

# Crossing Cultural/Religious Spaces

Encountering and loving the Other

Introduction of facilitators and translator

Overview of seminar (Cultural Chameleons)

Broken Squares activity

Navigation of cultural spaces

Questions

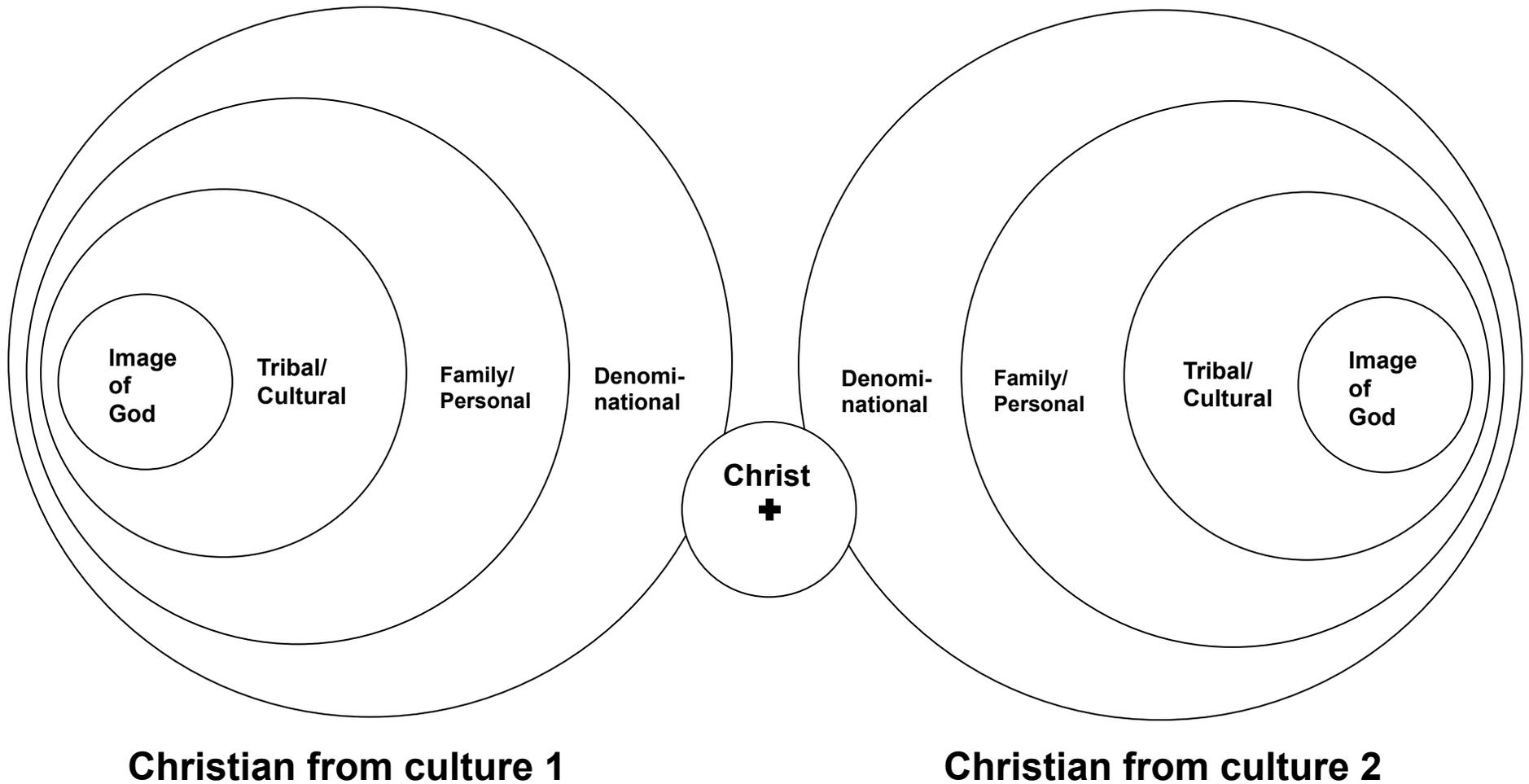
Worksheet: Features of Culture

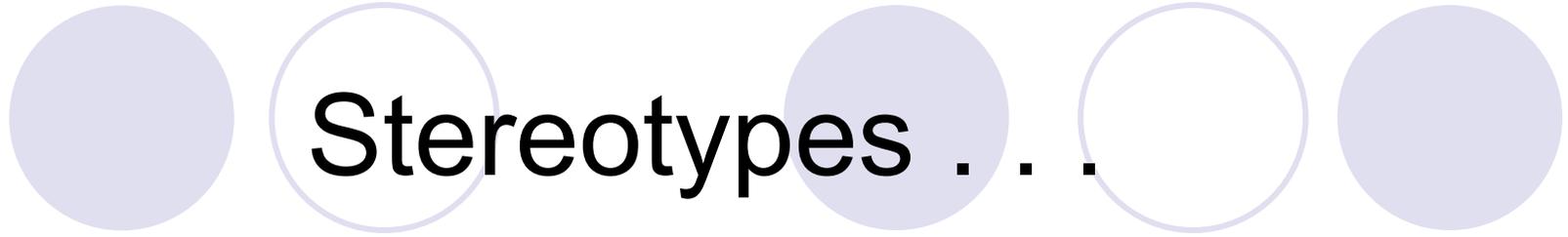
Understanding Cultural Viewpoints

Keys to understanding one another across cultures

# Crossing Cultural/Religious Spaces

Encountering and loving the Other





# Stereotypes . . .

. . .of US Mennonites/Christians

. . .of African Mennos/Christians

. . .of Latin American Mennos/Christians

. . .of Asian Mennos/Christians

. . .of European Mennos/Christians



# Stereotypes cause implicit bias

An unconscious reaction like Pavlov's dog

Story of Desmond Tutu and black pilots

Women can't teach math

White people don't have rhythm

African Americans and crime

Other examples?

# Moving Beyond Stereotypes and Implicit Bias

## Learning from the Other

- Starting point: Made in the image and likeness of God. (Gen. 1:27)
- All cultures both reflect and distort the image of God. It's always easier to pick out what we think are the distortions of the other culture than our own. "I may legitimately love my native culture, but I must do so without being blind to its faults, and without assuming that the call to image God is somehow uniquely reflected in my own cultural heritage." p.55
- Too many theological/religious discussions involve trying to shout each other down. "At the heart of intercultural learning is learning how to *hear*," p. 120.
  - Learn each other's language
  - Learn each other's unspoken language (cultural cues)
- "Loving the stranger is not about putting up with the inferior ways of the others [as defined by our stereotypes]; it involves realizing that I am a stranger too [that my own ways are ego- and ethno-centric]." p. 121
  - Sawing a board by hand
  - Crooked electrical poles

