

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 Two: The 1st Commandment

God’s Foundational Truth: Love the God Which Loves You, His Beloved

1. From Last Session:

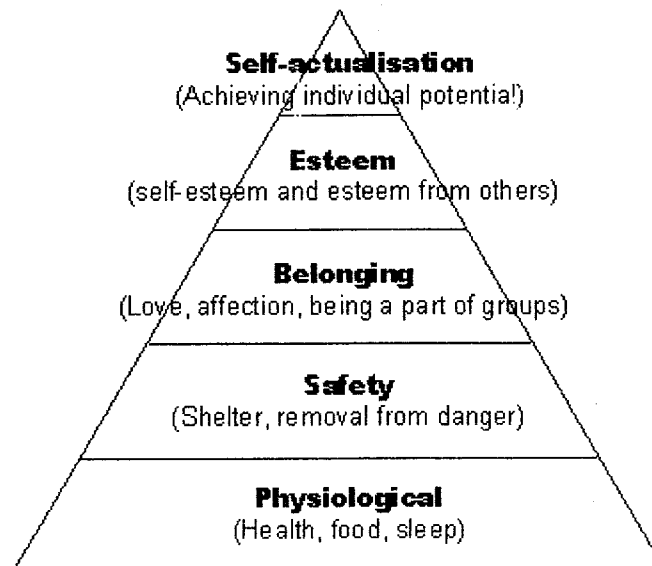
- a. The 10 Commandments are “want-to’s” for believers in response to God’s love through Jesus.
- b. It is a joy to obey the God who loves you.

2. Opening Discussion:

- a. Life is all about priorities; what’s most important!
- b. Without priorities, it’s nearly impossible to make decisions about how to manage your resources: time, money, energy, etc.
- c. When it comes to making such decisions, what goes into your thought processes?

3. Exodus 20:3. “You shall have no other gods before^[a] me.

- a. **Luther’s definition of a “god”:** “That to which you look (devote yourself) for the highest good in your life.”
 - i. Your “highest good” may depend on the life circumstance in which you find yourself!
 - ii. A commonly used tool for determining “highest good” is called “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.”



- b. Multiplicity of gods has always been the human “solution”**
 - i. Egyptian: Isis; Osiris; Nile, etc.
 - ii. Canannite: Baal gods – anger must be appeased
 - iii. Mandated rituals; temple prostitution; human sacrifices; priests with secret knowledge; purpose: appease the gods & achieve personal security
 - iv. Gnosticism: intellectual codes; levels of secret knowledge; purpose: to achieve spiritual intimacy with God for personal security
- c. In our day, our pluralistic culture worships a spectrum of gods or definitions of gods.**



Atheism (God doesn't exist: Freedom from Religion)



Agnosticism (God exists, maybe, but by which name?)



NONES (Define God in personal terms; rejecting religion)



Coexist (Universalism: all religions equal; different expressions of the same god; everyone ends up in heaven anyway) – sincerity based salvation

- d. Popular views among millennials (from higher education)**
 - i. “Sophisticated Scientific Deism”**
 - 1. Albert Einstein: “higher power” at work in the universe to maintain reason in the world
 - 2. Stephen Hawking: “a god decreed” fundamental laws of the universe, but left its development to natural evolution
 - ii. “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism”**
 - 1. A god exists who created the world and watches over it.
 - 2. God wants people to be good and nice to each other, like the Bible and other religions teach.
 - 3. The central goal of life is to be happy and feel good about yourself.

4. You don't need to have God involved in your life, except if you have a problem you can't solve.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.

(Sire, James. The Universe Next Door: 2009)

4. **Exodus 20:4-6**. "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

- a. "punishing the children for the sin of the parents...who hate me"
 - i. "punishing" – as a loving Father punishes the child who rejects His love.
 - ii. "the sin" of unbelief is passed down from parent to child.
 - iii. "hate" – reject; show indifference to; ignore God
- b. "showing love to...those who love me and keep my commandments."
 - i. "showing love" – welcoming; blessing; being a Father to His beloved

5. Why does this matter?

- a. **Foundational Truth #5**: 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.
 - i. I determine who, what, and when I serve.
 - ii. I determine my own morality (right/wrong; good/evil)
 - iii. I determine the purpose of my life
 - iv. There is only this life.
- b. **Foundational Truth #6**: 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;
- c. **Foundational Truth #7**: When God is your God, through faith in Jesus, you benefit from His _____. He forgives!

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