

▶ THE ROLE OF WONDER IN WITNESS

▶ USING HUMAN ILLUSTRATIONS TO CONNECT WITH TODAY'S CAMPUS

▶ THE NEW RULES OF MARKETING AND PR: BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Deep Roots *big reach*

The Role of Wonder in Witness

Why an emphasis on awe and mystery are important in today's evangelism

Twenty years ago when I began my journey from Atheism to faith in Christ, nearly all conversations about God included debate or at least a discussion of evidences for the rational foundation for faith. American cultural postmodernism has altered the way most younger people view the role of debate and discussion. While Christians need to be “bi-lingual,” speaking both the new language of

postmodernity while still able to defend the faith with traditional dialogical processes, when it comes to postmodern witness, a new emphasis on wonder is needed.

In the past such words as “mystery, wonder, the unknown, and awe” immediately raised red flags for hearers. Such concepts were seen as holes or limits on one’s ability to demonstrate the rationality of propositional claims. Subjective experiences that express mystery and wonder today are not only welcome elements of Christian witness but are now often seen as evidence for the personal relevancy of faith to our hearers.

True wonder, or the state in which a person is filled with a sense of awe, comes from experiences with the Divine, albeit an inescapably subjective experience. In fact, it is this articulation of wonder and its associated outward expressions (e.g. fear, immobilization, spontaneous worship, brokenness, demonstrative repentance...) that mark the unique experiences of women and men throughout the Scripture when confronted with the Divine. Two great examples of this come from Mark 5 in the exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac and the resurrection of Jairus’ daughter.

Our experience of God may not always be as acute as our mountain top or defining encounters with God but true Christians should be marked as people of wonder for we *relate* to God in an on-going fashion. Our relationship with God should go beyond rituals such as

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Using “Human Illustrations” to Connect with Today’s Campus

What are Human Illustrations and Why are They Important?

Human illustrations are symbolic demonstrations enacted by a person or groups of people that dramatically and emotionally drive home to viewers examples of the injustices or relevant issues that underlay an event, campaign, or meeting. They are important because people can only learn so much through academic channels, films, lectures, literature-education also comes through being emotionally connected to the issue being addressed. For example, one can read a book like “Not for Sale” by David Batstone and learn of the particular stories of child prostitutes, they can attend a symposium or lecture, a film on the subject or an event where the subject will be taught. However, hearts are moved in a

visceral way when people witness women bound and gagged, chained with real chains on the side of a road on a dirty mattress. This example of an human illustration is admittedly controversial but in past events has captivated the attention of media, students, campus officials and surrounding communities! They have also served to spur passionate dialogue as to the appropriateness of such educational tactics. One thing is for sure; however, such examples of human illustrations have time and again inspired people to get involved in the justice issue unlike traditional means. Human illustrations, secondarily, serve to draw attention to events we are sponsoring and help drive people to events or resources like websites, Proxe Stations, marches, special meetings.

How to Choose the Right Human Illustrations

Choosing powerful and appropriate human illustrations is a challenge. Anticipating unnecessary negative fallout from illustrations, negative press, unwanted responses, and/or counter-missional community responses is paramount. Gather a team of creative activists early in the planning process and work through

ideas, shamelessly challenging each and every nuance of the potential illustrations. Illustrations should be somewhat controversial and certainly grab attention but anticipating problems that can be counter-missional is the goal in properly

leaders decided to not use the purchased shirts but lost the operating expenses spent on them.

Leaders should also spend time researching not only competitive prices for materials needed for



human illustrations but cheap alternatives for marketing and branding such illustrations. Thinking creatively, competitively, and carefully about how to engage a market experientially through human illustrations is important. For photos of human illustrations, visit www.flickr.com/photos/theevangelist.

