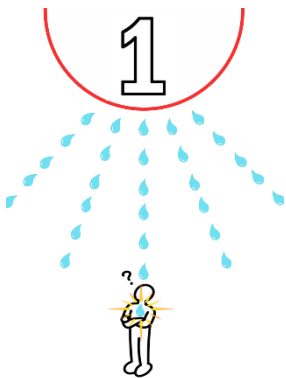


Module Two: Becoming God- Talk Outline

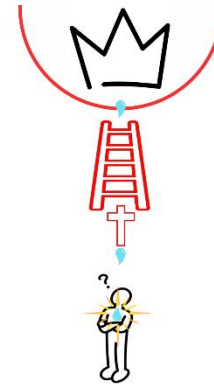
Recap

1 The Trapped Spirit





2 The Orthodox Way of Salvation



"God became man, so that man might become God"=Theosis

The Questions

If you died tonight and came before God,
do you think he would let you into heaven?

In your spiritual journey towards God have you come to the
point where you think you are at peace with him?

Module Two: Becoming God– Group Time

The Orthodox View of Salvation	What do our Orthodox friends need to hear?
Our problem is our failure to be like God Salvation is the journey to becoming God-like Christ assists us through the Church We must contribute through moral purification and self-denial	Discuss what you would say to them

1 God's View of Salvation– The Problem of Sin

Because God is a father who loves us as his children, he richly provides all we have and need. He deserves our gratitude and service.

The heart of sin is self-reliance: the conviction that we can provide all we need for ourselves. So, we do not thank God as our father. We consider God transactionally, where you only give when you expect something in return. It's the appropriate relationship to an employer who pays you for work, but not to your family.

The story of the Prodigal son is a powerful allegory of how the selfishness of sin destroys our relationship with God

Read Luke 15:11–24

1 How do the following verses illustrate how the younger son thinks transactionally?

eg verses 11–13

12- he wants his inheritance now which means he wishes his father were already dead his father is only good for what he can get out of him

13- as soon as he can he gets as far away as possible quickly spends the money=doesn't value what the father has given him

verses 16–17

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.....

verses 18–19 (think about the purpose of his “confession”)

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2 Reflection:

How is the son's behaviour an illustration of sin as described in Romans 1:20–23?

.....

.....

3 In the story, who repairs the relationship? What price is paid?

.....

.....

3 What this parable teaches our Orthodox friends

- 1 Orthodox people generally value family highly so the story will resonate with them – especially the offense of the ungrateful child and the rightness of the father's anger
- 2 Sin is described in terms of destroyed relationships
- 3 The offender (the son) can't earn their way back into a relationship
- 4 Broken relationships can only be repaired by forgiveness from the offended one (the father)

4 Exercise: Share your Experience

Your friends will be challenged to hear that Christians can be sure in their relationship with God.

In pairs practice explaining to one another:

Why you are certain God will admit you to heaven (Spoiler alert for next session: it has to do with confidence that Christ did enough to pay for our sins)

5 Share the names of your friends. Pray that they will understand how sin has broken their relationship with God and how they need God to forgive them.

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Before Session Three

Read the Prodigal Son with your friend and discuss with them- you could use the questions above or chapter 3 in *Certainty for Life: An Invitation to those in Eastern Orthodoxy*

Ask your friends one or both *Evangelism Explosion* questions:

If you were to die and come before God, would he let you into heaven?

In your spiritual journey towards God
have you come to the point where you are certain of entering heaven?

Then explain to them that you are certain and why.

Questions you might be asked (Information to aid evangelistic conversations)

Q: Being at Church, praying before the icons, lighting the candles and taking communion all make me feel closer to God. Does God agree?

A:

Luke 18:9-14 (Parable of Pharisee and Tax Collector)

Philippians 3:2-9

also Chapter 4 "What if I try Harder?" in *Certainty For Life*

Q: Don't I please God when I fast and pray constantly and other forms of self-denial?

A:

Colossians 2:16-23

even those practicing the most extreme self-denying lifestyles were uncertain they had done enough to merit God's favour

(see the example of Simeon the Stylite in Chapter 5 "What if I Fast and Pray" in *Certainty for Life*)

Module Two: Becoming God- Leader's Notes

The Orthodox View of Salvation	What do our Orthodox friends need to hear?
Our problem is our failure to be like God Salvation is the journey to becoming God-like Christ assists us through the Church We must contribute through moral purification and self-denial	Discuss what you would say to them 1 Our problem is Sin 2 Salvation requires the restoration of our relationship with God through forgiveness 3 Christ doesn't merely assist- he provides completely for our forgiveness 4 We cannot make it to God by our effort (the journey is not just difficult but impossible)

1 God's View of Salvation- The Problem of Sin

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The heart of sin is self-reliance: the conviction that we can provide all we need for ourselves. So, we do not thank God as our father. We consider God transactionally, where you only give when you expect something in return. It's the appropriate relationship to an employer who pays you for work, but not to your family.

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quickly spends the money=doesn't value what the father has given him

verses 16-17

the son sees his problems as imminent starvation from a lack of well-paid employment

doesn't he brought it on himself by breaking his relationship with his father
both conclusions reflect transactional way of thinking

verses 18-19 (think about the purpose of his "confession")

*his appeal to his father is **not** in order to restore the relationship but simply so he can get a job*

so he plans to beg for a job to acquire money again

in v19 he seeks an employer-worker relationship

not about affection, but about what you can get from the other person- which is appropriate for employment but not for familial relationships

2 Reflection:

How is the son's behaviour an illustration of sin as described in Romans 1:20-23?

God has given us every good thing we need

yet we have responded with ingratitude (Rom 1:21)

we have taken all that God has given us without acknowledging his goodness towards us

Like the son taking the inheritance and leaving the father, sin is a declaration of independence from God (vv21-23)

3 In the story, who repairs the relationship? What price is paid?

The father who demonstrates compassion and forgiveness:

forgives his son's ingratitude and selfishness

bears the cost of the spent inheritance himself- doesn't make the son earn his way back into the family by repaying it- but restores him to full sonship (and therefore inheritance again)

bears the pain of the son's rejection of him

humbles himself by running to the son and welcoming him home

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