

PUBLICITY CHECKLIST Lent 2024

Please Note: Most publicity materials are available in both English and Spanish.

SERIES THEME: Rethinking Religion

Everyone has assumptions about God. Likewise, everyone has assumptions about religion. Increasingly, those assumptions are negative. Americans are walking away from Christianity in breathtaking numbers. It raises the question. How do those people know if their assumptions about religion are correct? Do they really understand Christianity at all? Do we? Do we truly understand this religion?

In the season of Lent, as much as any other, Jesus teaches things that turn the world's assumptions about religion completely upside down. We call it "Christianity." So, in this holy season, let us go straight to Christ and let him replace assumptions with truth. Jesus, help us to rethink religion!

Date & Theme	Channel	Action	Wording
Week of February 4, 2024 Introduce theme	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	Everyone has assumptions about God. Likewise, everyone has assumptions about religion. Increasingly, those assumptions are negative. Americans are walking away from Christianity in breathtaking numbers. It raises the question. How do those people know if their assumptions about religion are correct? Do they really understand Christianity at all? Do we? Do we truly understand this religion? In the season of Lent, as much as any other, Jesus teaches things that turn the world's assumptions about religion completely upside down. We call it "Christianity." So, in this holy season, let us go straight to Christ and let him replace assumptions with truth. Jesus, help us to rethink religion!
			Join us next week for our Lent series: Rethinking Religion.

Facebook	 Post "Rethinking Religion" title Facebook graphic Post "Rethinking Religion" 1x1 video file (available with or without WELS logo at end of video) 	Everyone has assumptions about religion. Increasingly, those assumptions are negative. Americans are walking away from Christianity in breathtaking numbers. How do those people know if their assumptions about religion are correct? Do they really understand Christianity at all? Do we? In the season of Lent, let us go straight to Christ and let him replace assumptions with truth. Jesus, help us to rethink religion!
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	Video Digital display graphics (3 slide options)	 Post "Rethinking Religion" 16x9 video file to YouTube or Vimeo (available with or without WELS logo at end of video) Show "Rethinking Religion" 16x9 video file during this week's worship announcements Blank slide (4x3 or 16x9) Title slide (4x3 or 16x9) Small logo slide (4x3 or 16x9) 	 Join us next week for our Lent series: Rethinking Religion. Everyone has assumptions about God. Likewise, everyone has assumptions about religion. Increasingly, those assumptions are negative. Americans are walking away from Christianity in breathtaking numbers. It raises the question. How do those people know if their assumptions about religion are correct? Do they really understand Christianity at all? Do we? Do we truly understand this religion? In the season of Lent, as much as any other, Jesus teaches things that turn the world's assumptions about religion completely upside down. We call it "Christianity." So, in this holy season, let us go straight to Christ and let him replace assumptions with truth. Jesus, help us to rethink religion! Join us next week for our Lent series: Rethinking Religion.
		 Show on small screens (4x3) or digital display screens (16x9) before and after worship or during announcements this week 	
Wednesday, February 14 Ash Wednesday	Worship folder template	Use "Rethinking Religion" worship folder cover PDF	
<i>Theme of the Day:</i> Rethinking Our Priorities	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	That potential promotion at work. The third date, which will signal if there is real potential in this relationship. The test this Friday, which will determine if you make honor roll or not. The game on Sunday with the playoffs on the line. So many things that compete for our attention! It's easy to think of religion as just another of many activities to cram