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vetting ideas. For example, during an on-campus campaign on slavery, t-shirts were purchased with the simple word “Slave” on the front. All seemed well until significant numbers of African-Americans noticed that the largely White coalition of organizations putting the events together hadn’t asked them or included them in the discussion as to the appropriateness of such a shirt worn by Blacks on campus. Fortunately,



WIKIFAITH CORNER: Annual Global Forum on Human Trafficking

This October 14-15 in Yorba Linda, CA, the Not for Sale Campaign will host the second annual Global Forum on Human Trafficking. The Not For Sale Campaign’s Global Forum on Human Trafficking will provide attendees with the unique opportunity to network with other individuals committed to ending human trafficking. In an open forum with global leaders, participants will discuss effective and innovative methods to combat trafficking, address the needs of at-risk populations, and provide relevant tools to build a greater modern-day abolitionist movement. The 2nd Annual Abolition Concert will feature musical artists and celebrate the journey of Kru Nam and Not For Sale! The 2009 Abolition Concert featured Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, John Foreman of Switchfoot, and Bradley Corrigan of Dispatch and celebrated the work of Lucy Borja. For more information and to register, visit www.notforsalecampaign.org.



Executing and Leveraging Human Illustrations

Human illustrations can get lost on a large campus and fail to produce the kind of energy and mobilization they can bring. In order to maximize the role of human illustrations/illustrators, follow the following ten principles and guidelines for using illustrations:

1. **Study foot traffic:** In any market, there are times and routes that are more prone to higher levels of foot traffic. Begin at the beginning of public space where potential sites for illustrators can be placed and watch how people navigate the space. Follow the flow of groups of people. You may notice that certain people, for example, get off at a bus stop, walk through certain courtyards, between certain buildings to shortcut to their destination. Being familiar with the potential staging areas for

illustrations as a result of studying foot traffic is an excellent place to start dreaming up ideas for illustrations.

2. **Co-brand illustrations with the event:** Each staging area for illustrations should have some branding elements that tie the illustration with a campaign or event(s). Banners, other people distributing flyers near or at the staging area, branded shirts worn by illustrators are just a few examples of how organizers can maximize these powerful and emotion-provoking illustrations.

3. **Right-size illustrations for the staging area:** If after studying

foot traffic patterns for certain parts of the day when illustrations are being considered, organizers note that at any given point in time, over 500 people occupy a potential staging space, choosing illustrations that can be meaningfully observed by 500+ people should be planned and practiced. Find opportunities to test out potential ideas on friendly crowds that may approximate the anticipated number of viewers during the illustrations.

4. **Connect staging areas by foot traffic patterns:** After observing commonly used paths by pedestrians (or vehicles where appropriate), plan several staging areas along the best used routes for the campus. Particularly places where foot traffic can get congested serve as places where illustrators

Using Human Illustrations (cont.)

should concentrate to maximize the length of viewing.

5. **Deploy illustration hosts or guides:** Often, illustrators are themselves are silent so consider establishing a staging area host or guide for people who may want to ask questions. Such guides can also safeguard illustrators from potential harassment or inappropriate behavior on the part of observers.
6. **Market at or near staging areas:** Using staging areas to invite observers to events or into evangelistic opportunities like Proxe Stations should be a significant part of the planning for illustrations. Because so many people are emotionally impacted by illustrations, they often are more open to an invitation to dialogue or an invitation to an event where they can learn more. Guides or hosts can appropriately fill this role of engagement.
7. **Plan for prolonged exposure:** It is not only the number of staging areas observers should encounter along well-worn foot trafficked areas, but also the duration of when the illustrations operate. Illustrations should run for long periods of time, allowing the market to be saturated with the message illustrations bring.
8. **Leverage illustration staging areas for the overall goals of the event(s):** Often, Determine the goals of the campaign

or event(s) and seek to fulfill them at human illustration staging areas. If evangelism is a key part of the event, consider coupling Proxe Stations with human illustrations. If raising money for a justice organization like the "Not for Sale Campaign" is a part of the plan, place receptacles for donations at the staging area.

