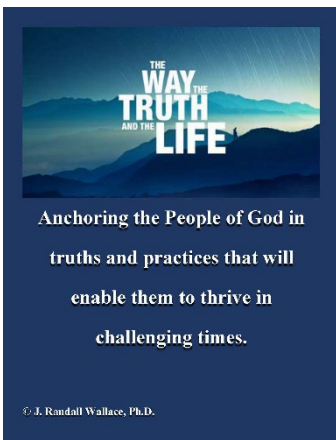


Seeds of Hope

Newsletter of Mustard Seeds & Mountains

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What does a *Way, Truth, and Life Seminar* offered by Mustard Seeds and Mountains look like? Take a peek:

It was encouraging, as I moved from small group to small group, to hear people wrestling with the questions provided from *The Way, Truth, and Life Seminar*. Three key areas were their focus. They had roughly an hour and a half to deal with each issue. By the end of the day, they should generate initial action plans to:

- address how to broaden and deepen their sense of *community* in their congregation,
- rethink and modify how they *teach and disciple* utilizing transformational teaching and learning techniques, and
- identify new approaches to *outreach* that emphasize getting “out of the box” and thinking creatively and strategically about outreach.

My hope was that by the end of the day they would also have identified three “sparkplugs,” individuals who would spearhead further discussion and implementation in each of the areas explored.

The questions they addressed were difficult and not typically what most churches think about, questions driven by data showing how churches are failing in educating adults and youth, how shallow and sometimes toxic church communities lead some to abandon the faith (deconversion), and how current practices in faith communities may come under attack as our culture not only becomes more secularized, but also energized against Christianity.

Earlier in the day the participants learned how four key modern thinkers have shaped the modern mind and provide the foundation and framework for much of the godlessness and perversion we see in our culture. In contrast, this was followed by exploring God's ways in the world as evidenced in His character. They then investigated how the scripture views truth, its nature, purpose, significance, and effect. To end the morning the participants discovered how God's ways provide a template for how we are to live in the world.

The purpose of *The Way, Truth, and Life Seminar* is to:

- First, help church leaders recognize that the easy time for Christianity in the US is over. The culture is casting off any respect for and recognition of Christianity as a positive force and is beginning to actively oppose it. Harsh persecution is not here yet, but it's coming. Are their people ready? Research says no.
- Next, the seminar is a call back to basics, especially focusing on knowing God, his character, and ways. Absolute confidence in His goodness is essential for being able to endure any hardship or persecution.
- Finally, the seminar forces people to take a critical look at how they are living in the world and whether it aligns with God's intentions for those who profess to follow Him. Are God's ways reflected in how we live our lives?

The seminar is followed up with monthly correspondence from me and articles to consider. In addition, three months following the seminar I visit with them again to assist participants with implementation of strategies and to address any questions or problems they encounter.

Pray for us as we seek to get into many more churches; God opens doors through his people.

Will you be a "sparkplug" for scheduling this Seminar in your church? So far this year we have had three seminars in the west and one on the east coast. We are ready to book more seminars for 2023. Contact us at the email above for more information.

Randy Wallace