

The Rudder of Missions & Our Wicked Problem

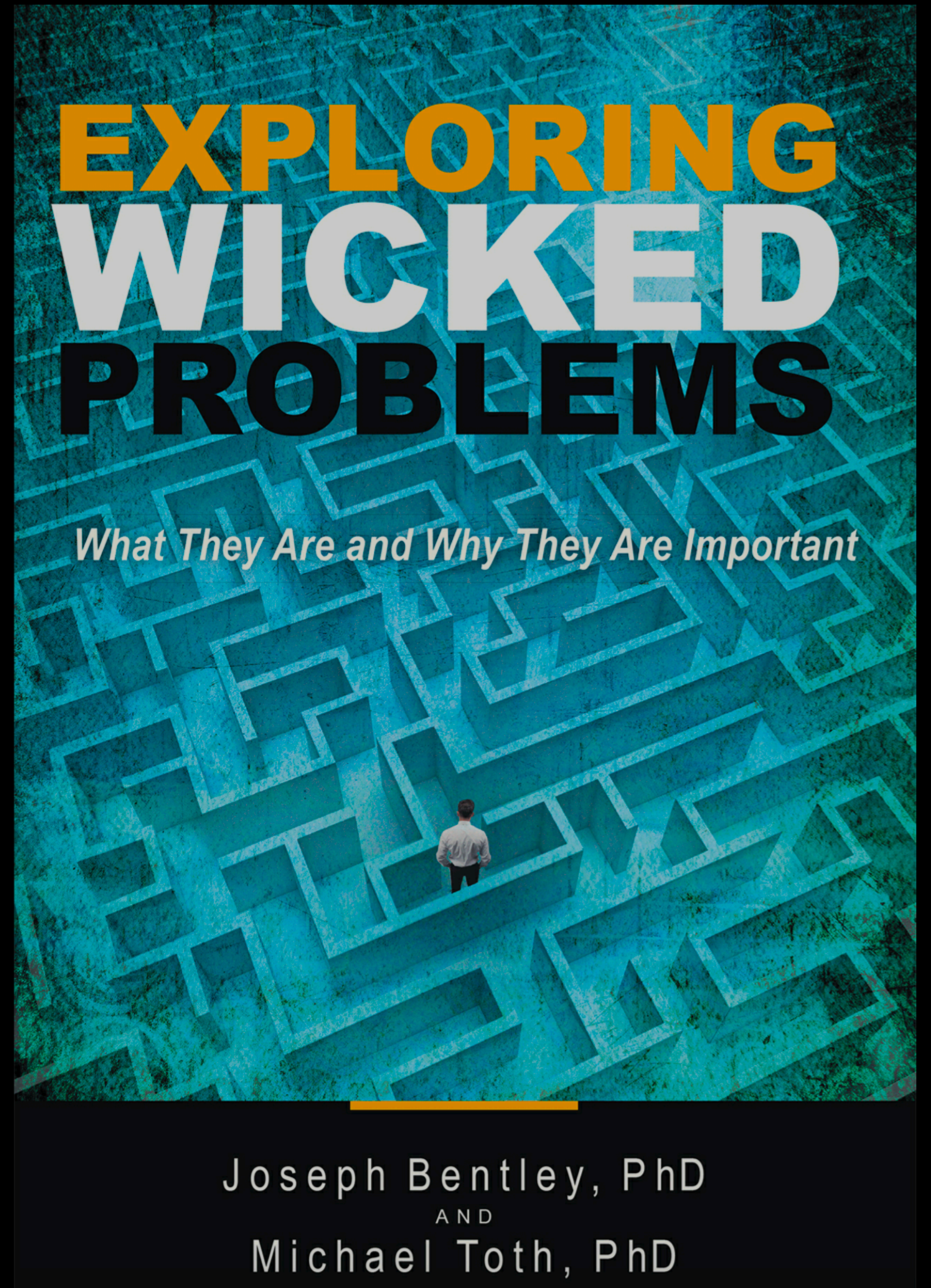
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LIFE
IN MESSIAH

**A new way of
thinking about
unsolvable
strategic
problems.**

**(Not suggesting certain
problems are evil.)**



“The Nation’s business is never finished....”

- Harry Truman, 1953 SOTU

We do ourselves a disservice when we approach “wicked problems” in the same way as “tame problems.”

We run the risk of causing more conflict, quick discouragement and creating more problems.