9. **Involve key people and organizations:** Often, markets have people of local lore and organizations of particular cultural influence. Representatives from sports teams, fraternities and sororities, well-known professionals, professors, religious leaders and the like can bring a power to illustrations that is exponential so consider some timeslots for such people to participate in the illustration teams.
10. **Don't skimp on the illustration budget:** While often the most effective illustrations utilize homemade, make-shift materials, co-branding and marketing illustration space should be done with professionalism and care. Allowing banners to be improperly hung or to sag in the wind, leaflets to blow around staging space, or extra materials like boxes to litter staging space reflects badly on the experience itself but also on your group and the event(s).



Wonder in Witness (cont.)

prayer, Bible study, and fasting and should include actual encounters with the Divine. This is the one universal thread that draws the Biblical narrative together across characters from Genesis to Revelation. This should come as no surprise since God is in the business of encountering His creation. Such encounters are inherently "alien" and produce the kind of reactions we see in the Biblical narrative (again, fear, flight, spontaneous worship...). While it is true that we are God's offspring, He is our Father, there is something so terrifying about the Divine presence that we are left with few voluntary, rational responses in the immediate moment.

When it comes to relating our understanding of and encounters with God to others, there is great value in our transparency in this area. In fact, the current cultural milieu is so desperate to mystically connect with the Divine, the hunger to hear such encounters amongst crowds and individuals is palpable. While this opens the door to all kinds of deceptions and potential manipulations, authentic wonder and delight in mystery within the Christian faith is an asset, not a liability. Seeking to root our experiences and the interpretation of such experiences in Scripture cannot be overstated but such authentic, transformative encounters with God are not confined to Scripture reading. We cannot manufacture such experiences but hope and wait for God to 'condescend' and connect with our hungering hearts.

Whether through film, television, music, or on-line and platform gaming, pop culture is riddled with illustrations of a desperate generation trying to manufacture encounters with the Divine. Such attempts to connect with God through the mundane and even through debauched behavior illustrates just how hungry this 'mystic generation' really is. Christians ought to have much to say in this area. We have authentic, transformative encounters with a God who is intimate with

us and longs to love us. We have the means (community, prayer, fasting, Bible study, worship...) to make ourselves available to God and thus encounter the Divine.

Whether through re-telling and applying testimonial encounters to others or inviting others into Christian disciplines and practices where encountering God is likely, evangelism today needs to include much more emphasis on wonder. Apologetically, when it comes to sharing Jesus relevantly with postmoderns, we need not run from or hide the fact that our faith, while an historic faith first, is also a faith of mystery. Unlike the pagan mystical religions of Jesus' day, our faith is a faith in an historic person, which makes authentic mystery possible! We leave room for and appreciate wonder and mystery simply because of God, while familiar, is also the awful God of dread, alien, and full of wonder.

The culture at large appreciates wonder and mystery as can be seen in the hit television show, "Lost" or the console game, "God of War." Within the often avoided grotesqueries and debauched expressions of American culture is a deep soul cry for the transcendent and we connect with such a cry through the story of the cross, the resurrection and with our on-going story. In the past, classical composers, expressionist painters, and gritty philosophers expressed this soul cry but today it is the film maker, the poet/singer, the manipulator of pixels and sprites, and those who clamor to consume such shadowy expressions of another world. While such value is not universal and may be unique to the N. American cultural context, it is nonetheless real and represents a real open door for the brave new world of evangelism.

SMARTER OUTREACH: The New Rules of Marketing & PR

The NEW RULES of MARKETING & PR

HOW TO USE NEWS RELEASES, BLOGS, PODCASTING, VIRAL MARKETING & ONLINE MEDIA TO REACH BUYERS DIRECTLY



DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT

In David Scott's groundbreaking book, we are familiarized with the 'new rules' of marketing and public relations that enable us as a non-profit, religious organization to connect directly with our 'customers' and potential 'customers.' The New Rules is a book for senior student leaders, staff, and staff directors who want to bring greater exposure and value to broader networks. Though written primarily for a secular, business/product oriented consumer, the New Rules will help us understand how to get our message out to larger numbers of faculty, students, and staff on campus, donors and potential donors, church and foundation partners, and other organizations within the broader evangelical landscape. Read "The New Rules" in print or on your e-reader today!



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