

Questions and Answers from Acts 17

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[0:00] If you would take your Bibles and go to the book of Acts, chapter 17, if you're visiting with us, you can pull out that black Bible in the chair in front of you and go towards the back to page 107, 107, Acts chapter 17, I'm actually going to read the whole chapter.

Acts 17, starting in verse 1 through verse 34, Acts chapter 17, again page 107 in that black Bible in the chair in front of you.

So read the whole chapter and then we'll do our Q&A; that I've had the past couple Sundays.

Starting in verse 1, Acts 17.

Now when they had traveled through Empirhus and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul's custom, he went to them and for three Sabbaths, reasoned with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, saying, this Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ. And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas along with a great multitude of God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women, but the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the marketplace, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar.

[1:40] And coming upon the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people. And when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, these men who have upset the world, they've come here also.

And Jason has welcomed them. And they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus. And they stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things.

And when they received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them. And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. And when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Now, these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica. They received the word with great eagerness, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Many of them therefore believed along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.

But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul and Berea also, they came there likewise agitating and stirring up the crowds. And then immediately the brethren sent Paul out to go as far as the sea, and Silas and Timothy remained there.

[2:47] Now, those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens, and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed. Verse 16. Now, while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was beholding a city full of idols.

So he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearers, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be present. And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him.

And some were saying, what would this idol babbler wish to say? Others, he seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities, because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, may we know what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming, for you are bringing some strange things to our ears.

We want to know, therefore, what these things mean. Now, all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new. And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects, for I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship.

I also found an altar with this inscription to an unknown God. Well, therefore, you worship in ignorance. This I proclaim to you, verse 24. The God who made the world and all things in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands, neither is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all life, breath, and all things.

[4:20] He made from one every nation of mankind, to live on all the face of the earth, having determined appointed times and the boundaries of the habitation, that they should seek God. If perhaps he might grope for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us, for in him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, for we also are his offspring.

Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the divine nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because he has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom he has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising him from the dead.

Now, when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some sneered. But others said, we shall hear you again concerning this. So Paul went out of their midst, but some, joining him, believed.

Among whom also were Dionysius, the Areopagites, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. I'm sure you've heard the phrase, the only stupid question is the one you don't ask.

Well, that's true up to a point. What if you ask a question not related to the subject? Like, why don't donkeys fly? Well, that's kind of a dumb question.

[5:50] I don't know if I can say stupid, that might be kind of strong. Maybe more like pointless.

Well, I'll tell you that I've had some questions from Acts 17, and none of them are pointless. I don't think any of them were stupid or pointless.

And hopefully this will help you. Maybe it will spur even more questions on in your mind, and then we can have even more conversation. There's eight questions that I had, so I'm going to go through that this morning.

Oh yeah, put that up there. Question and answer some Acts 17. And the reason why I'm doing this is because from Acts 17, specifically verses 16 through 34, books have been written on this section of Scripture because of so many things that Paul does here.

And what does it mean for us when we do evangelism? And as God has stepped into us, into our culture, how do we do that with others? First, my point that I tried to make from Acts 17 is that we reason, explain, prove, proclaim, and persuade toward Jesus Christ.

In the Gospel. That's what we do. God stepped in with us. God engaged in our culture. And that's what we do as well. We step in.

[7:05] We incarnate ourselves into the lives of people so that we end up reasoning, explaining, proving, or demonstrating, persuading, or proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I'm going to go through a few main points that I went through last week, and then we'll deal with our questions.

I told you last week, well even the week before that, every human has a true knowledge of God, the one true God. But that knowledge is degraded by sin.

Sinners have a sense of deity that condemns them, but they do not have a sense of deity that can save them. And you might say, well I don't understand what that means. How does that make any sense?

Think of it this way. The devil, who is a real person, he's not some figment of our imagination, the devil is a real person, Satan, does he have a knowledge of God?

Yes. Does he have an accurate knowledge of God? Oh yes. Does he have a true knowledge of God? Oh yes. But does that knowledge save him?

[8:13] Absolutely not. The same thing for everyone outside of Christ. So before you were a Christian, that's where you were. You had a knowledge of God, but that knowledge condemns you.