			 into our schedules. Sometimes, perhaps, the schedule is just too crowded. So, Jesus lovingly whispers into our ear, "Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust." Those are the words spoken as a dead body is planted in the ground. The reality is that our time in this world is so short. After comes eternity, spent in one of two very different places. Jesus wants us to grasp that somber truth so we rethink where he should fall among all our priorities. Death can come at any time. So now is the time to cling to Christ in true repentance. Not later. Now. There is no higher priority.
F	Facebook	 Post "Rethinking Religion" quote Facebook graphic 	So many things compete for our attention! It's easy to think of religion as just another of many activities to cram into our schedules. So, Jesus lovingly whispers into our ear, "Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust." Those are the words spoken as a dead body is planted in the ground. The reality is that our time in this world is so short. Death can come at any time. So now is the time to cling to Christ in true repentance. Not later. Now. There is no higher priority.
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Sunday, February 18 First Sunday in Lent	Worship folder template	 Use "Rethinking Religion" worship folder cover PDF 	
<i>Theme of the Day:</i> Rethinking Trials, Tests, and Temptations	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	<i>"If God loves us, why doesn't he remove all the trials and tests and temptations that we face?"</i> That question demonstrates the religious assumption that those things are bad. They aren't. In the hands of a loving God, they are tools by which he refines our faith. He uses tests as a way to compel us to be less self-reliant, and instead trust in his strength. He uses trials to teach us that this broken world is not our true home. God even takes Satan's temptations and uses them for our good. Trials, tests, and temptations are not exceptions to God's love. That's a false assumption! These are examples of

Facebook	Post "Rethinking Religion" quote Facebook graphic	to face trials and temptations, so that he might be our perfect savior and substitute. <i>"If God loves us, why doesn't he remove all the trials and tests and temptations that we face?"</i> That question demonstrates the religious assumption that those things are bad. They aren't. Trials, tests, and temptations are not exceptions to God's love. That's a false assumption! These are examples of God's love. Proof is that God allowed his
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Website	 Post theme information Post link to "Rethinking Religion" video on YouTube or Vimeo Post "Rethinking Religion" graphic 	 might be our perfect savior and substitute. <i>"If God loves us, why doesn't he remove all the trials and tests and temptations that we face?"</i> That question demonstrates the religious assumption that those things are bad. They aren't. In the hands of a loving God, they are tools by which he refines our faith. He uses tests as a way to compel us to be less self-reliant, and instead trust in his strength. He uses trials to teach us that this broken world is not our true home. God even takes Satan's temptations and uses them for our good. Trials, tests, and temptations are not exceptions to God's
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Sunday, February 25 Second Sunday in Lent Theme of the Day:	Worship folder template Worship	 Use "Rethinking Religion" worship folder cover PDF Place blurb in print and 	We know that the cross was an instrument of torture and
Rethinking Suffering Under the Cross	folder/newsletter blurb	electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter • Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic	execution. However, Scripture also uses the term "cross" to refer to any suffering that one endures because he is a believer: the painful denial of the desires of the flesh, ridicule and persecution from unbelievers, etc. This is one reason people reject religion. They see Christians struggling in life with these crosses, while non-Christians often seem perfectly happy. Even the prophet Jeremiah asked, "Why do all the faithless live at ease?" (12:1). Jesus asks us to rethink suffering under the cross. It is not pointless pain. Our crosses are not how we pay for sin. Jesus already did that on his cross. Our crosses are not redemptive, but they are constructive. Any suffering unbelievers face is only bad, a foretaste of worse to come. But the suffering believers face under the cross is only good, a way Christ connects us tightly to himself with fire-tested faith.
	Facebook	 Post "Rethinking Religion" quote Facebook graphic 	We know that the cross was an instrument of torture and execution. However, Scripture also uses the term "cross" to refer to any suffering that one endures because he is a believer. Jesus asks us to rethink suffering under the cross. It is not pointless pain. Any suffering unbelievers face is only bad, a foretaste of worse to come. But the suffering

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Sunday, March 3	Worship folder	Use "Rethinking Religion"	
Third Sunday in Lent	template	worship folder cover PDF	
Theme of the Day: Rethinking the Worth of Worship	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	Person A never attends worship. He can't see the point. Person B attends every week out of a slavish sense of obligation. Her mind wanders during the services, for she views the activities of worship merely as tasks for her to complete. Who is worse off? Rather than debating the point, let us just admit neither understand the true worth of worship. And that is exactly what Satan wants. Many think worship is about what we do for God. It is the other way around. As we gather around Word and sacrament, the Spirit moves us to love and trust in God above all things. Moved by the cross of Christ, we bow
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	Website	 Post theme information Post link to "Rethinking Religion" video on YouTube or Vimeo 	Person A never attends worship. He can't see the point. Person B attends every week out of a slavish sense of obligation. Her mind wanders during the services, for she views the activities of worship merely as tasks for her to complete. Who is worse off? Rather than debating the

