



Truth or Belief

# Recap

Humanity doesn't need God to be good

Religion leads to violence, hate and war

Atheism is rational

Reality on realities **terms**

## Recap

“The result is not, as we once imagined, a **secular** society. It is a **pagan society**, and its paganism, having been born out of the rejection of Christianity, is far more **resistant to the gospel** than the pre-Christian paganism with which cross-cultural missions have been familiar. Here, surely, is the most challenging missionary frontier of our time.” [Leslie Newbigin](#)

“If **atheism** solved all human woe, then the Soviet Union would have been an empire of joy and dancing bunnies, instead of the land of **corpses**.” [John C Wright](#)

# Recap

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very **religious**. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an **unknown god**. So you are **ignorant** of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you. [Acts 17:22-23](#)”



The religious **inclination** of humanity is **normative** and **rational** for the human condition according to available data

For our struggle is not against **flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [Ephesians 6:12](#)

“emotional health and spiritual maturity are inseparable. It is not possible to be **spiritually mature** while remaining **emotionally immature**.” Peter Scazzero, [Emotionally Healthy Spirituality](#)

# Can we evaluate worldviews? How to navigate the sea of ideas, John Warwick

First, it must be noted that worldviews are not mere matters of **feeling**, regardless of what the supporters of the varied views claim. For example, if one says “You can’t analyze what I believe, it’s just a matter of faith” they are making a claim about reality—that their faith cannot be analyzed. Similarly, if one claims “Israelites sailed to the Americas from the Middle East,” [Mormonism] or “There is no God” [atheism] they have made a claim about reality. Such truth claims are capable of **analysis**, by definition. Statements are true or false. All worldviews make claims about reality, which are therefore true or false. Simply stating that one’s belief is “just faith” or “obvious” does not exclude it from making claims.

# Can we evaluate worldviews? How to navigate the sea of ideas, John Warwick

One's beliefs should **conform** to reality, if one seeks to be **rational**. Certainly, one could say "To heck with the evidence, I'm going to believe x, y, and z! I don't care if I can't support the belief and that there is strong evidence against x, y, and z." But if one were to say this, one would abandon their **reason**. Their heart could believe, but their mind could not. Ultimately, all **truth claims** can and should be put to the **test**.

# Can we evaluate worldviews? How to navigate the sea of ideas, John Warwick

In his monumental work, *Christian Apologetics*, Douglas Groothuis argues that worldviews can be proposed as **hypotheses**. Worldviews present themselves as **answers** to explain the **phenomena** we experience. Groothuis therefore presents criteria for evaluating worldviews as though they were hypotheses about the world. Kenneth Samples similarly draws out nine tests which can be used to determine whether the claims of a worldview are true in his book *A World of Difference*. From these proposed methods, we can derive tests to evaluate competing worldviews:

**Coherence**– if a religion is contradictory, it simply cannot be true. For example, if a religion claimed that “Person Z is god, and person Z is not god,” that religion would be incoherent

**Explanatory Power and Scope**– Does the worldview explain what we experience in enough detail? If a worldview does not explain our world, or it cannot account for certain phenomena, then it lacks explanatory power

**Correspondence**– Does the worldview match the facts we know about the world to our experience of the world? If we know that the worldview in question promotes claims we know are false, it does not match reality

**Pragmatic Test**– Can we live by this worldview?

**Verification**– Can this worldview be falsified?



Islam means "**surrender**" and its central idea is a surrendering/  
submission to the will of God. Its central article of faith is that  
"There is no god but God and Muhammad is his messenger".

Followers of Islam are called Muslims. Muslims believe that they are following in  
the same tradition as the Judeo-Christian figures Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses,  
and Jesus who they believe were significant **prophets** before Muhammad.

The origin of Islam is placed around **610 CE** when Muhammad, a highly spiritual and religious man who spent months in praying and self contemplation in a secluded cave near the town of Mecca, is thought to have received divine messages. The story is that one morning Muhammad heard the voice of the angel Gabriel and, through him, Allah spoke words of wisdom. The words were first recited by Muhammad, later his disciples, and then recorded as text which came to known as the Holy **Qur'an**. Thus followers of Islam consider the Qur'an not the work of Muhammad but as **direct revelations** from Allah.



**Profession of Faith (shahada)**. The belief that "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God" is central to Islam.

**Prayer (salat)**. Muslims pray facing Mecca five times a day: at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and after dark.

**Alms (zakat)**. In accordance with Islamic law, Muslims donate a fixed portion of their income to community members in need.