A knowledge of God is degraded by sin. Everyone has it. This clear knowledge of God is from creation, logic, morality, and it's suppressed.

And results in culpable ignorance. Culpable meaning, the guilty. It's not, well I didn't know.

Okay, well you're okay then. You're off the hook. No. You didn't know, but you're guilty of that. You should know. You should deal with that, but you don't. You suppress it, and they actually exchange it for a lie.

Because of our sinfulness. Which is why we read Romans chapter 1, verses 18 through 25, that correlates with the Acts 17 passage. It proves the point even more.

[9 : 15] So what's our point of contact? With those people who don't know Christ. It's the fact that they have the inescapable knowledge of the true God. That all people, in virtue of the fact that they have been made in God's image, and His revelation is given through nature and history.

So human eyes though, they're blinded to the light of God's revelation. They do not interpret natural revelation correctly. They look at the stars and say, that's millions of years.

They look at the stars and say, wow, those are so amazing, they're so awesome, they're so vast, they're so far away from me, that's millions of years. Notice the ginormous creation that's been made, and they're acknowledging the fact that that's so much greater than them, and yet they immediately fall into depravity.

That's millions of years. Evolution. They grow up about in the darkness. They're looking in an uncertain way. They seek after God, but immediately they suppress that truth and exchange it. Suppress and exchange it. Suppress and exchange it. They're just sin. So the unsaved will never interpret natural revelation correctly coming to the one true God.

[10 : 31] They will never do it. You didn't do it. Before you were a Christian, you did not understand this or interpret natural revelation correctly. You will look at it and then you will fall into sin.

Look at it and fall into sin. See the things around you, fall into sin. The very people that we look at, we're all made in the image of God, we immediately fall into sin. They grow up about in the darkness, and for this they are to blame.

Culpable ignorance. God left humanity a witness in His creation. Providence. But they in the rebellion suppressed that knowledge.

They willingly turn the other way. They take the knowledge that they have about God. They simply suppress and exchange it. Suppress and exchange it.

Constantly. Moment by moment. So the unsaved are responsible because they possess the truth, but they're guilty for what they do with that truth.

[11 : 35] So natural revelation can be read clearly only through the glasses of special revelation. It's like when you're sitting there reading, and you go, uh-oh.

Where's my reading glasses? You know, you know, we're trying to, okay, right there, I can see it, you know. That's what you're trying to do. That's natural revelation. It's like you can't see it clearly, and then you put the glasses on.

Oh. You need the glasses. The glasses of special revelation. What's special revelation? This. God's Word.

In Acts 17, you see Paul quoting from, uh, these Greek poets. In him we live and move and have our being. Um, we are also his offspring.

So we think, well, why is he doing that for? Is he commending them? No, he's not commending their doctrine. He appealed to their distorted teachings. That's evidence that they perverted their knowledge of God.

[12 : 40] So they say, we're his offspring. And so they come up with Zeus. In him we live and move and have our being. We come from somebody else, but then they immediately go into Greek mythology.

They perverted their knowledge of God. And friends, this doesn't just go for the Greek theologians that Paul quotes here. This goes for atheists, agnostics, Muslims, Mormons, Roman Catholics, and even flat out pagans.

For all. There's a groping about in the darkness of this knowledge of God, and they suppress it and exchange it for something else. So now, I went through those points, and from those points we looked at last week, and even the week before that, came some of these questions.

So I'll put the questions on the screen. Some of the answers I put up on the screen, some of it is just too much to put on the screen for you. But a few of the questions, excuse me, a few of the answers I put up on the screen, all the questions are up on the screen, so you can write those down if you need to.

Question number one. You, me, me, said, we as Christians take the Bible, God's revelation authority, as our starting point, and the controlling factor in all our reasoning with the unsaved, whether they know the scripture or not.

[14:08] What if they don't believe the Bible? The scripture, to be God's word. Then what do we do? So while you're talking to somebody about the Bible, and they say, well, yeah, a man wrote it.

So what do you do at that point? You go, oh, well, okay. So do you try and build some common ground with them outside of the Bible? Well, first, what I've found, by my own experience, roughly seven out of ten, even sometimes nine out of ten people, when they say, well, I don't believe the Bible, she or he has never read the Bible.