Goal

**Provide a viewpoint
and common language
that will help us address our
problem
in more constructive
and cooperative ways.
(Frame the scope.)**



Next 30 min

- What is a “wicked problem”?
- What is a “tame problem”?
- Some things we all desire
- 10 min table discussion
- Findings
- A potential modest advance
- Conclusion



A Wicked Problem:

**Many solutions necessary,
likely unsolvable.**

Can only be worked on.

natural hazards

healthcare

AIDS epidemic

pandemic influenza

INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING

nuclear weapons

homelessness

social injustice

Tame Problem:

- **a source of perplexity, distress, or vexation**
- **can be solved**

Tame VS Wicked:

Tame

Going on a date

Celebrating a Wedding

Saying “trust me”

Saying “I’ll help”

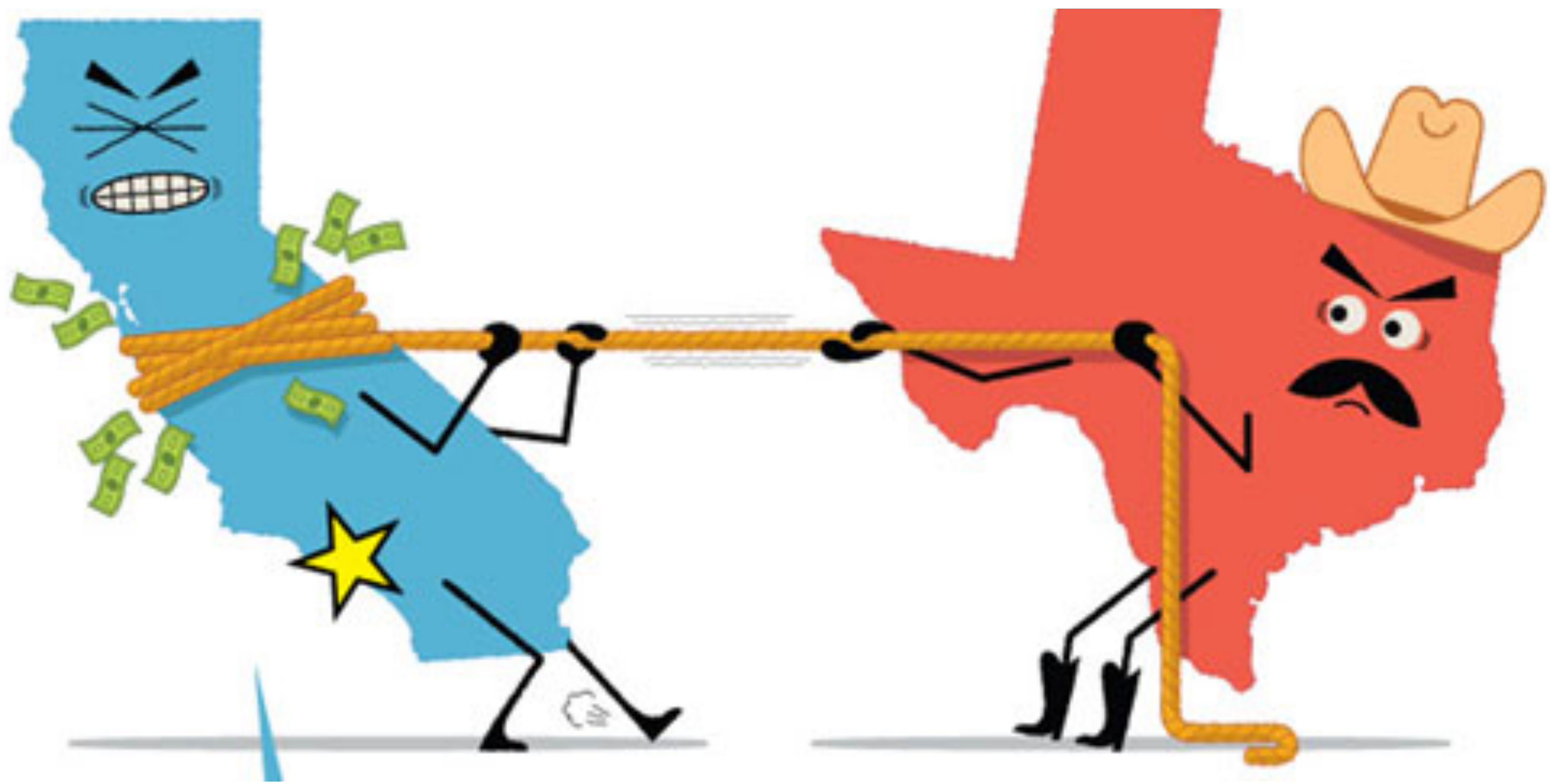
Wicked

Creating and maintaining a relationship

Making a successful marriage

Becoming trustworthy

Becoming helpful



After I learned that some problems are wicked and others are tame, I began to see wicked problems everywhere. Instead of seeing a problem and thinking, “How am I going to solve this?” I would hold back from thinking “solve” and ask, “Is this a wicked problem or is it tame?” If I decided that it was wicked, I would think, “Well, I’m not going to get it solved, so now what?” and “Since I can’t figure this out by myself, who else should I get involved?”