**Fasting (sawm)**. During the daylight hours of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, all healthy adult Muslims are required to abstain from food and drink.

**Pilgrimage (hajj)**. Every Muslim whose health and finances permit it must make at least one visit to the holy city of Mecca, in present-day Saudi Arabia.

Though the two main sects within Islam, **Sunni** and **Shia**, agree on most of the fundamental beliefs and practices of Islam, a bitter split between the two goes back some **14 centuries**. The divide originated with a dispute over who should succeed the Prophet Muhammad as leader of the Islamic faith he introduced.

Today, about **85 percent** of the approximately 1.6 billion Muslims around the world are Sunni, while 15 percent are Shia,

The roots of the Sunni-Shia divide can be traced all the way back to the seventh century, soon after the death of the prophet Muhammad in **A.D. 632**. While most of Muhammad's followers thought that the other elite members of the Islamic community should choose his successor, a smaller group believed only someone from Muhammad's family—namely his cousin and son-in-law, Ali—should succeed him. This group became known as the followers of Ali; in Arabic the Shiat Ali, or simply Shia.

Eventually the **Sunni majority** (named for sunna, or tradition) won out, and chose Muhammad's close friend Abu Bakr to become the first caliph, or leader, of the Islamic community. Ali eventually became the fourth caliph (or Imam, as Shiites call their leaders), but only after the two that preceded him had both been assassinated.

Ali, himself, was killed in 661, as the bitter power struggle between Sunni and Shia continued.

**Qur'ān**, (Arabic: “Recitation”) also spelled Quran and Koran, the sacred scripture of Islam. According to conventional Islamic belief, the Qur'ān was revealed by the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad in the West Arabian towns Mecca and Medina beginning in **610** and ending with Muhammad's death in **632 CE**. The word qur'ān, which occurs already within the Islamic scripture itself (e.g., 9:11 and 75:17–18), is derived from the verb qara'a—“to read,” “to recite”

The Qur'ān is markedly shorter than even the New Testament, let alone the Hebrew Bible. It is subdivided into **114 chapterlike** units called “sūrahs,” a word used within the Qur'ān to designate revelatory passages of an unspecified length

the sūrahs are subdivided into verses called āyāt (singular āyah), a word that literally means “sign”



The Qur'ān forms the bedrock of **Islamic law**, even though many legal details are derived not from scripture but from extra-Qur'ānic utterances and actions attributed to Muhammad—the so-called **Ḥadīth**. Most of the Qur'ān's legal or quasi-legal pronouncements are concentrated in a few of the longest sūrahs, the most extensive block of such material being 2:153–283. The domains covered by Qur'ānic law include matters of **family law** (e.g., inheritance rules), **ritual law** (e.g., the performance of ablution before prayer or the duty to fast during the month of Ramadan), **dietary regulations** (e.g., the prohibition of consuming pork or wine), **criminal law** (e.g., the punishment for theft or for manslaughter), and **commercial law** (the prohibition of usury). Concrete behavioural prescriptions are not expounded in a systematic order and can be presented as responses to audience queries

Islam is not simply a religion, it is the basis  
for **society** (political, cultural and relational)



“The Holy Qur’an is the only divinely revealed been preserved to the present time in its **exact** scripture in the history of mankind which has **original form**” Suzanne Haneef, *What Everyone Should know About Islam and Muslims*

“So well has it been **preserved**, both in memory and in writing, that the Arabic text we have today is **identical** to the text as it was revealed to the Prophet. Not even **a single letter** has yielded to corruption during the passage of the centuries.” Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur’an: English Translation of the Meanings & Commentary*

“Tony [Costa] pointed out that we have a copy of the Qur’an dating from 790 in the British Museum (MS2165 Ma’il Codice). Folks, that’s 1,300 years ago. And we can compare that with what we’re reading today and we find them to be **exactly identical**.” Dr. Shabir Ally, *During a Debate with Tony Costa in Canada*

## Dead Sea Scrolls

With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we now had manuscripts that **predated** the Masoretic Text by about **one thousand years**. Scholars were anxious to see how the Dead Sea documents would match up with the Masoretic Text.

After years of careful study, it has been concluded that the Dead Sea Scrolls give **substantial confirmation** that our Old Testament has been **accurately preserved**. The scrolls were found to be almost **identical** with the Masoretic text.