So start there. Well, I don't believe the Bible, you know, that's written by men. Have you ever read the Bible? Oh, yeah, I've read, like, no, have you read it from Genesis to Revelation, from the beginning to end?

Well, no. Seven, out of ten, something, nine out of ten people say that. So then very clearly, you say, well, so wait a second, so you're saying to me, you believe, man wrote the Bible, and yet you haven't even read the Bible?

that pretty much defeats their whole argument, right? Okay, well, someone says they have read the Bible, from beginning to end.

[15:30] So then what do you do? We need to understand that the Bible, is self-attesting authority. It's true whether you believe it or not.

It doesn't need you to believe it for it to be true. It just is. It just is. It attests to itself. It is the standard.

It is the evidence for Christianity. So what do we do? We give them scriptural proof. Or, truth. I gave you the illustration, I think last week, about a tape measure.

If you have a builder coming in, he wants to do some remodeling in your house. And as this guy comes in, he's like, yeah, doesn't have a tape measure with him. He's like, I think that's probably about a couple feet, you know, we can do this and that, and this and that.

You say, yeah, thanks a lot. I ain't calling that guy, right? Right? I mean, we're doing that cry room. I mean, you're doing that big window. I mean, every single person we got out to do a bid, you know, they're measuring from here to here, here to here, even from the middle, from this side, they have a tape measure.

[16:44] That's the standard. I mentioned it last week. You don't say to that person, you know, did you get that tape measure from Home Depot? Because they're kind of squirrely, you know what I'm saying?

Usually I get mine from Ace Hardware. The guy would look at you and think you're a moron. You think, are you crazy? What's the matter with you? A tape measure is a tape measure. So I graciously say this to us.

The Bible is the Bible. It's self-attesting to itself. It is the standard. So someone says, well, man wrote it. You say, you're absolutely right. Man wrote it and God wrote it because men, moved by the Holy Spirit, spoke from God.

2 Timothy 1, verse 21. Look, when you have, when you're talking to somebody about the Gospel, I mean, in your own life, somebody spoke the Gospel to you and God opened your eyes to the truth of the Word of God.

That's what God does. And so we call them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and we call them to believe the evidences that point to the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what happened to you, right? I mean, God did a work in your heart where He saved you so you had an understanding of His Word.

[17:59] Now, does it help if you know more and more about the Bible? No. It does help. So that's why I encourage you to continue to read the Bible and understand more about the Bible.

Like, for instance, understanding when somebody says to you, well, the Bible has been translated so many different times, well, you know, that, blah, blah. And say, actually, the great part about the Bible is, for instance, the New Testament.

It's written in Koine Greek. That's a dead language. So the language is locked in. So there's no changing of definitions of words because that language is a dead language now.

And it's locked in. See, that throws their argument off, doesn't it? So now, does it help to know more and more about the Bible? Yeah, it does. But realize this. We just need to know, this is what God's Word says, and we tell them, this is what God's Word says.

Just know the Gospel. Because, it is, what? The power of God. Thank you all two of you. That's great. Unto salvation. The Gospel is the power of God.

[19:01] So that was the first question. Second question. How are we able to persuade or convince people toward Jesus Christ? Again, these are really good questions.

The first one is a really good question. This is a good question too. Acts chapter 17, verse 4. And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas.

You're in Acts 17. Look at the next chapter. Acts chapter 18. Look at verse 4. Paul was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath. Notice the word reasoning.

We reason. We explain. We prove or demonstrate. We persuade. We proclaim. The words used again, reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Same word. The Greek word is *petho*. In the passive form, it means to be persuaded, to be induced, to believe. There are other definitions, like listen to, yield to, trust, have confidence.

[20:03] This most likely means here, from the context, to be persuaded, to be induced to believe. So what do we mean by that? How are we able to persuade or convince people toward Jesus Christ?

Well, humanly speaking, let's just talk humanly speaking now. This is what we're aiming for. We want to bring the truth of God, to bear upon their conscience.

We want to bring the gospel, to bear upon their conscience. Realizing that, divinely speaking, or holistically speaking, W-H-O-L, God's the one who opens the heart, right?

