

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE CLASS

Fall/Winter, 2018

Pastor Jim Otte

“Foundational Truth for a Confused World: The Ten Commandments”

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Session Five: The 1st Commandment: Part 2 (Believing is More than Seeing)

“You shall have no other gods before me.”

1. From Last Week’s Lesson

- a. Unbelief in God can be intergenerational.
- b. Belief in God ought to be taught at home; but that is no guarantee the children will stay receptive to the Gospel.

2. Why does this matter?

- a. **Foundational Truth #7:** To reject God as the _____ God in your life, is to replace Him with your SELF as the source of life, security, purpose, and meaning for your life.
 - a. I determine who, what, and when I serve.
 - b. I determine my own morality (right/wrong; good/evil)
 - c. I determine the purpose of my life
- b. **Foundational Truth #8:** You have little or _____ ultimate source of hope, in the midst of suffering (losses in life; rejection; injustice; etc.) beyond your own ability to cope or control the situation. Many people boil their options down to: self-medicating; escape through addictions; homicide and/or suicide, or to simply seeking more control over others.
- c. **Foundational Truth #9:** When God is your God, through faith in Jesus, you benefit from His _____. He forgives!

2. In what ways can you, God’s beloved, respond/witness in the hope you have?

- a. Keep the conversations going; stay in touch.
- b. Speak up about the benefits/blessings you’ve experienced – being candid about any darkness-es which have plagued you.
- c. Be real! Acknowledge any faith struggles you’ve had.
- d. Be genuine (not pathetic or settling for pat answers).
- e. Be respectful of the person, by acknowledging the sincerity of their spiritual searching, as you speak about what Jesus has done for you.

3. We can learn from the Bible: How to Engage our Culture of NONES

Acts 17:16-34 *While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.*

Learning #1: Engage _____ informed conversation. Listen well and be respectful of their point of view, even if you disagree with it.

¹⁸ *A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods."*

Learning #2: Prepare yourself to be _____ taken seriously by some; while others may be intrigued. Don't take the rejection personally, even though it may hurt.

They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰ You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean." ²¹ (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

Learning #3: Some of what you say _____ trigger their curiosity.

²² *Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.*

Learning #4: Creatively affirm their spirituality, even if it seems they are _____ religious.

²⁴ *"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from*

any one of us. ²⁸ *‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’*^[b] As some of your own poets have said, *‘We are his offspring.’*^[c]

Learning #5: Start with what you have _____ common; common ground.

Learning #6: Show respect by educating yourself on the teachings of the _____ they listen to or read.

²⁹ *“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill.*

³⁰ *In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”*

Learning #7: Share the Gospel, by telling them what Jesus has done for you, and how He has helped you deal with difficult moments in _____.

³² *When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” ³³ At that, Paul left the Council. ³⁴ Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.*

Learning #8: Remember that your task is to _____ the seeds. God is in charge of making the plant grow.

Learning #9: Sometimes, it’s the people you _____ expect, who are the receptive hearts.