

Congregation Present

Congregation Past

Congregation  
Future



why won't they listen?

(what's wrong with them?)

2016

a tale of two fishing buddies

an enlightenment motto:  
reasonable men will agree.

getting enlightened about the enlightenment:  
our reasonableness is highly overrated.  
we're not as reasonable as we thought.

people can't see what they can't see ...  
because of built-in biases we all share.

if we seek genuine connection and understanding, we  
must learn to steer our messages around these biases ...

“wise as serpents” (finding the tiniest opening)  
“innocent as doves” (honest, true, genuine, nonviolent)

13 biases or barriers to mutual understanding

## Confirmation Bias

Our story or system excludes what doesn't fit, because we judge new information based on the ease with which it fits in with the only standards we have: old information and trusted authorities.

## Complexity Bias

Our brains prefer a simple falsehood to a complex truth.



## Community Bias

It's almost impossible to see what our community doesn't see.  
(Belonging/Social Identity & Desirability/Mimetic Theory)

## Complementarity Bias

If you are hostile to my ideas, I'll be hostile to yours -  
and vice versa.

(Complementarity Theory in Social Psychology)

# Competency Bias

We don't know how little (or much) we know,  
because we don't know how much (or little) others know.  
(Dunning-Kruger Hypothesis)

## Consciousness Bias

Some things simply can't be seen from where I am right now.  
(But I can make short leaps to a state beyond my stage.)  
(Integral Theory, Human/Moral Development Theory)

Simplicity, Complexity, Perplexity, Harmony

Comfort Bias  
(Complacency/Convenience)

I prefer not to have my comfort disturbed. I can't handle that much discomfort, pain, or inconvenience. (Psychic Numbing)

## conservative/liberal bias

My political leanings help me see some things and miss others.

nurturing fairness & kindness!

or

strictly enforcing purity/sanctity, loyalty, liberty, & authority!

moral foundations theory

Lakoff's strict father vs. nurturing parent framing

conservative v liberal brains

catastrophe bias

i remember dramatic catastrophes and don't notice  
gradual improvement or decline

## contact bias

when people lack meaningful contact with the other,  
their prejudices and false assumptions go  
unchallenged.



## confidence bias

we are attracted to confidence, even if it is false. we often prefer the bold lie to the hesitant truth. (con artists, con men)

cash bias

(conflict of interest)

it's hard to make someone see something  
when their way of making a living depends  
on them not seeing it.

## conspiracy bias

under stress or shame, our brains are attracted to stories that relieve us, exonerate us, or present us as innocent victims of malicious conspirators.

(teleological/conspiratorial thinking)

confirmation  
complexity  
community  
complementarity  
competency  
consciousness  
comfort  
conservative/liberal  
catastrophe  
contact  
confidence  
cash  
conspiracy

*people can't see what they can't see.*

confirmation  
complexity  
community  
complementarity  
competency  
consciousness  
comfort  
conservative/liberal  
catastrophe  
contact  
confidence  
cash  
conspiracy

*it's not just **their problem.***

?

*“people can’t see what they can’t see”*  
isn’t the whole truth.

*people can't see what they can't see  
until someone helps them see it.*



*people can't see what they can't see until  
someone helps them see it.*

jesus provides valuable examples of helping  
people see.

“we must taught what jesus taught in the  
manner jesus taught it.”

## Confirmation Bias

Jesus surprised and “abducted” people - through immersive or imaginative experiences: a field trip, unexpected guest, or powerful parable or story.

Jesus changed the world by telling a bigger, better framing story.

# Complexity Bias

Jesus simply, briefly, confidently articulated and repeated his message.

He saved the details until people asked for it - as confirmation.

He complexified oversimplified understandings with questions that expanded the frame, parables that confounded expectations, teachings that elevated deep values over shallow rules, and interactions that showed nuance.

He didn't spend a lot of time correcting false statements, but used false statements as invitations to repeat his true statements.

# Community Bias

Jesus created a welcoming, more desirable community  
with a clear onramp to his movement

# Complementarity Bias

Jesus flipped the script - “Do unto others” not as they do to you, but as you would have them do to you.

# Competency Bias

Jesus praised child-likeness and helped people admit they have a lot to learn ... and built their confidence that they can enjoy learning and succeed at it.

Jesus asked questions, listened, and learned from others - which invited them to listen and learn from him.

# Consciousness Bias

Jesus introduced people to immersive and “transcendent experiences” (states) and offered practices for growth in and through stages.

He practiced, modeled, and taught with both dual and non-dual thinking.

