

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

"You shall have no other gods before me."

From Last Session:

- a. Christians, who highly value the benefits of "organized religion," have a hard time understanding those who don't (NONES).
- b. The benefits of "organized religion" are:

5. **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, ⁶but 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"
 - a. "punishing" – as a loving Father punishes the child who rejects His love.
 - b. "the sin" of unbelief is passed down from parent to child.
 - c. "hate" – reject; show indifference to; ignore God
- b. "showing love to...those who love me and keep my commandments."
 - a. "showing love" – welcoming; blessing; being a Father to His beloved

6. The appeal of graven "images in the form of anything" has been in the human race since the beginning!

- a. **Exodus 32:1.** *When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods^[a] who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."*
- b. **Foundational Truth #4:** One motive people have for making "images," is the _____ of the unknown.
- c. **Judges 2:10-13.** *After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. ¹¹Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. ¹²They forsook the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and*

worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They aroused the LORD's anger ¹³ because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths

- d. **Foundational Truth #5:** Another motive for worshipping "images" can be the failure of _____ to teach and live the faith or the refusal of the children to retain the faith.
- e. **Foundational Truth #6:** Other people are drawn to "images," because it is popular to do so, in their tribe, crowd, or family. Their desire to _____ approved of, or their fear of disapproval, guides that decision.

7. 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!

8. 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.
- f. **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. 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." 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.)

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.

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."²⁹ As some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."³⁰

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."

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.

- g.** Be observant and say what you notice.
- h.** Be prepared to respond, not react, to pushback.
 - a.** This is a conversation, which might last for years!
- i.** Let the Holy Spirit work through your words!