Because look, you're in chapter 17, look in chapter 16 of Acts, Acts chapter 16, look at verse 14. Acts 16, 14, a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God was listening, and what happens?

And the Lord, opened her heart, to respond to this thing, spoken by Paul. So we know God's the one, who's opening the heart. Divinely speaking, that's what God's going to do.

[21:22] So this is where I come to this, statement here. There's nothing we can say, that will ultimately convince, or persuade a person, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet God's spirit, doesn't work in a vacuum. He's the spirit of truth. The spirit of truth, uses the word of truth, to penetrate the heart, which is void of truth.

Or really void of understanding the truth, spoken to him, or spoken to her. Did I put this up here? Yeah.

You're in Acts. Go to Romans. 1 Corinthians. 2 Corinthians. If you want to turn there, you can. 2 Corinthians chapter 4.

2 Corinthians 4. Actually, starting in verse 1. Paul speaking, notice what he says. Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we receive mercy, we don't lose heart.

[22:30] We have renounced the things hidden, because of shame. Not walking in craftiness, or adulterating the word of God. So what do we do? By the manifestation of truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God.

Look at verse 3. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, and whose case, the God of this world, has blinded the minds, of the unbelieving.

From what? That they might not see, the light, of the gospel, of the glory, of Christ, who is the image of God. They are blinded to it.

There is nothing that you can say, ultimately say, that can convince, or persuade them. But look at verse 5. We don't preach ourselves. We preach Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as slaves for Jesus' sake.

And then what does God do? Verse 6. For God, who said, light shall shine out of darkness, is the one, who has shown in our hearts, to give the lights, of the knowledge, of the glory of God, in the face of Christ.

[23:40] God's the one, as he said in Genesis, let there be, light. God's the one, who's going to say to this person, who's blinded, by the God of this world, who's blinded, by the evil one, to the gospel of Christ, God is going to say, let there be, light.

That's what he does. Have people been chosen for salvation? Absolutely. Is God the only one, who can open their heart?

Absolutely. But by what means, does God use, to open that person's heart? Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Opening your mouth, and proclaiming the gospel.

That's what you're meant to do. The means that God uses, for you to bring, for you, for this person to bring about, a conversion of their soul, is you proclaiming the gospel.

You reasoning. You explaining. You demonstrating. You proclaiming. You persuading. That's what God uses. That's the means that he uses.

[24:47] Good question. Question number three. What if someone doesn't want us, to speak the gospel to them? What do we do? Hopefully you actually, have spoken the gospel to them.

Or at least have said something, for them to actually say, don't talk to me about that. So what do you do, if someone says, you know, I don't want to talk about that. Don't talk about that.

We respect their wishes. Let them bring it up. Now as conversation comes up, making reference to spiritual things, as truthfully as you can, that's what you do.

Not to push buttons. Not to antagonize. But to be honest with them. I've told you about, a friend that I have up in Jerome. First time, first or second time that I met him.

We're talking about spiritual things. I start bringing in the gospel. Talking about the gospel. And he kind of went, I said, are you getting uncomfortable? He said, yeah, kind of. I said, do you want, do you not want to talk about this anymore?

[25:54] No, I don't want to talk about it anymore. I said, okay. I have not brought it up to him. He keeps bringing it up. He keeps asking me about that. I have not said, I have not brought it up with him, not at all.

He keeps bringing certain things up, and he starts asking me questions. He's actually the same guy I spoke about it last week. He was the eagerness type response. Where he was just asking me different questions, and listening and engaging with me the previous Friday.

He's a dear friend, I think, when he was that way. But anyways, all that to say, we don't want to talk about it, so I say antagonize people. So we respect their wishes as best as we can.

But as things come up, take the opportunity. Let's not push buttons. Question number four. You mentioned you don't like handing out tracts.

What do you mean? I just don't like using tracts because it could come across impersonal. I didn't say it's wrong. You're not a sinner because you use tracts.

[26:56] It's okay. You don't have to go to, you know, confess, you know, or something like that because you're using tracts. No. It's just not my thing. I would rather have a conversation with people about the gospel.

I think it's more effective to build a gospel relationship with somebody. But that's just my thing. Question number five. Another good question.