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Sunday, March 10 Fourth Sunday in Lent Theme of the Day: Rethinking the Solution to Sin	Worship folder template Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Use "Rethinking Religion" worship folder cover PDF Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	While not every religion uses the word "sin," they all embrace the concept. Every religion acknowledges that mankind's flawed attitudes or misguided actions are a source of pain, both now and potentially in eternity. So, every religion offers a solution: a set of laws, a moral code, a path to more enlightened behavior. What do they have in common? We are to solve sin through human effort. <i>Be</i> <i>better! Try harder!</i> This is the heart of every false religion. Those who correctly understand they will never overcome their sin are crushed by guilt. Those who ludicrously believe they have defeated their sin are killed by pride. True religion offers a better way—one that frees us from guilt and has no room for pride. Jesus teaches that the

		work he has done for us. Salvation comes through Spirit- wrought faith in Christ.
Facebook	 Post "Rethinking Religion" quote Facebook graphic 	While not every religion uses the word "sin," they all embrace the concept. So, every religion offers a solution: a set of laws, a moral code, a path to more enlightened behavior. What do they have in common? We are to solve sin through human effort. <i>Be better! Try harder!</i> This is the heart of every false religion. True religion offers a better way. Jesus teaches that the solution to our sin is not to work harder. It is to trust in the work he has done for us. Salvation comes through Spirit-wrought faith in Christ.
Social Med	 Post "Rethinking Religion" quote social post square graphic 	While not every religion uses the word "sin," they all embrace the concept. So, every religion offers a solution: a set of laws, a moral code, a path to more enlightened behavior. What do they have in common? We are to solve sin through human effort. <i>Be better! Try harder!</i> This is the heart of every false religion. True religion offers a better way. Jesus teaches that the solution to our sin is not to work harder. It is to trust in the work he has done for us. Salvation comes through Spirit-wrought faith in Christ.
Website	 Post theme information Post link to "Rethinking Religion" video on YouTube or Vimeo Post "Rethinking Religion" graphic 	While not every religion uses the word "sin," they all embrace the concept. Every religion acknowledges that mankind's flawed attitudes or misguided actions are a source of pain, both now and potentially in eternity. So, every religion offers a solution: a set of laws, a moral code, a path to more enlightened behavior. What do they have in common? We are to solve sin through human effort. <i>Be</i> <i>better! Try harder!</i> This is the heart of every false religion. Those who correctly understand they will never overcome their sin are crushed by guilt. Those who ludicrously believe they have defeated their sin are killed by pride. True religion offers a better way—one that frees us from guilt and has no room for pride. Jesus teaches that the