“Even though the two copies of Isaiah discovered in Qumran Cave 1 near the Dead Sea in 1947 were a **thousand years** earlier than the oldest dated manuscript previously known (A.D. 980), they proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than **95 percent of the text**. The five percent of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling.” [Gleason Archer, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction](#)

# What is the doctrine of biblical inerrancy, Don Stewart

Others, in an attempt to defend inerrancy, have denied such legitimate disciplines as **textual criticism**. Textual criticism is a legitimate field of study which attempts to recover the **original text of Scripture**. It is wrong to say that such a quest is unnecessary. By saying things like this, it gives the impression that Christians who believe in the inerrancy of Scripture refuse to face difficult issues which arise. This is certainly not the case.

“Inerrancy,” or “infallibility,” means that when all the facts are **known**, the Bible, in the original autographs, when **properly interpreted**, will prove itself to be without error in all matters that it covers. These include areas of theology, history, science, and all other disciplines of knowledge—they will be in perfect accord with the truth. The Bible, therefore, is totally trustworthy in everything that it records or teaches.



# What is the doctrine of biblical inerrancy, Don Stewart

Those who defend inerrancy admit that not all defenders of the doctrine have done this in a **clear and reasoned manner**. Examples can be given of over-zealous believers who have made **careless statements** in an attempt to preserve this doctrine. In their desire to defend the inerrancy of Scripture they have opened themselves up to **criticism and ridicule**.

Indeed, some people have attempted to make the Scripture much more **precise** than it intends to be. They attempt to insist that every statement is meant to be **scientifically precise or exact**. However, this is not the case. There are a number of places in Scripture where the language is meant to be imprecise or ambiguous. We should always allow the **context** to determine whether the writer is speaking in generalities or is trying to be precise. Let us not make the Bible say more than it is attempting to say.

Some manuscripts include here words similar to Mark 9:29. [Matthew 17:21](#)

Some manuscripts include here the words of Luke 19:10. [Matthew 18:21](#)

Some manuscripts include here words similar to Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47. [Matthew 23:14](#)

Some manuscripts include here the words of 4:23. [Mark 7:16](#)

[The earliest manuscripts and some other ancient witnesses do not have verses 9–20.] [Mark 16:9–20](#)

[The earliest manuscripts and many other ancient witnesses do not have [John 7:53—8:11](#). A few manuscripts include these verses, wholly or in part, after John 7:36, John 21:25, Luke 21:38 or Luke 24:53.]

# The Sana'a Manuscripts

The manuscripts, thought to be the **oldest surviving copies of the Koran**, were discovered in the ancient Great Mosque of Sa'na in 1972 in Yemen, when the building was being restored after heavy rainfall, hidden in the loft in a bundle of old parchment and paper documents.

Until now, there were **three ancient copies of the Koran**. One copy in the Library of Tashkent in Uzbekistan, and another in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul, Turkey, date from the eighth century. A copy preserved in the British Library in London, known as the Ma'il manuscript, dates from the late seventh century. But the Sa'na manuscripts are even **older**.

# The Sana'a Manuscripts

the Sa'na manuscripts are written in a script that originates from the Hijaz – the region of Arabia where the prophet Mohammed lived, which makes them not only the **oldest** to have survived, but one of the **earliest** copies of the Koran ever.

Dr Gerd Puin noticed **minor textual variations**, unconventional ordering of the chapters (surahs), as well as rare styles of orthography. Then he noticed that the sheets were palimpsests – manuscripts with versions written even earlier that had been washed off or erased.

These findings led Dr Puin to assert that the Koran had undergone a **textual evolution**. In other words, the copy of the Koran that we have is not the one believed to have been revealed to the prophet.



Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman came to `Uthman at the time when the people of Sham and the people of Iraq were Waging war to conquer Arminya and Adharbijan. Hudhaifa was afraid of their (the people of Sham and Iraq) **differences** in the recitation of the Qur'an, so he said to `Uthman, "O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they **differ** about the Book (Qur'an) as Jews and the Christians did before." So `Uthman sent a message to Hafsa saying, "Send us the **manuscripts** of the Qur'an so that we may compile the Qur'anic materials in perfect copies and return the manuscripts to you." Hafsa sent it to `Uthman. `Uthman then ordered Zaid bin Thabit, `Abdullah bin AzZubair, Sa`id bin Al-As and `AbdurRahman bin Harith bin Hisham to rewrite the manuscripts in perfect copies. `Uthman said to the three Quraishi men, "In case you **disagree** with Zaid bin Thabit on any point in the Qur'an, then write it in the **dialect of Quraish**, the Qur'an was revealed in their tongue." They did so, and when they had written many copies, `Uthman returned the original manuscripts to Hafsa. `Uthman sent to every Muslim province one copy of what they had copied, and ordered that all the other **Qur'anic materials**, whether written in fragmentary manuscripts or whole copies, be **burnt**. [Vol. 6, Book 61, Hadith 510](#)



