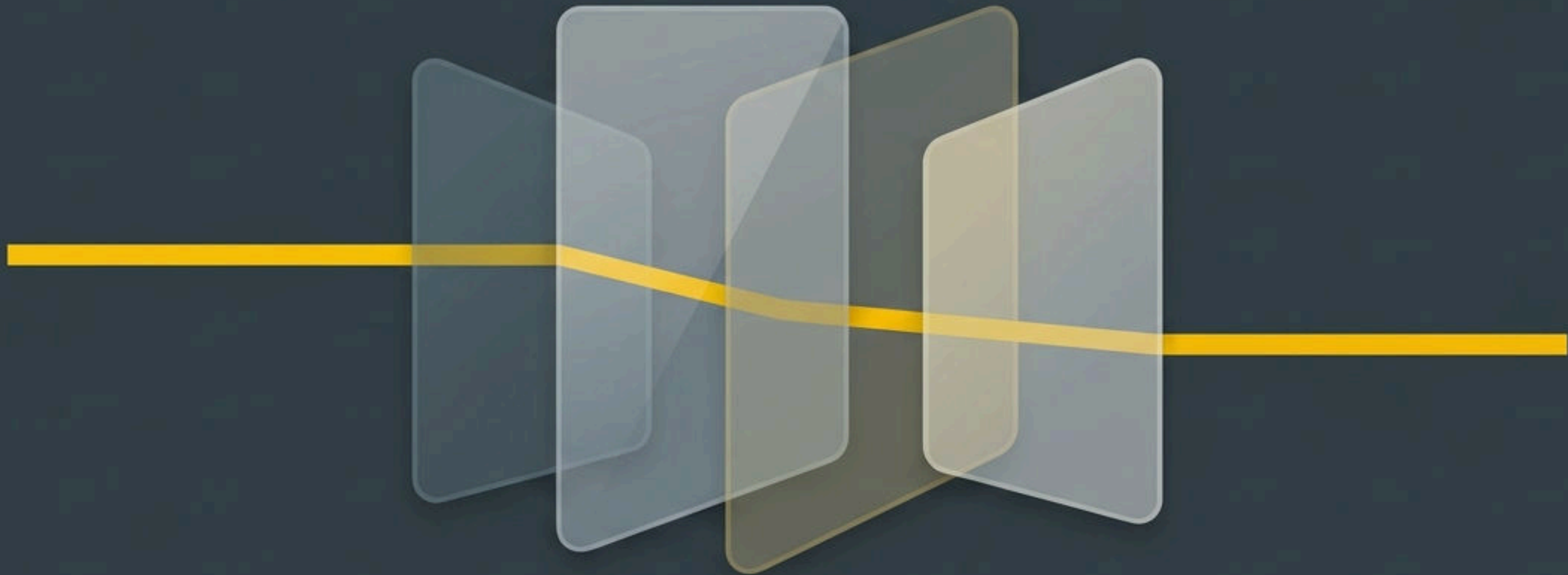


THE SIGNAL AND THE FILTER

Communicating Unchanging Truth in a Shifting Culture



THE TRIGGER

A repeating mechanical sound in the night.



THE EVACUATION

A neighbor with a nightgown too short, a husband holding a pillow, an old man carrying his phone, passport, and wallet in a cooking pot.