To what degree do we engage with the culture? As I mentioned, when we say engage, we establish a meaningful contact or connection with the unsaved, with the gospel.

To what degree? How far do you go? How far do you incarnate? How far do you engage? How far do you try to establish a connection with them?

I have two responses I split up into three different parts. First, to what degree? Only in so far that you do not sin. It'll be kind of comical here, but, yeah, I'm going to go engage with the culture.

[28:03] Let me have another one of those beers. Yeah, bring it on. You're getting drunk with the unsaved. Yeah, no. I'm going to go get high with somebody.

Yeah, no. Now you're sinning. So you're drinking, buddy. Now you're sinning.

You see what I mean? So now you're pushing the envelope. I'm going to go get drunk with the unsaved so I can really engage with the culture. No. I'm going to go get high with the unsaved so I really get, no, you're sinning now. So to what degree?

Only in so far that we do not sin. Second, only in so far that you do not do something to violate your own conscience. You're in 2 Corinthians or, if you're in 2 Corinthians, go back to Romans.

If you're in Acts, go forward to Romans. Romans chapter 14. Romans chapter 14, look at verse 21. Romans 14, 21. What do I mean by that?

[29:10] Only in so far that you do not do something to violate your own conscience. Romans 14, look at verse 21. It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything by which your brother stumbles.

The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself and what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats because his eating is not from faith.

And here it is. And whatever is not from faith is sin. What's Paul talking about here in Romans chapter 14? There was people that had a struggle with eating meat that's been like this.

Should they eat that or should they not eat that? Certain days were important. We should keep these days and keep this day and do this. Others are like, eh, it's not a big deal. Some people say, you know, we shouldn't eat that meat because of sacrifice to idols and that's really bad.

And they're like, eh, it's just meat. I mean, for crying out loud, it's half the price. Let's get it. Let's cook it up on the grill. Another shrimp on the barbecue type thing. You know, that was the idea. That was how it was going on.

[30 : 16] So Paul's point here is if you are doing something and it's violating your conscience, don't do it. If you feel like it'd be wrong for you to do this, to engage with that culture by doing such and such a thing, and you know what, I don't think that that's right for me to do that, then don't do it.

For instance, here's an example. If you come up to Jerome and you struggle with going inside the spirit room to drink a soda with somebody, then don't do it.

If that's going to violate your conscience, don't do that. If it's going to violate your conscience to even drink a beer with somebody, don't do that. Don't violate your conscience. Whatever you do, you must do from faith because if you're not doing it from faith, what is it?

Sin. Because you're violating your conscience. Notice what he says in verse 22. The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy as he who does not condemn himself from what he approves.

You know, I just think, God, I'm just, I just struggle with that. I can't do that. Don't do it then. So how far do you engage with the culture? Only so far you don't sin.

[31 : 31] I'm going to get high. No. Now you're sinning. Second, only so far you don't violate your own conscience. And here's the third part. Only so far you don't violate your own conscience or offend a brother or sister in Christ.

I want to go to Romans 14. I want to read verses 13 through 19 then we'll go to 1 Corinthians chapter 8. You're in Romans 14.

Look at verse 13. Therefore, let us not judge one another anymore. We'll rather determine this not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

I know, here's Paul speaking, I'm, and I'm convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself. He's like, nothing's unclean. I can eat it. Boom. I'm good with it.

But notice he says, but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it's unclean. For if because of food your brother's hurt or offended, you are no longer walking according to love.

[32 : 34] Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. He's not talking about the world. He's talking about your brother or sister in Christ. That's the one for whom Christ died.

Verse 16. Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil. Look, the kingdom of heaven is not eating and drinking.

It's righteousness, peace, it's joy in the spirit. In other words, don't make it an issue, man. If it's going to offend somebody, let it go. Verse 18. For he who in this way serves Christ, that is acceptable to God and approved by men.

That's true worship. 19. So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another. If you're going to do something, you're engaging in the culture, but that's going to offend a brother or sister in Christ, don't do that.

If it has the potential of offending a brother or sister in Christ, don't do that. You're in Romans, go to 1 Corinthians. I'll show you even more. Next book over, Romans, 1 Corinthians, go to chapter 8.

[33 : 42] Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8. 1 Corinthians chapter 8.