The documentary evidence at our disposal, prior to 750 AD “consists almost entirely of rather dubious citations in later compilations” (Humphreys 1991:80)

Consequently, we have no reliable proof that the later Muslim traditions speak truly of the life of Muhammad, or even of the Qur’an (Schacht 1949:143-154)

“Prior to **750 AD** (thus for 100 years after Muhammad’s death) we have no verifiable Muslim documents which can give us a window into this formative period of Islam.” (J. Wansbrough)

In fact the primary sources which we possess are from **150-300 years** after the events which they describe, and therefore are quite distant from those events (Nevo 1994:108; Wansbrough 1978:119; Crone 1987:204)

We simply do not have any “account from the Islamic’ community during the [initial] **150 years or so**, between the first Arab conquests [the early 7th century] and the appearance, with the sira-maghazi narratives, of the earliest Islamic literature” [the late 8th century] ([Wansbrough 1978:119](#)).

Consequently, we have no reliable proof that the later Muslim traditions speak truly of the life of Muhammad, or even of the Qur’an ([Schacht 1949:143-154](#)). In fact we have absolutely no evidence for the original Qur’anic text ([Schimmel 1984:4](#)).

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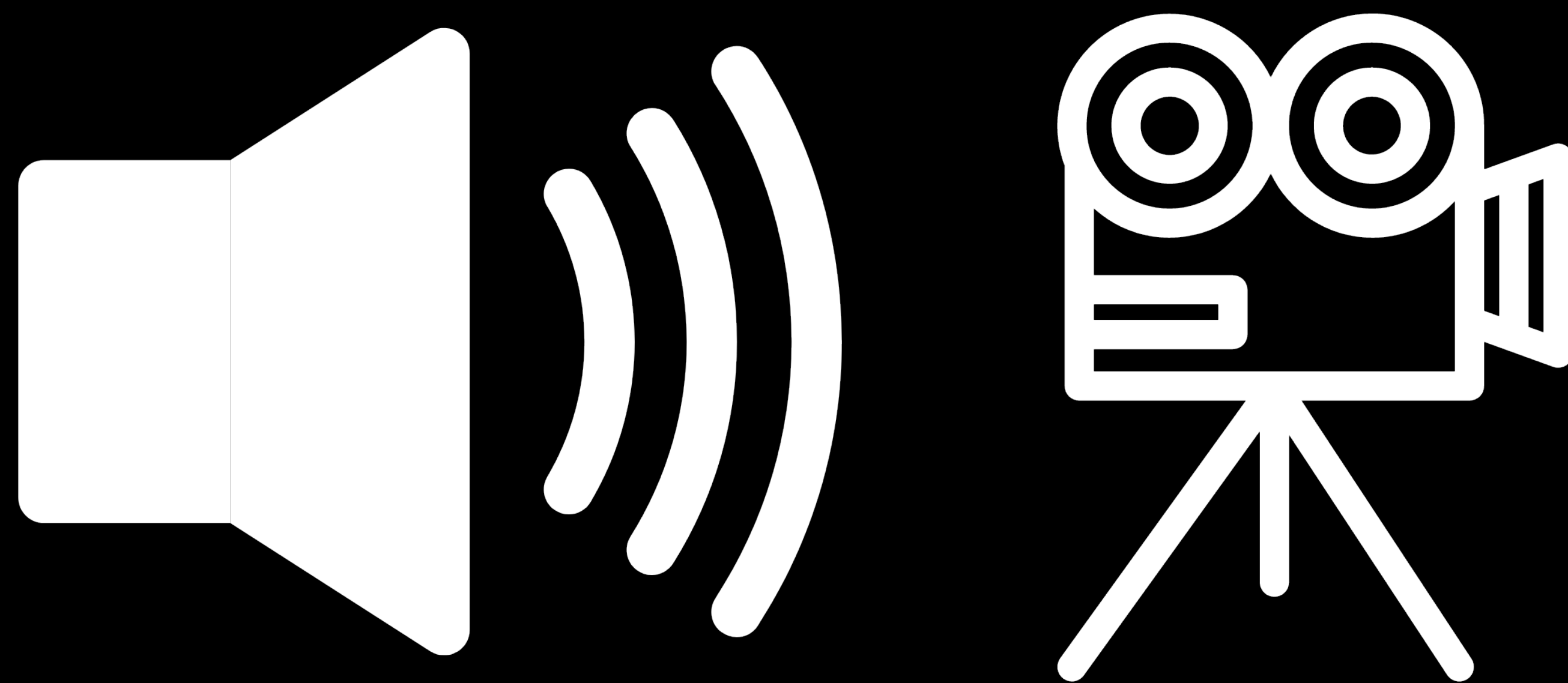
<https://www.youtube.com/@pfanderfilms>



