

Six Modes of *Christian* Engagement with the Jewish World

| From **opposing hatred** to **pursuing unity**, through **love**, **honesty**, and **belonging**

Christian engagement with the Jewish world is not one thing but operates in at least **six distinct modes**. Each is driven by one of **three guiding questions**, surfacing different assumptions and rooted in different identity commitments. Read across the rows to see whose perspective is primarily in view. Read down the columns to track how each question functions, oriented primarily, though not exclusively, toward priorities within the Jewish world or the Christian world.

| | JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIP | CHURCH-ISRAEL RELATIONSHIP | JEW-GENTILE RELATIONSHIP |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| | <p><i>What does love require?</i></p> | <p><i>What does honesty require?</i></p> | <p><i>What does unity require?</i></p> |
| Jewish World | <p>1 OPPOSING Jew-Hatred ETHICAL FOUNDATION</p> <p>Love requires Christians to oppose antisemitism and actively resist Jew-hatred in every form.</p> <p>Genesis 12:3 "I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse." Mark 12:29-31 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one... You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart... The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."</p> | <p>3 RECKONING WITH THE Jewish Nation THEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL</p> <p>Honesty requires Christians to reckon seriously with the Jewish nation as a modern and geopolitical reality, across the full range of theological positions and historical complexity.</p> <p>Jeremiah 31:35-36 "Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day... If this fixed order departs from before me, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever." Romans 11:29 "The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."</p> | <p>5 NURTURING Messianic Jewish Belonging ECCLÉSIOLOGICAL FORMATION</p> <p>Unity requires communities where Jewish followers of Yeshua inhabit their full Jewish identity, anticipating Israel's fullness, the church's maturity, and the nations' ingathering.</p> <p>Isaiah 56:7 "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." Romans 11:12 "If their transgression means riches for the world, how much more will their fullness mean."</p> |
| Christian World | <p>2 WITNESSING TO Jewish People MISSIONAL CONVICTION</p> <p>Love requires Christians to share the good news of the kingdom and the love of God with Jewish people, from the conviction that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel and all nations.</p> <p>Isaiah 52:7 "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news." Romans 1:16 "The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."</p> | <p>4 ENGAGING CHRISTIANITY'S Jewish Roots RECOVERY</p> <p>Honesty requires Christianity to repent of centuries of anti-Judaic theologies and practices and pursue the purity of Messiah's Bride, the Church.</p> <p>Psalms 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."</p> | <p>6 PURSUING Jew-Gentile Unity in Messiah ESCHATOLOGICAL VISION</p> <p>Unity requires biblically committed Jewish and Gentile followers of Jesus to belong together in Messiah, each remaining distinct, together constituting a unique body neither constitutes alone.</p> <p>Psalms 133:1 "How good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters dwell in unity." John 10:16 "I have other sheep that are not of this fold...they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd." John 17:11 "...that they may be one."</p> |

Two Modes of Mainstream Jewish Engagement with Followers of Jesus. The mainstream Jewish community typically engages **Gentile Christians** relationally and strategically, cooperating without necessarily requiring theological agreement. By contrast, when mainstream Jews engage **Jewish believers in Jesus**, the traditional posture often shifts to defining and protecting communal boundaries. These two modes of mainstream Jewish engagement reflect a coherent logic grounded in the preservation of Jewish identity and existence. When this distinction between mainstream Jews engaging biblically committed Gentile versus Jewish followers of Jesus is ignored, discussions quickly devolve into category errors that derail productive engagement. WWW.WHEATON.EDU/JCRI