Did I say Romans the first time? I did? Stupid. 1 Corinthians chapter 8. Y'all there? Okay. Verse 1.

Concerning things sacrificed to idols, know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he is not yet known as he ought to know.

But if anyone loves God, he is known by him. Therefore, concerning the eating of things, sacrifice idols. We know there is no such thing as an idol in the world and that there is no God but one.

Even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as in need, there are many gods and many lords. Yet for us, there is one God, the Father. From whom are all things and we are for him.

[34 : 44] And one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we are through him. Amen. Verse 7. However, not all of you have this knowledge.

But some, being accustomed to the idol until now, they eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol and their conscience is weak and it's defiled. Verse 8. But food will not commend us to God or neither

the worse if we do not eat nor the better if we do eat.

But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow becomes a stumbling block to the weak. Stop there. So his point is you have this liberty, you see this meat, it's fine, there's nothing wrong with it, you're going to consume it but this person who's weak, it offends them, don't do it.

Verse 10. If someone sees you of knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience if he's weak be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?

For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died. Aha! Remember when Paul said that in Romans chapter 14? Verse 12. And thus by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when he is weak, you sin against Christ.

[36:01] So, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again that I might not cause my brother to stumble. What's his point? We engage with the culture.

Establish a meaningful contact and connection with the uns incarnate yourself. But be careful. Only insofar as we're not sinning, only insofar that you're not offending or violating your own conscience, and only insofar as you're not offending somebody else, another brother or sister in Christ.

I won't say that. So, hopefully that helps you to understand, we're talking about engaging in the culture, what does that mean? And what are the principles by which you can guide yourself by? question six. Where is the line drawn in engaging the culture in light of many Christians seeking to remove themselves from secular workplace, public schools, events for gatherings, etc.?

Do we become like the Amish or the Mennonites? questions? This question is the very opposite direction of the other question. The first, question seven was, how far do we engage in the culture?

[37:21] This question is, how far do we pull back? Right? Right? The principle remains the same. But maybe this might help even more so.

You're in 1 Corinthians, go back a book to Romans, go back to Romans 14, because this, Romans 14 deals with this as well. for the question number five was, how far do we engage in the culture? How far do we go? This question in question six is, how far should we pull back and how to respond to those people? Romans chapter 14, look at verse one. Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.

One man has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables. Let not him who eats regards with contempt him who does not eat. Let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him.

Notice what he's doing here. For this person, I'm going to engage in the culture, I'm fine, it's okay, but I have to be careful with this guy who might be offended. Ah, but you might say, you know what?

[38:37] You shouldn't be doing that, you shouldn't be doing that, I'm going to do this, I'm going to do this. Why are you judging that guy? You shut your mouth. In other words, that's what he's saying. You stop judging this guy, well you shouldn't do this, and you shouldn't do that, blah, blah, blah, you're engaging too much in culture.

No, he just doesn't have a struggle with that like you do. So you don't judge him saying, you're in sin. So it goes both ways. This is, don't offend your brother or sister.

This is, don't judge them or pass judgment upon them. Did I put that up on the screen? Oh yeah, Romans 14, 1-4. Verse 4, Who are you to judge the servant of another?

To his own master he stands or falls, and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

Verse 5, One man regards this day, another does not have any problem with any of the days. That's the whole point he's trying to make.

So this side, be careful not to offend. But the other side, be careful not to pass judgment. So you shouldn't be doing this, you shouldn't be, and checking off your little list, I'm a really good Christian because I don't do this, I don't do this, I don't do this, what's your problem, clown?

[39:48] You're passing judgment on that person. Let all things be done in love. Knowledge puffs up, but what edifies? Love. That edifies. Question 7.

What do you mean that, when I said, quote, unless God changes the heart or presupposition of the unsaved, a proper knowledge, understanding, and embracing of the good news of Jesus Christ is practically impossible.

What I mean by practically is realistically speaking. In other words, it's virtually, realistically speaking, impossible without God's Spirit working in the heart of the unsaved for that person to come to Jesus Christ.

You're in Romans, right? So go back to Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8, start in verse 5. Romans chapter 8, verse 5.