### Quotes

David I. Smith, *Learning from the Stranger: Christian Faith and Cultural Diversity*, 5.10.2009 edition (Grand Rapids, Mich: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009).

# Moving Beyond Stereotypes and Implicit Bias



Learning from the Other: Scriptural bias

**Learning from the other: Open hearts and minds**

**Galatians 5:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

<sup>22</sup> Pero el fruto del Espíritu es amor, gozo, paz, paciencia, benignidad, bondad, fe, <sup>23</sup> mansedumbre, templanza. Contra tales cosas no hay ley.

**Learning from the other: All made in God's Image**

**Galatians 3:28**

<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

<sup>28</sup> Ya no hay judío ni griego; no hay esclavo ni libre; no hay varón ni mujer, sino que todos ustedes son uno en Cristo Jesús.

# Crossing Cultural/Religious Spaces

## Change through crossing cultural spaces

Self → Tribal → Church → Denomination → Other

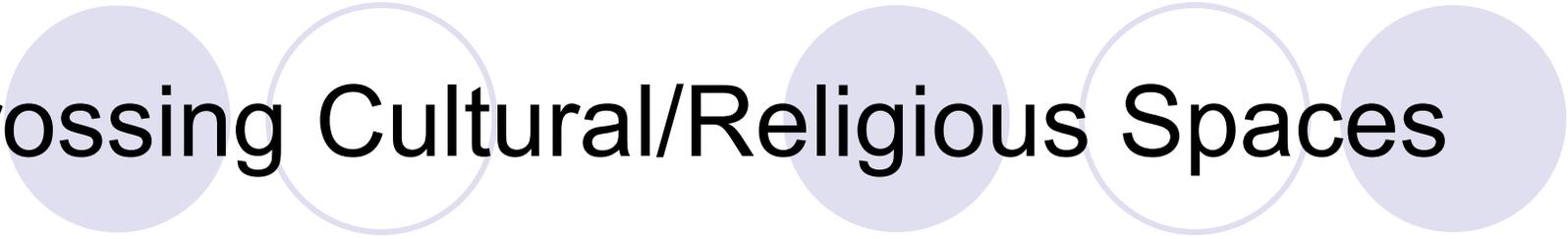
**Safest** → **Riskiest**

**Most confident** → **Most tentative**

**Most in control** → **Least in control**

**Least amount of learning** → **Most learning**

**Least depend. on God** → **Most depend.**

The title is centered and surrounded by five circles of varying shades of purple and lavender. The circles are arranged in a horizontal line, with the first and last circles being solid and the three in the middle being hollow with a thin outline.

# Crossing Cultural/Religious Spaces

# Keys to understanding one another across cultures

Responding to events or differences: surprising, confusing, uncomfortable/distressing, offensive

Why? What information is needed? Do I need to adjust my own thinking/behavior?

## **10 Tips for Cross-Cultural Understanding**

1. Speak slowly and clearly.
2. Ask for clarification.
3. Frequently check for understanding.
4. Avoid idioms.
5. Be careful of jargon.
6. Define the basics of business.
7. Be specific.
8. Choose your medium of communication effectively.
9. Provide information via multiple channels.
10. Be patient.