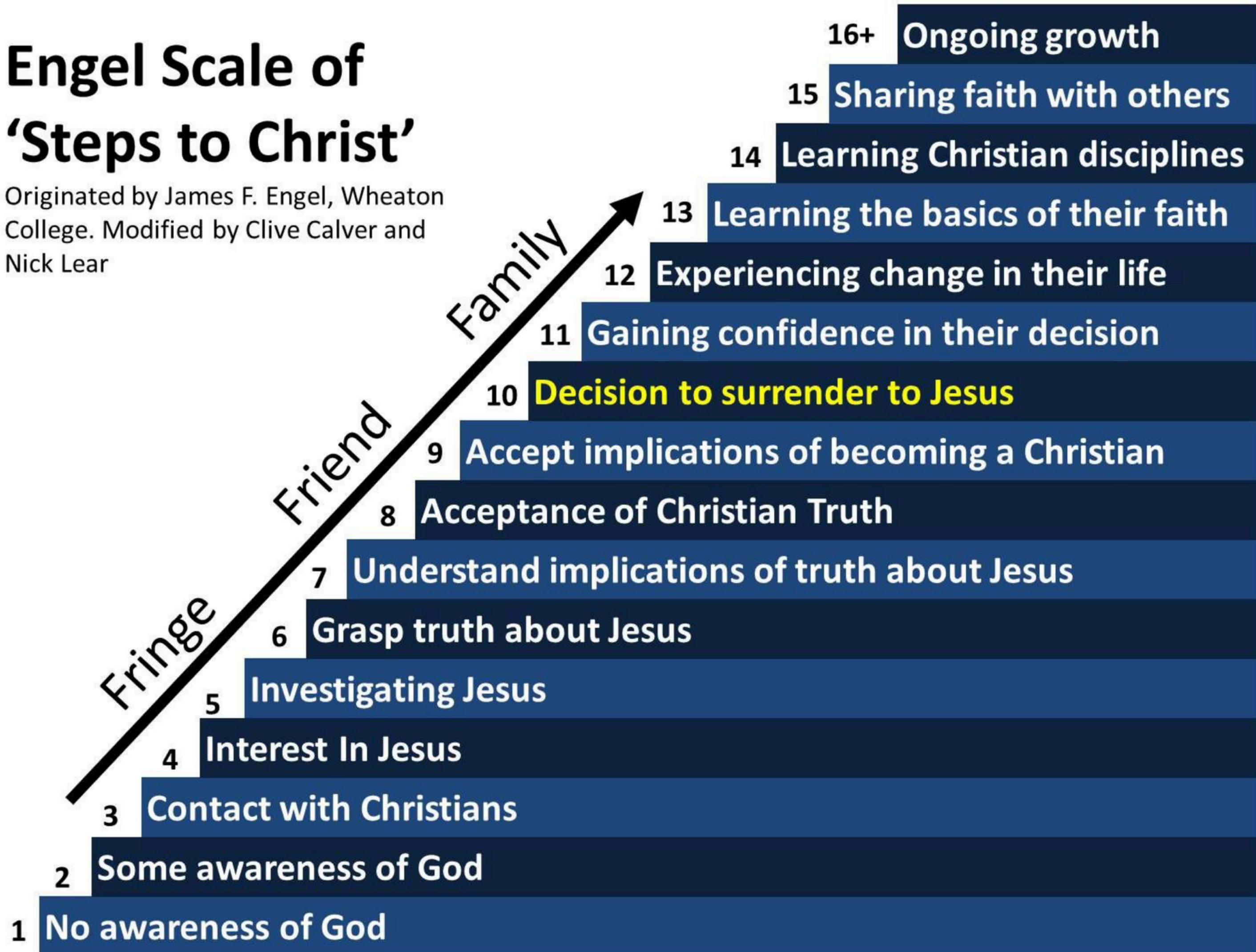
Aim for clarity + warmth, not winning.

End with an invitation, not a lecture.

If defeater beliefs are obstacles,
"right enough" moments are gospeling bridges.

Engel Scale of 'Steps to Christ'

Originated by James F. Engel, Wheaton College. Modified by Clive Calver and Nick Lear



1. Trusting a Christian
2. Becoming Curious
3. Opening up to Change
4. Seeking After God
5. Entering the Kingdom

I Once Was Lost by Don Everts & Doug Schaupp

RESOURCES

Books/Ebooks:

Center Church by Tim Keller

How God Became King by N.T. Wright

I Once Was Lost by Don Evert and Doug Schauup

Sharing Lives by Bert de Ruiter

Surprise the World by Michael Frost

The King Jesus Gospel by Scot McKnight

Online:

“Deconstructing Defeater Beliefs” by Tim Keller

“Reaching Secular People - A Summary” by Shawn & Deborah Galyen

www.secularpeoples.org