- CEO of Major Company

“Understanding from the beginning that you are about to work on a wicked problem gives you a huge advantage. You are able to bypass much of the confusion and controversy that is typical of beginning attempts to work on complicated problems. Even before getting to the actual problem, many people get bogged down in one misunderstanding after another, often provoking much emotional pain and frustration but yielding very little. They often founder in the shallows before ever getting to the deep water. The realization that what is before you is a wicked problem is an important and productive shortcut.” - pg 104

Our Wicked Problem:

A Jewish *perspective* of the gospel is missing for the vast majority of people.

Our Wicked Problems:

- **Much of Rabbinic teaching is antithetical to the teachings of Yeshua**

Many....

- **Jewish people have never heard the gospel**
- **Jewish people are told to never read the NT**
- **Christians hold some version of anti-Semitism**
- **Christians are ignorant of God's heart for the Jewish people**

The *Seen* Consequences:

- **Fewer Jewish people investigate the claims of Yeshua.**
- **Fewer believers understand or care about the Jewish roots/context of their faith.**
- **Makes it easier for replacement theology to take root and spread.**
- **Fewer believers are engaged in Jewish ministry.**
- **Makes it easier for anti-Semitism to find a home within the Church.**

Our Collective Desire:

We ALL want these consequences removed, for the glory of God and the salvation of lost souls.

Our Collective Desire is a Future Where:

- **More Jewish people are investigating the claims of Yeshua.**
- **More believers understand the Jewish roots/context of their faith.**
- **It's difficult for replacement theology to gain a foothold.**
- **More believers are engaged in Jewish ministry.**
- **It's hard for anti-Semitism to find a home within the Church.**

The Unique Aspects of this Wicked Problem:

- This problem is one of *perspective*.
- The problem is that *others* are missing a crucial perspective.
- Many people are not aware or do not agree that this is a problem.
- How do we get people to see a problem they don't believe exists and change the perspectives of millions, even billions, of people?

This will not happen without....

- **prayer and fasting**
- **major collaboration**
- **influential leaders**

**We need multiple,
creative
approaches.**

“Getting to ‘as good as we can’ is achieved by human beings sitting down together and grappling with the critical dilemma: What is the problem here, and what should we do about it? This involves proposing, insisting, arguing, disagreeing, and finally deciding together on the best possible plan of action. To achieve this, supportive, constructive conversation is required.” *

*** In humility, faith & obedience**

My Proposed Modest Advance:

Persuade every missions pastor, regardless of their theology, that they have a crucial role to play in Jewish ministry because of the priority assigned by the Bible.

Oakland E-Free Example

“The first horizon of missions is in our own congregation and its community. In the context of Acts 1:8, it refers to bringing the gospel of Christ to others in our community. For our missions committee, this also applies to educating our congregation in missions and evangelism.

A second application of this horizon of missions comes from the example of the Apostle Paul, who stated that the gospel was “first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” (Ro 1:16) Our missions should include outreach to the Jewish people.”

What Are *Potential Modest Advances?*

10 min table discussion

Our Wicked Problem:

A Jewish *perspective* of the gospel is missing for the vast majority of people.

- 1. Discuss what a “Jewish perspective” would look like for your table (3 min)**
- 2. Consider potential modest advances we could take (7 min)**

“We cannot help looking for the restoration of the scattered Israelites to the land which God has given to them by a covenant of salt: we also look for the time when they shall believe in the Messiah whom they have rejected, and shall rejoice in Jesus of Nazareth, whom today they despise. There is great encouragement in prophecy to those who work among the seed of Israel; and it is greatly needed, for of all mission fields it has been commonly represented to be one of the most barren, and upon the work the utmost ridicule has been poured. God has, therefore, supplied our faith with encouragements larger than we have in almost any other direction of service. Let those who believe work on! Those who believe not may give it up. They shall not have the honor of having helped to gather together the ancient nation to which our Lord himself belonged; for be it never forgotten that Jesus was a Jew.”

Charles Spurgeon, 1887

Horner, Barry E.. Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged:

Recap

- What is a “wicked problem”?
- What is a “tame problem”?
- Some things we all desire
- Collaboration
- Findings
- A potential modest advance

