

LESSONS LEARNED FROM “A PUBLIC FAITH”

Sermon Series from 2013 by Tim Keller

Lesson 1 –

Be confident that you have the right to share your faith.

If you personally believe you have a cure, you have an obligation to talk about it.

What about the objection that Christianity is an exclusive claim? The belief that “no spiritual belief is correct” is also an exclusive claim.

Lesson 2 –

Be willing to talk about doubt – it is both a positive and a negative. Learn to be honest about it.

Key point – everyone takes a step of faith. It is a leap of faith to believe in God. It also a leap of faith to reject God.

Lesson 3 –

If talking about the existence of God, ask one of these questions to have a respectful conversation:

“How do you know whether God exists?” or

“If you say you can’t know whether there is a God or not, how do you know that?”

Lesson 4 –

If the objection is that you must keep your religion PRIVATE, ask the following:

“Do you believe in human rights and justice? How do you prove that scientifically? You can’t? It must be a belief or religion just like my belief.”

Slow it down by saying “Where do you get your moral convictions for right and wrong?”

Lesson 5 -

Tell the story of your JOURNEY of faith. Your beliefs will be accepted more if you describe the process.

Sample Dialogue:

Person: “I can’t believe in God.”

Keller: “Tell me what you don’t believe in, and tell me why it is hard to believe in God.”

Person: *describes their view of God* “I can’t believe in a God that does this”

Keller: (4/5 times) “Oh this is great! I don’t believe in that God either. The God you are talking about is not the God I believe in!”

Person: What?!?!?

LESSON 6 -

Know the basics of the faith ... there is a good summary in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

“The Test” from David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: “Are you a Christian” ... if they answer “I am trying” then they don’t understand the gospel of grace.

Lesson 7 -

Do I have to force conversations about my faith?

Remember: People are around you by divine appointment. You don’t have to force anything. They are there for you and you are there for them.

There are certain good deeds you have been uniquely formed by God to do. There are some deeds you are the best person for. Some people you need to talk to, some you need to pray for, some are just silently watching your witness of how you handle life.

Lesson 8 -

“Can you be a Christian and not take all the Bible literally?” No!

How can you say you can follow Jesus and then reject one of the main operating principles of his life?

Jesus believed in the full authority of the Bible. Let the word exhort you or argue with you.

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