

Culture Wars #1 **Engaging the Culture**

Word

Scripture Reference

Acts 17:16-34

Discussion Questions

1. Culture is a way of thinking, living or behaving that defines a group of people. It is like the air we breathe; we don't consciously think of it. We only think about it when we are exposed to a different cultural practice. Was there a time in your life when you were shocked by a different culture? Share your experience with the group and how you coped with it.
2. Acts 17:16-34 relates how Paul reacted to the Athenian culture, the center for Greek philosophy and education in biblical times. What disturbed Paul about Athens (v.16)? Why did it provoke the spirit within him? Does ungodliness bother you? How do you react when you see things that are definitely wrong as far as the Word of God is concerned being practiced?
3. As a follower of Jesus Christ, your response to ungodly culture should be disturbance. What are some commonly accepted practices today that should be a cause of distress to God's people? How can you emulate Paul in engaging the culture? Discuss why you should not let the world dictate the culture you live. Talk about practical examples on how you can combat the biblically wrong, worldly cultures you live in today.
4. A Christian's responsibility to culture is to engage it to transform (v. 17-18). Describe how Paul presented his message to his diverse listeners. Discuss how you can help transform the culture in your home, school, or workplace so that the common practices become glorifying to your heavenly Father and edifying to each other.
5. As Christians our expectation when engaging culture is rejection (v. 18). How did the philosophers react to Paul's thoughts? How do you respond when others don't take you or what you say very well? Do you compromise your Christian testimony, or do you show courage by walking away from a situation that displeases the Lord? Share an experience and discuss.

6. A believer needs to be prepared when confronting culture, and part of that preparation is to understand the culture (v. 19-23). Why do you think was the council of the Areopagus interested to hear what Paul had to say? What was Paul's attitude towards these people? How did Paul use his knowledge of the Athenians' "unknown god" to impart his knowledge of the true God (v. 23)? How would you prepare yourself to understand the people you are trying to reach for the Lord?
7. A believer also needs to have strong biblical knowledge to be prepared in confronting culture (v. 24-31). How did Paul describe God to his audience? How did he prove that God was not an idol (v. 29)? What incorrect beliefs do the culture you're a part of have about God? Can you explain to an unbeliever why you believe what you believe? How important is it to have correct biblical foundational beliefs in order to counter the wrong perceptions of God in your culture?
8. Describe the different responses Paul's audience had to his message (v. 32-34). What is the most encouraging response you can get from a person you are sharing the gospel with?

Walk

Unless one's worldview is filtered through a biblical grid, we cannot engage the culture. Do you know your faith enough that you can confidently depend on what the Bible says? What are you doing to wake people of today's culture to the Christian way of life?

Worship & Prayer

Pray for...

- GCCP Christians to live biblically in an ungodly and permissive culture.
- Baptismal candidates to faithfully commit to follow Christ and love His church.
- Healing for Jake Malto, FW, Segundo Yu, Anabelle Uytengsu and BF (sick and depressed due to various troubles).
- Mercy and protection for A.B. and D.O.
- Protection of the Fil-Chi community from abductions and extortions. God's peace to calm the hearts of His people.
- Two Bhutanese pastors to be cleared of all charges against them.