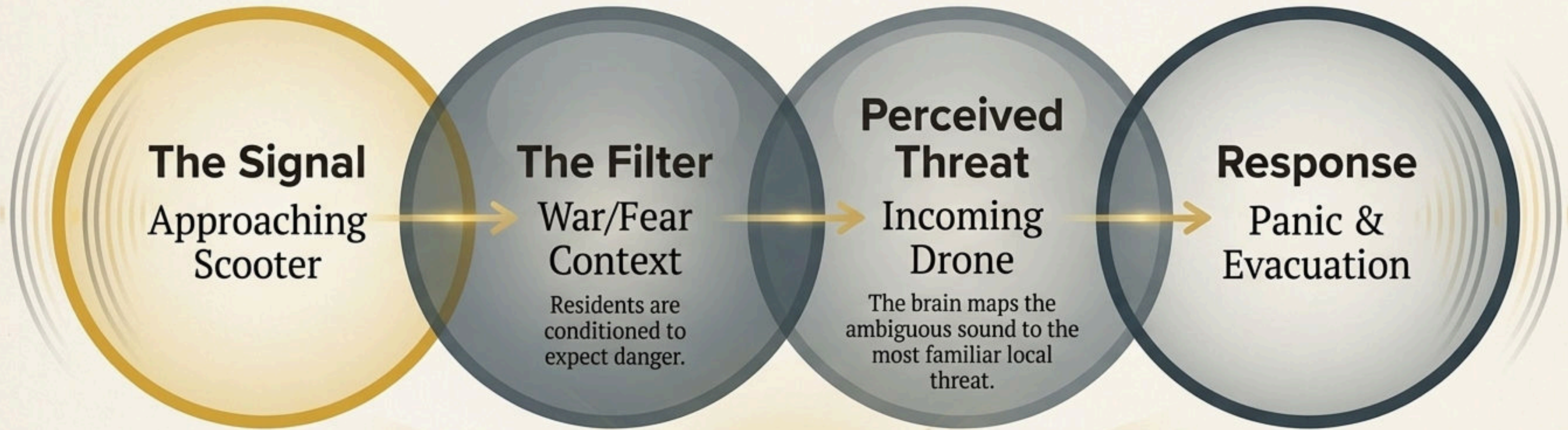
THE REVEAL

The gate opens. A young man on a scooter rolls in. "I barely pushed the gas," he says.



One bike in three minutes created more neighborly connection than five years of apartment living—but only after the initial panic subsided.

How Context Distorts the Signal



People bring their own background, history, and context into play when confronted with a new situation. When people do not understand what they are hearing, their response may turn out to be something you would not expect.

The Church Jargon Problem

The Signal

Washed in
the Blood

The Filter

Secular
Modernity

Listener has no
history with 18th-
century hymnody.

Perceived Threat

Halloween
Horror Movie

The brain maps the
violent imagery to
familiar secular pop
culture.

Response

Alienation &
Walking Away

A familiar message cherished by insiders for 65 years can be deeply confusing and off-putting to a person entering a church facility for the first time.

The Translation Matrix: Meaning Over Vocabulary

1772 Insider Language: There is a Fountain

“There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emanuel’s veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.”

Deeply meaningful to the insider.
Terrifying to the outsider.

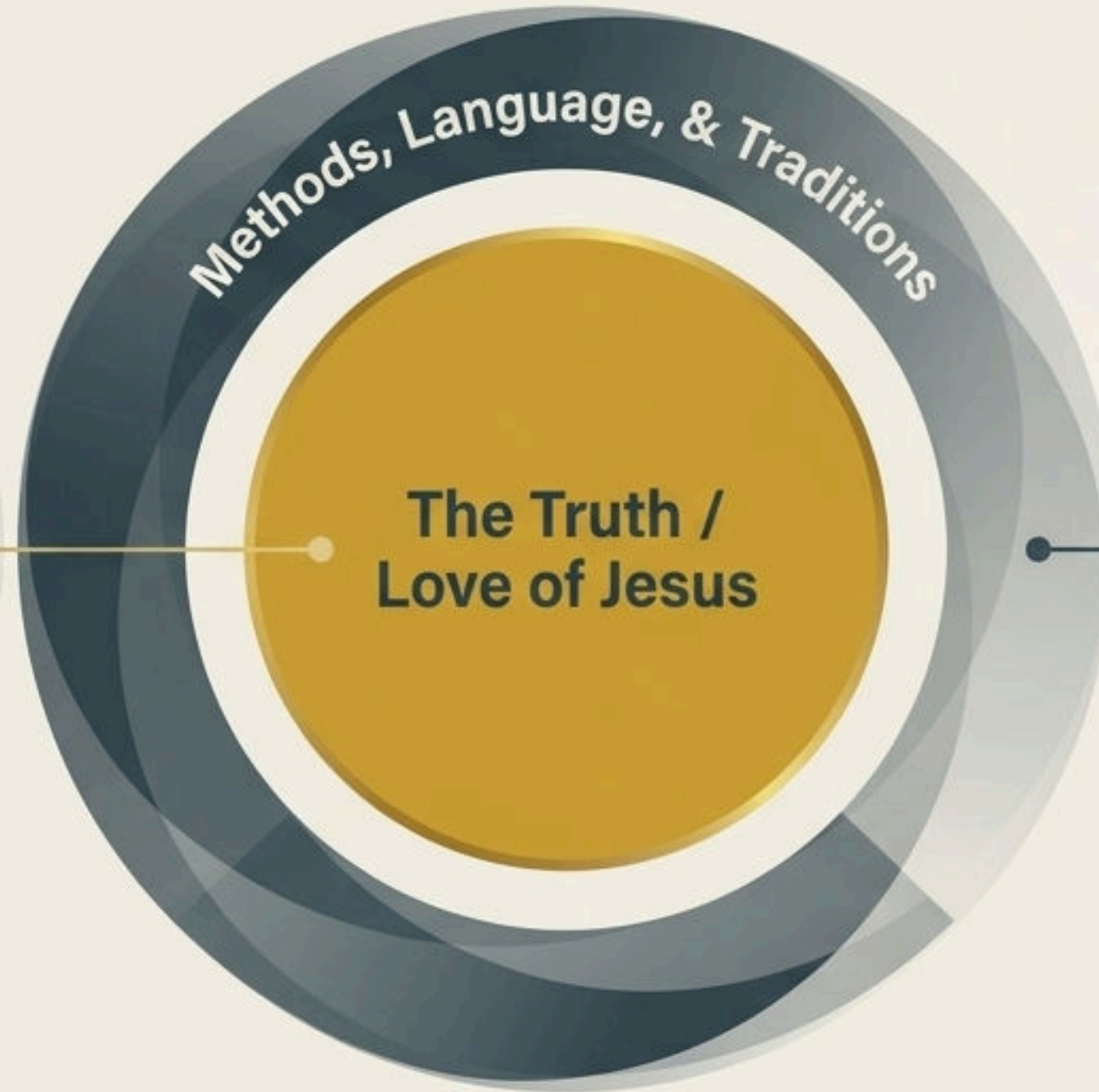
2026 Conversational Reality: The Local Restaurant Approach

