

Speaking Titles and Topics:

1. Origins of Western Religious Beliefs

“Death Valley” -- The geography of the Middle East and how it can illuminate the understanding of religious teachings

“The Sun God Also Rises” -- Egyptian views of life after death, the human soul and the final judgment

“No Other Gods” -- Egyptian gods and Akhenaton’s articulation of monotheism

“Let My People go” -- The Exodus, its historicity and effect on Jewish beliefs

“Walls Came Tumbling Down” -- What archaeology has to say about Biblical history

“Away in a Manger” -- Jewish expectations of a Messiah, the birth of Jesus and Jewish and Islamic rejections of the idea of God’s son

“When Pigs Flew” -- The earthly ministry of Jesus, including his reaching out to people of different religious views

“Passion Week” -- Details of the last week of Jesus’ life and different views on its significance.

“Where Did That come From?” -- Early Christian thought and influences from earlier religious beliefs

“Echoes of Egypt—Egyptian Influences on Religion”

“Zoroastrianism and the Abrahamic Faiths—Is there a Connection?”

2. Christian History and Division

“The Lord is One -- How Christianity Separated from Judaism”

“On this Rock” -- The origins of the church and divisions between Paul and James over the need to follow Jewish Law

“Blood of Christ” -- The separation of Christianity from Judaism, the Gospels and the writings of Paul

“Gospels Galore” -- The growth of the Church despite persecution and the non-canonical gospels

“An Iota of Difference” -- Church councils and the establishment of orthodoxy

“How the West was Won” -- The church of Rome after the fall of the western Roman Empire and divisions between east and west

“Here I Stand” -- The activities of the Roman Catholic Church in the late Middle Ages and the Reformation

“Pilgrims’ Progress” -- The separation of the Church of England and religious diversity in the American Colonies

“My Bible Says So” -- Current divisions over abortion, evolution, homosexuality and Biblical interpretation

3. Interfaith Issues

“What Truth Can Set Us Free” -- Dealing with Religious Diversity

“We are Not Alone” -- Primitive religions and early beliefs about gods and life after death

“There is a Way Out” -- History, beliefs and practices of Judaism

“Round and Round We Go” -- History, beliefs and practices of Hinduism

“It’s All in Your Mind” -- History, beliefs and practices of Buddhism and Jainism

“Understanding Passeth Peace” -- The Origin and Beliefs of Islam and Sikhism

“In the Beginning was the Beginning” -- Teachings of the New Atheists

“What Truth Can Set Us Free?” -- Dealing with Religious Diversity

“Egyptian Influences on Religion” -- The influence of Egyptian religious beliefs on modern religious beliefs

“Syria and Christian History” -- The connections between Syria and Christian history

“Syria in Turmoil” -- The historical and religious origins of the Syria civil war

“Promised to Whom” -- Origin of conflicting claims to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount

“From Balfour to Bethlehem” -- Historical origins of current conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians

“Moorish Spain and Morocco” -- History of Spain and Morocco from Eighth Century to Fifteenth Century

“Images of the Divine” -- How to deal with religious differences

4. What the Bible Really Says

“Body and Soul” -- What the Bible really says about life after death

“Hell Hath No Fury” -- What the Bible really says about Hell and eternal damnation

“The Devil Made Me Do It” -- What the Bible really says about Satan and the origins of evil

“The End Game” -- What the Bible really says about the end of time

“The Ba’al Still Tolls” -- What the Bible really says about sexuality and homosexual practice

“The Devil Made me do it” -- What the Bible says about Satan and the Source of Evil

5. Around the World

“Talking Turkey” -- Turkey

“Cuba: Which Way is it Going?” -- Cuba

“Journey to a Golden Age” -- Spain and Morocco

“History Tour of India” -- India

“Egypt and the Egyptians” -- Egypt

6. Ins and Outs of the Bible

“The Mountains of God” -- Moses and the Pentateuch

“From Canaan to Babylon” -- Books of the Prophets

“Persian Connections” -- Writings from the Exile

“All About Jesus” -- The New Testament

“Wheat from Chaff” -- Establishing the Canon

7. English Reformation

“Defending the Faith” -- Early Reformers

“Executing Changes” -- Henry VIII to Elizabeth I

“New World Order” -- Puritanism and the American Colonies

8. Christians You Don't Know

“The Difference a Word Makes” -- Eastern Orthodox

“The Simpler the Better” -- Mennonites and Amish

“Thy Kingdom Come” -- Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses

“Visions of God” -- Mormons

9. Bridging the Gap: Jewish Thought Between the Testaments

“What are Protestants Missing?” -- The Apocrypha

“Assumed Names” -- Pseudepigrapha

“Hidden Treasures” -- The Dead Sea Scrolls

“End of an Era” -- Philo, Josephus and the First Century

10. Free to Believe: From Reformation to RFRA

“Morning Stars” -- Early Reformers

“Here I Stand” -- The Reformation in Germany and Switzerland

“Great Awakening” -- From Henry VIII to the First Amendment

“A Delicate Balance” -- Reconciling Religious Freedom with other Values