

VALLEY CHRISTIAN  SCHOOLS

FREEDOM

2023 SEC

## **A Note From Dr. Tonkinson:**

The Apostle Paul begins Galatians chapter 5 by stating, “So, Christ has truly set us free...”

Freedom is a concept we often take for granted but rarely stop to contemplate it’s profound meaning and application in our lives. The truth that a believer in Jesus Christ has been freed from bondage to sin is both weighty and equally exciting.

I am thrilled to think that over the course of this year’s Spiritual Emphasis Conference, we will dive deep into exploring this biblical truth of true freedom that can only be found in Jesus Christ!



**Dr. Greg “Tonk” Tonkinson**  
*Spiritual Life Director, VCS*

# FREEDOM

## 2023 SEC

## Monday & Tuesday Schedule

7:30	8:10	Café
7:30	8:10	Check-in
8:10	8:45	Worship
8:45	9:30	Teaching
9:30	9:50	Break / Café
9:50	10:30	Breakout Session
10:30	10:35	Transition
10:35	11:15	Breakout Session
11:15	12:30	Lunch / Check-in
12:30	1:10	Breakout Session / <b>ENGAGE Meetings</b>
1:10	1:25	Refuel
1:25	2:15	Teaching
2:15	2:45	Worship

**Café Hours:** 7:15-8:10 | 9:30-9:50



## Monday Morning

### Dr. BJ Eason – Total Depravity Trumped by Total Love

Understanding the depth of our sin nature will aide us in embracing the magnitude of God's love. In this session, Dr. Eason will introduce the Gospel as the starting point for being truly free.

## Monday Afternoon

### Dr. BJ Eason – Believers are Free

The Bible could not be more clear as to how free a believer truly is once saved. Words like alive, changed, and set free, are all biblical depictions of a Christian. The question is, do we believe it to the point that it changes the way we live our lives? Dr. Eason will champion this concept in Session Two!

## Tuesday Morning

### Dr. Greg Tonkinson – Believers Can Live in Freedom

What evidences do believers have of living in freedom? The Bible proclaims that not only do Christians have Christ dwelling inside them but they also have the power to combat sin and experience God-glorifying freedom! Dr. Tonkinson will celebrate the Scriptures truths as well as personal testimonies of when and how God has truly set us free!

## Tuesday Afternoon

### Dr. Greg Tonkinson – Free Enough to Serve

All of the "one anothers" in the New Testament are pointed toward believers. And if applied correctly, a believers life should be outwardly focused. This is only possible when there is an understanding and embracing of the reality that believers are free from the bondage of sin. Dr. Tonkinson will put forth the challenge to spend our time serving and loving others.

**Arizona Community Church**

**Bethel Church**

**Chandler Heights Community Church**

**Compass Christian Church**

**Compass Christian Church — The Bridge**

**Christ's Church of the Valley**

**First Baptist Church of Tempe**

**Logos Christian Academy**

**Redeemer Bible Church**

**The Grove Bible Church**

**Valley Christian Schools**

# Faculty-Led Breakout Sessions



## **SOS: Traumatic Loss and God's Goodness**

**Monday, Tuesday | Michelle Cefola, Marie Martin | Room C204**

Marie and Michelle will share their experiences of losing a family member to suicide and how God has worked in their lives through this storm to bring them to a deeper love and faith in Jesus.



## **The Freedom of the Afterlife**

**Monday, Tuesday | Dave Anderson | Room YC102**

Did you know that researchers have documented more than 10,000 near death experiences? This breakout session will focus on our lives after death by comparing biblical theology with near death experiences. Using the book "Imagine Heaven" by John Burke, we will discuss several documented near death experiences and see how they compare to the biblical account of heaven and life after death.



## **Does God Have a Sense of Humor?**

**Monday, Tuesday | Allan Fuller | Room MC101**

Most people tend to read the Bible with a very serious tone. What if some verses and some stories were read differently? What if the original writers had a sense of humor? If we value humor as humans, and we're created in the image of God... does God have a sense of humor?



## **Old Skool Grit**

**Monday, Tuesday | Troy Hanzal | Room W107-8**

We're told the secret to a successful and happy life, more than anything else, is something called GRIT. Defined as the willpower to persevere with passion and a sense of purpose, research shows that grit is what matters most in whether a person succeeds or fails.

Coach Hanzal will discuss the 15 most important principles of obtaining and practicing some old school grit!



## **Question Roulette**

**Monday, Tuesday | Tim Pitts, Damon Sterling | Room C201-3**

Question Roulette is a discussion-based breakout session with Mr. Pitts, Mr. Sterling, and VCS students.

The topics will vary but we promise this to be interactive, engaging, challenging, and fun! Students will share their thoughts on questions, derived from various category (dating, friendships, personal life, choices, theology, and more!)



## **A Christian's Response to Gender Identity**

**Monday, Tuesday | Kevin Christy, Barb Hunsaker | Room C209**

How do Christians navigate a difficult topic such as gender identity?

Join us as we have an in-depth discussion and address topics like: balancing truth and grace, addressing sin issues with love, listening learning and loving, standing firm in truth.





## **Is That Really in the Bible?**

**Monday, Tuesday | Mark VanBebber | Room W109**

In this session, we will look at some of the strangest, least known, Bible stories. We believe that all scripture is inspired and profitable for us... so why did God include these interesting stories in the Bible? Hopefully, we will learn and laugh a little together in this session!