“No matter what offenses you’ve committed, **the death of Jesus on the cross** has the power to wash away your guilt and give you a totally clean slate.”

Identical meaning.
Different method.

The truth of the good news never changes, but we must use different methods so it makes sense to the person sitting across the table.

The Core vs. The Shell



The Unchanging Center

The message itself, which offers a clean slate and hope, remains totally static.

The Adaptable Shell

Conversational topics, communication styles, and vocabulary that must morph to fit the listener.

**Key Insight: One size simply does not fit everybody.
Changing the outer ring protects the integrity of the inner core.**

The Pauline Strategy of Relational Surrender

“ I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ.”

(1 Corinthians 9:19)

Christian freedom is not about doing whatever we want; it is about choosing to serve others to bring them to Jesus.

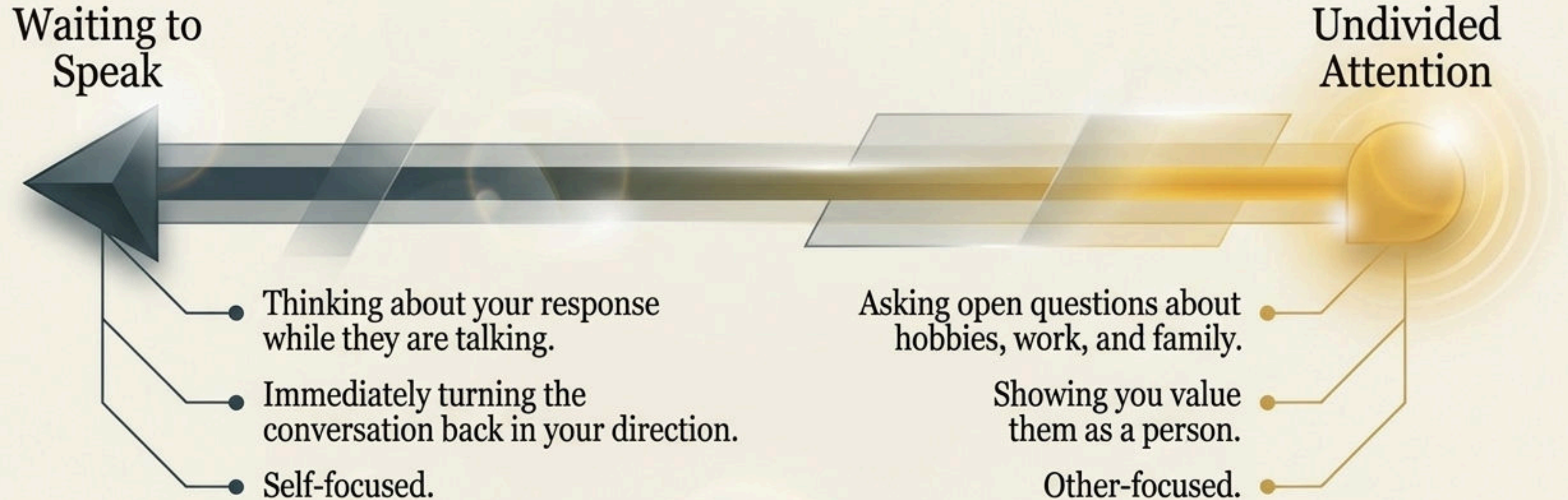
Paul owed nothing to anyone, yet willingly gave up his own rights and comforts to meet people exactly where they were.