# comfort bias

Jesus would tell one story with feeling & provide hearers with one simple step to take within their current capacity.

He would tell people their faith had saved them and affirm the power of the smallest mustard seed.

He called “blessed” those who were willing to suffer for the right.



# conservative/liberal bias

Jesus started with compassion & fairness

and employed

Purity vs. Degradation, In-Group Loyalty vs. Betrayal,  
Liberty vs. Oppression, Tradition vs. Rebellion

# catastrophe bias

Jesus told stories of both dramatic and gradual positive change through parables, signs, and wonders.

# contact bias

Jesus reached out to the other, included the other,  
gave the other a spotlight and voice.

confidence bias

Jesus was bold, yet invited people to  
question, test, evaluate.

# cash bias

Jesus named the power of money and challenged people not to be ruled by it.

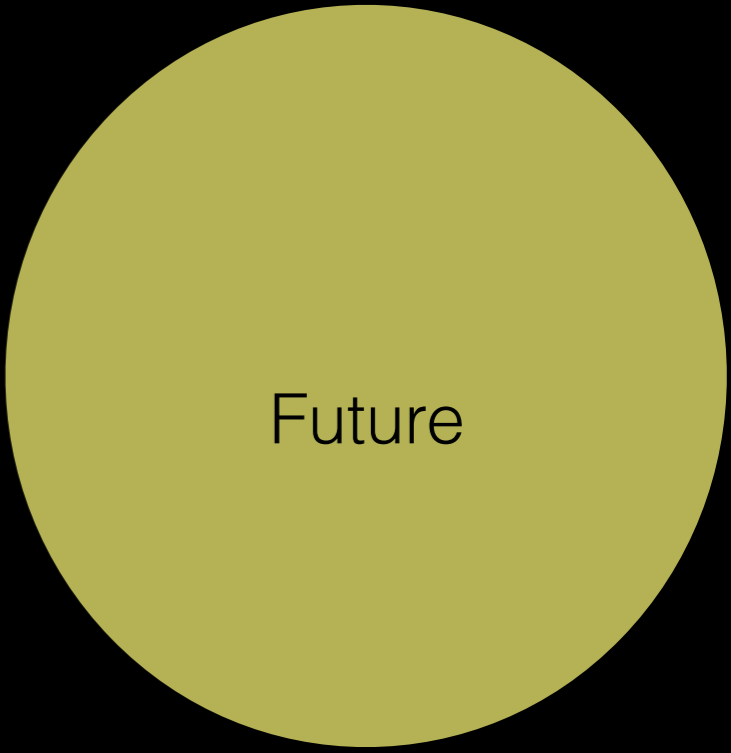
## conspiracy bias

Jesus told a reverse-conspiracy narrative, where God is plotting for the ultimate good of all, urging faith, hope, and love instead of fear, and where a Creator's larger love overshadows the malicious intent of creatures.

*people can't see what they can't see until  
someone helps them see it.*

Jesus helped others to see more.

And so can we.



Past

Present

Future





# Checklist

1. “Abduct” your audience through imagination, surprise, unexpected vulnerability, risky boldness, and compelling graphics/images. (confirmation)
2. Make 1, 2, or 3 memorable, simple points and trim away everything else, intentionally complexify oversimplifications by showing both sides, with nuance, and don’t repeat a falsehood in order to correct it. (complexity)
3. Present yourself and your group as welcoming of honest seekers and pleasant to be around. (community)
4. Show script-flipping respect, kindness, patience and curiosity to those you hope to influence - and begin with sincere curiosity and active listening. (complementarity)
5. Celebrate people’s ability to change their minds & learn. (competency)
6. Help people experience a “state” that could later become a “stage,” and give them exposure to models at higher stages, with practices to get there. (consciousness)
7. Give people one thing to do right now about one problem, affirm the power of simple faith. (comfort)
8. Emphasize compassion and fairness, but also appeal to purity/sanctity, loyalty, liberty, and authority. (conservative/liberal)
9. Tell stories of both dramatic and gradual positive change, illustrate positive statistics graphically, warn people of media attraction to fear & catastrophe (catastrophe)
10. Humanize the other by giving them a spotlight and a voice. (contact)
11. Name and challenge the power of money (cash)
12. Display bold confidence, but invite people to question, think, test. (confidence)
13. Frame a larger story of love that overshadows smaller malicious stories. (conspiracy)

1. explore your own biases and certainties
2. surprise people with your curiosity, kindness, and humility
3. put understanding and belonging before agreement
4. offer one doable first (next) step
5. build on common ground; win friends instead of arguments.
6. tell a love story.