## **How to Change the World by Standing up to Porn**

**Monday, Tuesday | Scott Timmer, Manny Guarino | Gym**

This breakout session will showcase the reality of the catastrophe our society is currently engrossed in – an addiction to porn. Coach Timmer and former student Manny Guarino will dive into this topic and address the reasons behind this addiction, the temptation, and the ultimate cost to self, family, and friends. Manny will share his powerful and convicting story highlighting God's forgiveness and healing.



## **Is Your Speech Free?**

**Monday, Tuesday | Greg Tonkinson | Room MC102**

Is there such a thing as free speech in today's world? Can I disagree without consequences? Is it ok to offend someone who has a different worldview? Should I be concerned about getting canceled? Join Tonk in a 18-Questions type atmosphere and let's get to the bottom of this!



## **How do YOU identify: Cultural Christian or Kingdom Christian?**

**Monday | Dorothey Staten | Room C208**

This session will discuss the difference between the Christian who is a Christian because it fits into their societal role and the Christian who has given their life wholly to serving and worshipping Jesus.



## **Christ-Centered Dating (Girls Only)**

**Tuesday | Tiffani Sproul, Savannah Freeman | Room C208**

This interactive session will have a very casual feel as Mrs. Sproul and Mrs. Freeman talk with each other and the audience about relationships. Lots of opportunities for attendees to share thoughts, ask questions, and challenge one another with biblical thoughts on dating and marriage.



## **Love, Sex, Singleness**

**Tuesday | David Gamez | Room C207**

The session will focus on what is love, how is sex a gift from God, and how singleness can be one of the greatest blessings God gives a person. Attendees will discuss good and bad ways to approach relationships.

This session will be interactive with heavy input from the audience. Attendees will be highly encouraged to share ideas, thoughts, and opinions.



## Running Through Adversity

**Monday | Drew Streeter, Jordan Schmidt | Room MC103**

How are you handling adversity? Jordan was adopted as a baby from India. Even though he has many health challenges and has faced multiple struggles, like Job, he has refused to give up. His tenacity is best shown through his running 100 mile marathons. This is his story.

## Smiling Through Adversity

**Tuesday | Drew Streeter | Room MC103**

In James 1, we are told we will all face adversity in our lives. The defining difference is how we meet these challenges and once we are through them, recognize the growth that has taken place.

Mr. Streeter will recount the many times he has been challenged by struggles in his life and how they have impacted his life and his faith.



**CROSSROADS**  
NAZARENE CHURCH

# Student-Led Breakout Sessions

## Leading Others

**Monday, Tuesday | Zeke Pasch, Jacob Leppert,  
Mason Henkel | Room C205**

In this session, we will discuss leadership, how everyone can be a godly leader and set a good example for other believers AND nonbelievers.

The idea of servant leadership will be explored, with how Jesus used this type of approach and encouraged us to do the same. The apostle Paul did as well, and millennia later Martin Luther King Jr. was a servant leader to America and helped unite the country despite the racial prejudice and tension.

## Persuaded or Persuader?

**Monday, Tuesday | Josh Carter, Jed Arneson | Room C206**

Students will be able to learn the basics on how to effectively argue the Gospel through Christian tactics and logical argumentation as well as the need for every Christian to defend their faith. This session will consist of multiple interactive discussions and questions within the demonstration to encourage critical thinking on controversial religious topics.

## Life as a Valley Girl! (Girls Only)

**Monday | Malia Tonkinson, Jacqui Lagatta,  
Gracie Miraglia, Hayden Matykiewicz | Room C207**

It's challenging to be a girl, especially at school! Having a strong faith makes all the difference. Come join the Senior girls for an opportunity to ask us questions about our personal high school experiences.

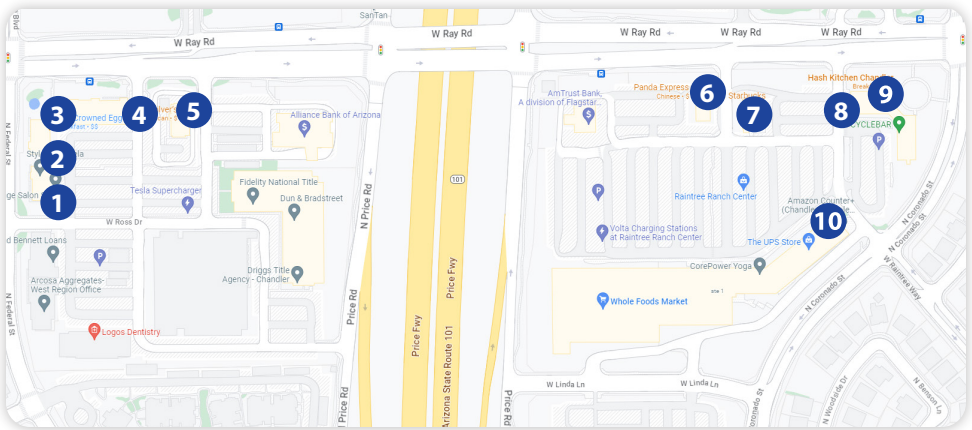
We'll reference the book of Esther, a strong woman of the Bible who lived a courageous life for God and her people. We desire to provide guidance in making high school an experience without regret!

# Lunch Schedule

## Lunch Hour: 11:15-12:30

- Must travel in groups
- Must use crosswalks
- Can bring lunch from home
- Must check-in with attendance team before 12:30

**NO ONE can drive to lunch.**



**1 Yogi's Grill**

**2 Pokitrition**

**3 The Crowned Egg**

**4 Firehouse Subs**

**5 Culver's**

**6 Panda Express**

**7 Starbucks**

**8 Los Taquitos**

**9 Hash Kitchen**

**10 GOSAN Poke & Roll**