The best way to use freedom is to exercise love through action.

Paul's Adaptability Matrix

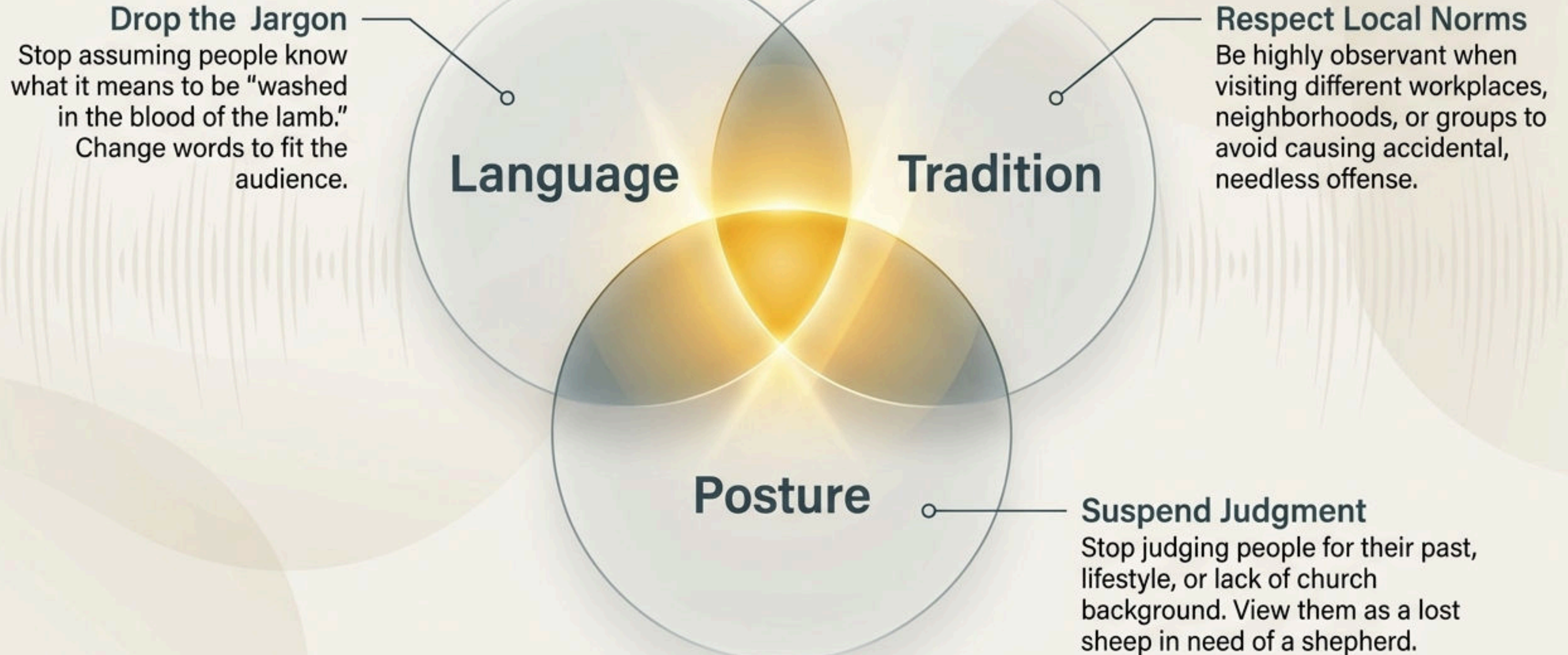
The Audience	Paul's Posture	The Relational Goal
Fellow Jews	Emphasized Jewishness; followed prior religious restrictions despite personal freedom.	Spend time without causing needless offense to win a hearing for Christ.
Greeks / Pagans (Without teachings of Moses)	Adapted style to connect on their level; learned their language without participating in sinful activities.	Identify with them and speak their language to share the good news.
The Weak, Broken, and Depressed	Shared from his own experiences of being lost, depressed, and weak.	Show how the presence of Christ offers a new angle and understanding for overwhelming situations.

