

Class Objective: To refine our faith and understanding by dismantling misconceptions regarding God, the Bible and the Christian life.

Class Overview

- 1. Introduce *Urban Legends of Theology* by Michael Wittmer
- 2. Clarify the meaning of the term urban legend as used in this class
- 3. Understand the degree of personal impact connected with various misconceptions
- 4. Elevate the pursuit of truth as the ultimate goal of analyzing error
- 5. Emphasize edification as the primary purpose of this study
- 6. Explore the following misconceptions in light of biblical truth:
 - a. Theology puts God in a box.
 - b. Doctrine divides. Love unites.
 - c. Jews, Christians and Muslims worship the same God.
 - d. Jesus is more loving and compassionate than the God of the Old Testament.
 - e. You shouldn't waste your life on temporal things.
 - f. My body is a temporary residence for my immortal soul.
 - g. All sin is the same before God.
 - h. You're not supposed to judge.
 - i. The safest place to be is in the center of God's will.
 - j. God won't give you more than you can handle.
 - k. Christianity is not a religion—it is a relationship.
 - l. I don't need church to have a relationship with God.

Part 1

Part 2

Notes

Review

- I. Urban legend #5: **You shouldn't waste your life on temporal things.**
 - A. Popular statements that might lead to this conclusion: (see week 1 notes)
 - B. Scripture that might lead to this conclusion: (see week 1 notes)
 - C. Biblical truths that provide theological perspective.
 - 1. God created a material world and humans with material bodies. Genesis 2:15, 16
 - 2. God cares about our material needs. Matthew 6:9-13; 6:25-33
 - 3. God intends to be glorified through the life of our material bodies. 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20
 - 4. God's redemptive plan includes the glorification and permanent existence of our present material bodies.
 - a) God's redemptive plan through Jesus, the second Adam, ultimately reverses the effects of the fall on the world and on our bodies.
 - (1) If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. Romans 8:11
 - (2) ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by

the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Philippians 3:20, 21

(3) Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3:2

(4) ⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:50-53

(5) But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 2 Peter 3:13

(6) ¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. . . . ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Revelation 21:1-4

5. Living as God's material creatures in a material world means living within a hierarchy of values.

a) But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things [food, drink, clothing] will be added to you. Matthew 6:33; Matthew 6:19-21; Colossians 3:1, 2; 1 John 2:15-17

6. Motive matters most in all our pursuits.

a) So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:22-24

7. Scripture exhorts us to give appropriate attention to temporal matters.

a) ⁹ Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰ for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, ¹¹ and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, ¹² so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one. 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

b) ⁶ Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate

us, because we were not idle when we were with you,⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.⁹ It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.¹¹ For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.¹² Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

c) ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Ephesians 4:28

8. Scripture also instructs us to give appropriate attention to eternal matters.

a) ¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:19-21

b) ¹ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. Colossians 3:1, 2

c) ²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? Matthew 16:24-26

9. The new creation work of God through Jesus gives ultimate meaning to all we do in this “temporal” world. Revelation 21:1-3

D. Important takeaways regarding the Christian understanding of the body and our temporal existence.

1. God created mankind with a material body before the fall and pronounced it good.
2. The human body is important to God.
3. We should be grateful for all the material gifts of life we receive from God.
4. We serve God through the agency of our material bodies.
5. We should be good stewards of our bodies as instruments of service to our God.

II. Urban legend #6: **My body is a temporary residence for my immortal soul.**

- A. This legend or myth implies that the body is less important than the soul.
- B. God has created human creatures with both body and soul.

1. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:28
- C. The soul and body are of equal importance to God.
1. "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Matthew 6:25
 2. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Philippians 3:20, 21
- D. Though intended to remain united in one person, soul and body are separated at death because of the fall.
1. And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." . . . Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. Luke 23:43
 2. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Philippians 1:20-24
 3. ⁶ So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:6-8
- E. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees the resurrection of our bodies and thus the reuniting of body and soul.
1. ¹ For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³ if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 1 Corinthians 5:6-8
- F. Believers will live eternally in a resurrected body united to their soul.
1. ⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:50-53