Dr. Jay Smith

It isn't my responsibility to judge **outsiders**, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those **inside the church** who are sinning. [1 Corinthians 5:12](#)

For this is how God loved the **world**: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone **who believes** in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. [John 3:16-17](#)



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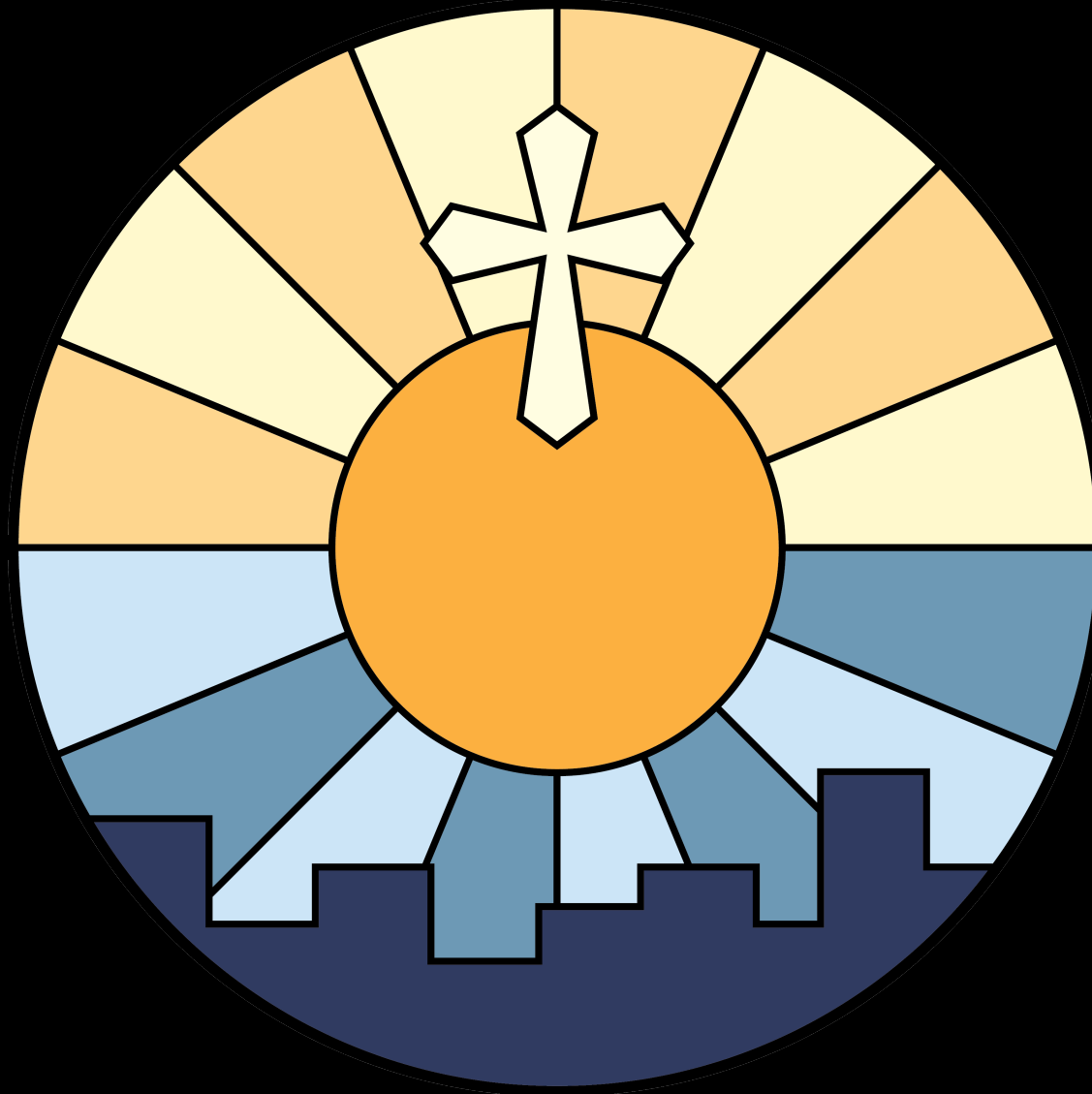
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