

Effective Media Communication for Academics

Engaging with media can be challenging for any academic, but Christian scholars seeking to be salt and light to media audiences face an additional layer of complexity. This session will provide a framework for finding faith-friendly messages from within our disciplines, and help in pitching them in a media-savvy way. We'll also look at building constructive relationships with media practitioners, and handling difficult interview questions.

Kay Carter is Director of Communications at Tyndale House, an academic institute for biblical understanding, where she supports researchers to speak about their work in a way that cuts through the academic/popular divide and capture the public imagination. Kay has a background in journalism, including as a staff member of *The Sunday Times* in London and as founding editor of *The Difference* magazine, which examined political issues through the lens of Christian ethics. She has a long-term interest in religious freedom and has worked as a lobbyist for organisations that represent persecuted Christians in the Middle East. Before joining Tyndale House, she ran the secretariat for the British All Party Parliamentary Group on International Freedom of Religion or Belief.

I. A Christian voice in the public square

A. A Magnetic Message ...

B. with an Arresting Angle ...

C. which Draws on our Discipline

II. A Magnetic Message

“It appears that humanity always and everywhere has fallen back on definite ideas and presumptions, and that these ideas and presumptions always resurface in surprising ways whenever they may have been temporarily repressed for various reasons... This is a universal religious consciousness that remains indestructible...”

JH Bavinck 1895-1964

A. Romans 1:19

“For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.”

B. Bavinck’s “universal religious consciousness”

1. Totality

2. Norm
3. Deliverance
4. Destiny
5. Higher power

III. An Arresting Angle

A. Surprising

B. Inspiring

C. Informative

D. Topical

E. Emotive

IV. Drawing on our Discipline

Q&A

V. Building media opportunities

VI. Handling hostile questions

A. Do I have to answer the question?

B. Don't repeat the premise

C. "What I'm saying is...."

D. The artful dodge!

1. Answer or Address

2. Bridge

3. Communicate

[*Robert Taylor, Media Interview Techniques (Kogan Page, 2016)*]

E. Broaden and narrow

F. Rehearse

Suggested reading:

Ed John Bolt, *The JH Bavinck Reader* (Eerdmans 2013)

Daniel Strange, *Plugged in: Connecting your faith with what you watch, read and play* (The Good Book Company, 2019)

Ted Turnau, *Popologetics* (P&R, 2017)

Alec Sabin, *'You're On!'* (How To Books, 2009)

Robert Taylor, *Media Interview Techniques* (Kogan Page, 2016)