



In February, you may remember me writing about our diverse staff of almost 20,000 Cru staff members (including FamilyLife, Jesus Film, Campus, Athletes in Action and other divisions) in 190 countries. I wrote of how we are able to work together for the common mission to, **“Win, build and send Christ-centered multiplying disciples”** by agreeing together on the same basic Statement of Faith. As we seek to share the love of Christ around the word, we need this whole diverse

body—but in order to not lose our foundational faith base, we need these basic truths in common. There is another way that Cru seeks to keep its mission staff refreshed spiritually— through IBS, or Institute of Biblical Studies.

Every mission staff member is expected to complete 11 core IBS courses, most taught by seminary professors, in their first 10 years on staff. As I’ve mentioned, this program helps keep Cru staff on the same page spiritually. Also, Cru feels that theological development is crucial to our mission. As the IBS web page description puts it...

*“The nature of the mission to which we have been called requires **kingdom-workers with a passion for God** who are growing ever deeper in their ability to understand and apply His Word to their own lives and the lives of those to whom they minister. We need to be women and men who treasure Christ, being captured by a vision of His greatness; leaders who are able to apply the resources of the gospel to the lives of broken people; and women and men who possess great confidence in the promises of God.”*

Eric and I enjoyed our classes and completed our IBS certification in November of 2019. So why am I bringing this up now? Because I’ve had a chance to ‘return to class’! This past month, I’ve been able to work with three different professors and help correct IBS assignments for Apologetics, Intro to Christian Theology, and God/Bible/Holy Spirit. Classes are usually only offered for a few months in the summer, so no matter where I end up serving at FamilyLife, I also expect to help with IBS. It has been a great way to review material that I covered in class years ago.

UP TO 40% OF FAMILIES in your church and community are blended families.

we can help.

LET US EQUIP YOU to prevent divorce, strengthen stepfamilies, and help break the generational cycle of divorce.

Summit on Stepfamily Ministry

For two days the Summit brings together well-known ministries, experts, counselors, pastors, worship leaders, and lay leaders to network, share best practices, and call the church to prevent divorce, strengthen stepfamilies, and break the generational cycle of divorce.

The **only event** geared toward equipping the church to minister to stepfamilies; a significant percentage of communities and churches. **In Person outside Atlanta, GA on October 14-15, 2021**

<https://www.summitonstepfamilies.com/>

An unexpected benefit of helping with these classes has been having a peek into the window of where Cru stands theologically. Every once in a while we come across an article/post/blog with negative perspectives on Cru. Staying in touch with what we are teaching at IBS helps me have confidence in settling those concerns.

One of the most helpful teachings was reviewed for me recently while correcting 'Intro to Christian Theology' - the **Convictions/Persuasions/Opinions paradigm**. As staff, the Statement of Faith mentioned earlier lays out our common convictions that we **must agree** on, but many staff have different persuasions than me and even more so many different opinions. Let me clarify (from Dr. Alan Scholes):



Convictions: These are central beliefs of the Christian faith that are crucial to salvation. For example, Paul identifies the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as "of first importance" in 1 Corinthians 15:3-5. Other examples of conviction level doctrines would include the authority of the Scriptures, the doctrine of the Trinity and the full deity and humanity of Christ.



Persuasions: These are beliefs about which we are personally certain but can still fellowship with other Christians who disagree since they are not matters central to the gospel and/or the historic Christian faith. Examples of persuasion level issues would be forms of church government, modes of baptism (sprinkling vs. immersion) and the nature of God's providence. Many denominational distinctives fit into this second category.



Opinions: These are beliefs, desires, or even wishes which may not be clearly taught in Scripture over which believers may legitimately differ. Implicit in this third category is the assumption that there may be more than one correct "Christian" view on an issue. An example of an opinion level doctrine could be the order or style of Christian worship.

In order to fulfill the Cru mission of, "Win, build and send Christ-centered multiplying disciples" and the FamilyLife mission "To effectively develop godly families who change the world one home at a time" we need to hold tight to those convictions but also learn to work with different persuasions and opinions in a winsome and kind way.

In Him,

Tear & Prayer

Pray for the
Riedy
Family
Serving with

Brenna Deb Eric Amanda

FAMILYLIFE
Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.

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Charissa & Jon

Praise for opportunities to try a few churches in person, we have found one we will be trying to settle in with-looking forward to new friends

Praise for Amanda finding a job at ACE Hardware! Brenna is applying for library jobs while continuing with online college classes through the summer

Praise for continued high traffic on FamilyLife webpage & podcasts -to God be the glory!

Pray fall planning-both personal & FamilyLife-we expect to have our first in person donor getaway in Sept & plans are going forward for the Feb cruise but wisdom is needed for both events with shifting regulations & liability factors

Pray for me (Deb) as I continue with job placement