Blueprint Step 1: The Active Listening Spectrum



Before you can adapt your message, you must accurately diagnose their context.

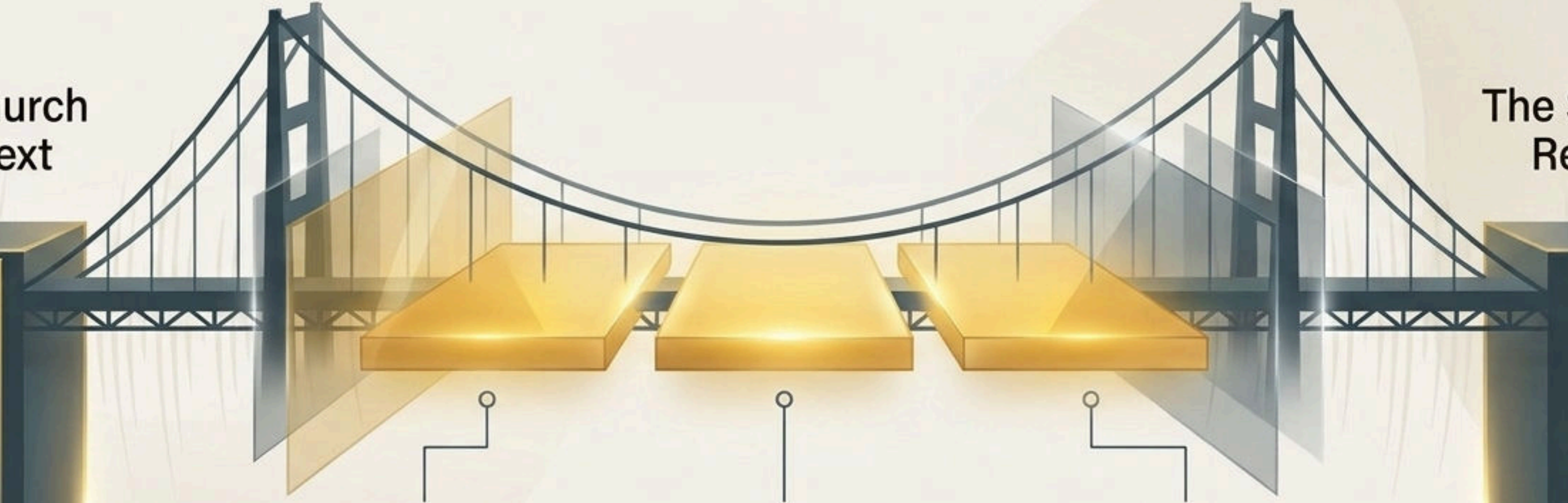
Blueprint Step 2: Contextual Adaptation



Blueprint Step 3: Building the Bridge of Trust

The Church
Context

The Secular
Reality



Messy Involvement:
Step into their world with
real care, even when
situations are chaotic
or confusing.

Radical Honesty:
Share your own
struggles instead of
trying to look like a
perfect Christian.

Practical Action:
Look for physical or
emotional needs you
can meet before sharing
a religious message.

Blueprint Step 4: Methodological Flexibility



Warning: Flexibility is never an excuse to participate in something wrong. The freedom to change style must always be driven by the unchanging truth of Jesus.

The Ultimate Reward of Adaptation

The Mutual Transformation

Paul didn't just work hard for other people. He knew that serving God in this way would make his own faith deeper and stronger.

Expect to Find Joy

Keep your eyes open for the best part: the pure joy of watching the good news change someone else's life—and your own—right in front of you.

Jump into this mission with excitement. When we change our methods, we don't lose the message; we ensure it is finally heard.