Romans chapter 8, verse 5, Paul says, for those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh. But those who are according to the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For the mindset on the flesh is death, but the mindset on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mindset on the flesh is hostile toward God.

[41:09] For it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so. And those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Someone who's unsaved, someone who has not responded to Christ, someone who has not turned from their sin and put their trust in Jesus Christ, someone who's not a disciple of Jesus, they are God's enemy.

They hate God. They're hostile towards God. Remember, they have this knowledge, but they suppress it. They have this knowledge, they suppress it and exchange it. Why? Because as soon as they acknowledge the one true God, the knowledge that they have, then they realize they must become accountable to Him.

No way. People want to become autonomous from God as much as they can. Maybe you're here, you want to become autonomous from God. Maybe you're here, you're not a follower of Jesus Christ.

Maybe you're here, you're not one of His disciples. You are hostile towards God. You're His enemy. He's your enemy. He doesn't have to be. If you turn from your sin and put your trust in Jesus Christ, God has His arms open wide to anybody who turns from their sin and puts their trust in Jesus.

The Father sent Jesus who lived, who died, and who rose from the dead. Repent and trust in Jesus alone and you'll be saved. That's the gospel. God is gracious and compassionate and forgiving.

[42:36] And He can do that with you. So that's what I mean by this question about how it's practically impossible, realistically impossible.

And one more question, last one. Oh, I put Romans 8, 5, 8. Sorry. Romans 8, 5, 3, 8. What's for that one? Last question. How does one shift a nothing conversation to a spiritual needs conversation? You're talking about the weather, football game, blah, blah, blah. How do you turn that conversation about nothing to a conversation about something?

How do you turn a conversation about has nothing to do with nothing to a conversation about their spiritual need? It really depends. It depends on the conversation, who it is, where they're from, how long you've known them, etc.

It really depends. For some people, you know how far you can push. You know if you say this or that, you're going to be pushing their buttons.

[43:45] so be careful. For others, you're still trying to get to know them, their likes, their dislikes, their hobbies, what they enjoy, what they don't enjoy. I told you a couple weeks ago, a friend of mine and Jerome gave up drinking.

He's got cold turkey. He's done. So you're talking to me about this. I'm thinking, how in the world am I going to pull this gospel into this? We start about satisfaction, does it satisfy?

And I use that to pull in the fact of, and it's so true, we look for different things to satisfy ourselves, and yet, we don't realize that the one who can satisfy us most is the one who's created us, because he's created us to be worshippers of him.

So what you do is, it depends on the conversation, and the thing that I can encourage you to do is pray as you're having a conversation with somebody, pray and say, God, how in the world am I going to pull this into the gospel?

And the spirit of God will put words into your head and things into your mind which you can bring that about. You just have to trust, know the gospel, and trust that God's going to answer your prayer.

[44:59] So, it just depends. It really depends on the situation of the person and all that. You can't really, cookie cut everything like that. It doesn't work that way. You know that. We have different relationships with other people here and there.

That's how it works. Same thing with the gospel. So, at the end of the day, the three practical applications, the same things we looked at last week.

Humans are totally unable to embrace the truth of Christianity. Two, we must give a consistent, gracious proclamation of the gospel. Three, as we speak the gospel, we firmly rely on God's grace.

We tenaciously hold to God's grace. I mean, praise God, He's shown us grace, right? There's nothing that I did to get this. There's nothing you did to get this. God was so gracious to you. Bringing that person or persons to speak the gospel into your life, and He opened your heart and you saw the truth and you believed.

[46:07] God will use you in the same way. You just speak the gospel and speak about God's grace that's given to sinners in Jesus Christ and then let God do the rest.

So I'll put, keep those on the screen. Let me take a moment and pray before I have a moment of silence. We thank you, Father, that you've been so kind and gracious to us. You know we're sinners. We need your constant compassionate mercy and we thank you you give it to us in Jesus Christ.

And may this grace that you've shown to us, this mercy, may it motivate us and drive us realizing that we are unable to embrace you and yet you use us as the means to speak this gospel and let us hold firmly to your grace, your awesome power where you say, let there be light.

So let's take a few moments and just ponder and think what we've seen in our Q&A; this morning and then we'll do our time of giving in our last two songs in prayer.