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Sunday, March 17 Fifth Sunday in Lent	Worship folder template	 Use "Rethinking Religion" worship folder cover PDF 	
<i>Theme of the Day:</i> Rethinking Devoted Commitment	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	Religious sociologists sometimes divide Christians into two groups: committed Christians and cultural Christians. The former are usually defined as those who are active in a congregation, who pray regularly, who read Scripture, etc. The latter are those individuals who call themselves Christian and perhaps have some Christian beliefs. Yet, they do not strive to live a Christian life. They are not interested in church involvement. Those definitions are interesting when trying to understand shifts in American Christianity. However, they demonstrate a false assumption about the Christian religion. There is indeed a devoted commitment at the center of Christianity, but it is not man's commitment to God. Even believers will at times demonstrate lukewarm commitment at best. Instead, at the heart of Christianity we find God's devotion and commitment to us. It is a devoted commitment so strong that it put God on the cross.
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Sunday, March 24 Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday)	Worship folder template	 Use "Rethinking Religion" worship folder cover PDF 	
Theme of the Day: Rethinking Real Strength	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	 Most religions believe in a powerful God. It is assumed that God will use that strength for the benefit of his followers. That is a reasonable assumption, but it begs the question. What is real strength? It is easy to assume that real strength means exerting your will over another by using any means necessary, including force. But this week we see Jesus Christ demonstrate a different kind of strength. We have come to Holy Week. It begins with Jesus humbly riding a donkey colt straight into the hands of his enemies. As the week progresses, it will appear that Christ's adversaries are the ones in a position of power and Jesus is in a position of weakness. Yet what Christ does this holy week—setting his divine strength aside, being passive in the face of death—would change the world. To do what Christ did for us and our salvation took real strength.
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Thursday, March 28	Worship folder	Use "Rethinking Religion"	
Holy Thursday	template	worship folder cover PDF	
Theme of the Day: Rethinking Our Appetites	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	We use the word "appetite" to describe a powerful desire for something. So, what is it you crave the most? Where does your mind go in those quiet moments? What do you want? Power? What do you dream about? Prestige? For what do you hunger? Pleasure? Are our appetites healthy? A truly healthy appetite is one that aligns with our deepest needs: forgiveness, salvation, communion with God, loving relationships with others. The believer is ravenous for such things! And all of those blessings are on the menu of the Lord's Supper. Some view Holy Communion as just a religious ritual. Far from it! In this meal, Christ satisfies our greatest appetites.
	Facebook	 Post "Rethinking Religion" quote Facebook graphic 	We use the word "appetite" to describe a powerful desire for something. So, what is it you crave the most? A truly healthy appetite is one that aligns with our deepest needs: forgiveness, salvation, communion with God, loving relationships with others. The believer is ravenous for such things! And all of those blessings are on the menu of the Lord's Supper. Some view Holy Communion as just a religious ritual. Far from it! In this meal, Christ satisfies our greatest appetites.
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Friday, March 29 Good Friday	Worship folder template	 Use "Rethinking Religion" worship folder cover PDF 	
Theme of the Day: Rethinking Sacrifice	Worship folder/newsletter blurb	 Place blurb in print and electronic versions of worship folder and newsletter Include "Rethinking Religion" logo graphic 	In most religions the gods demand sacrifice. Followers are to surrender something of value to that god. Money. Time. Possessions. Some religions have even called for human sacrifice. Even people who think they aren't religious sacrifice to false gods. Take the man whose idol is success. What he wants most is to rise through the ranks at work. So, to pursue that idol, he sacrifices his family, spending little time with them. Throughout human history, false gods have expected you to die for them. In Christianity you meet a God willing to die for you. Today we see that the true God does not make our relationship

			with him conditional on how much we sacrifice for him. Instead, we are at peace with God because he sacrificed himself for us. It is one reason why we call it "Good Friday."
F	acebook	 Post "Rethinking Religion" quote Facebook graphic 	In most religions the gods demand sacrifice. Followers are to surrender something of value to that god. Throughout human history, false gods have expected you to die for them. In Christianity you meet a God willing to die for you. On Good Friday we see that the true God does not make our relationship with him conditional on how much we sacrifice for him. Instead, we are at peace with God because he sacrificed himself for us. It is one reason why we call it "Good Friday."
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	Vebsite	 Post theme information Post link to "Rethinking Religion" video on YouTube or Vimeo Post "Rethinking Religion" graphic 	In most religions the gods demand sacrifice. Followers are to surrender something of value to that god. Money. Time. Possessions. Some religions have even called for human sacrifice. Even people who think they aren't religious sacrifice to false gods. Take the man whose idol is success. What he wants most is to rise through the ranks at work. So, to pursue that idol, he sacrifices his family, spending little time with them. Throughout human history, false gods have expected you to die for them. In Christianity you meet a God willing to die for you. On Good Friday we see that the true God does not make our relationship with him conditional on how much we sacrifice

		for him. Instead, we are at peace with God because he sacrificed himself for us. It is one reason why we call it "Good Friday."
Digital display graphics (3 slide options)	 Blank slide (4x3 or 16x9) Title slide (4x3 or 16x9) Small logo slide (4x3 or 16x9) Show on small screens (4x3) or digital display screens (16x9) at worship 	Rethinking Sacrifice