

# EXTRA! Ideas for Adults – Staying True in a World Far from God– Session 1

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Date: September 3, 2023

## Develop Strong Convictions

**The Point:** Our convictions, not our circumstances, define who we are.

## Get Into the Study

*Before discussing Question #1, share the following illustration.*

Every generation brings about a change in culture. Some are positive and some can be negative.

According to a report on the Buzznet website, millennials are shaping culture in their own image. One way is by not buying products and services that were common among previous generations. As a result, certain products could be going away, and previous habits are changing. Among those things listed include-

- Cable TV is slowly on its way out, and millennials are receiving the blame. Hulu, Netflix, Amazon Prime, and other streaming services require only a subscription, internet access, and a device to watch it. The main reason millennials embrace streaming services is the freedom from the confines of wires and scheduled programming. Sixty-six percent of 25-29 -year-olds live in a completely wireless house. Home phones have been replaced by cells.
- Napkins are being replaced by paper towels. Dairy products have declined in favor of vegan/vegetarian diets. Canned tuna sales are down because millennials are concerned about the overfishing of the oceans, but also because most don't own a can opener. Cereal is an inconvenient breakfast choice because they had to clean up after eating it. Avocado toast is now the preference.
- Casual dining is being replaced by UberEATS. Fast food and soft drinks are being exchanged for healthier options. One report noted that by 2030, online food delivery will comprise ten percent of the food-services market. Bulk foods are considered a waste of money because many millennials cook only for themselves.
- In fashion, suits have been replaced by more casual clothing. Gucci and stilettos are out Crocs, slide sandals, and tennis sneakers reflect millennials' favorite styles. Thrift shops are running designer brands out of business since millennials would rather buy something they think is cool for ten dollars rather than spend hundreds of dollars on something fancy. They are saving money and simultaneously developing their own style, all at the same time. Razor sales are drastically falling. Men younger than the age of 45 have adopted a laid-back approach to shaving and it's sent the razor industry into a frenzy.

- Financially, the stock market is considered too volatile and lottery odds are stacked. Many would rather rent an apartment or a house, not only because of the rising cost of housing, but it also allows them to have mobility without having to make a huge commitment with a mortgage. Cash has been replaced by online shopping, Paypal, Apple Pay, and Google Pay. Fifty-five percent of 18–29-year-olds have at least one credit card.
- In the 1980s, more than two-thirds of people aged between 25 and 34 years old had already gotten married. More than half the people in the age range today are single. Some don't feel the need to tie the knot, while others are waiting later to get married.
- For those who do get married, many are forgoing the honeymoon and expensive diamonds, primarily for financial reasons, having to choose between housing and necessities and what is considered luxury. Because millennials are usually older and better educated when they get married, divorces are also down, falling eighteen percent between 2008 and 2016.

NOTE: If you don't have time to use the entire lists, pick the ones that would relate most to your students.

At this point, discuss Question #1.

<https://www.buzznet.com/2023/08/millennials-are-refusing-to-buy-these-items/5/?fbclid=IwAR0TgFu0236i1yzSnuZFgK05BgkVk5wGNQafcwcmq46eVUn9WvGT8MikaBY>

## Get Into the Study [Option for Adult Leader Guide]

In advance, play a [video](#) showing someone who has experienced culture shock. Then ask Question #1.

## Study the Bible

*Before discussing Question #4, share the following.*

On August 9, the New York Times shared research on the impact of social media on our beliefs. Relying on data collected from hundreds of millions of Facebook users over several months, the researchers found that the platform wielded considerable influence over what information people saw and their knowledge about news events. The Facebook algorithms also tended to provide users with information from sources they already agreed with. In other words, readers were directed to information that reflected their existing worldviews. A negative impact was that those sources could be a vehicle for sharing misinformation, if that information fed into the beliefs they already held.

Surprisingly, the biggest news came from what the studies didn't find. Despite Facebook's influence on the spread of information – and possible disinformation – there was no evidence that the platform had a significant effect on people's underlying beliefs, especially when it came to their political beliefs. Based on four major academic papers, the theory that social media content would shape people's beliefs and worldviews, often in harmful ways, found little support.

Brendan Nyhan, a lead author of one of the studies, said "The finding that has emerged is that factual information often changes people's factual views, but those changes don't always translate into different

attitudes.”

Say, “While this research focused primarily on political attitudes, do you think that social media can affect the things we believe? How can we make sure what we believe is right?”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/09/world/europe/interpreter-social-media.html>

Continue to Question #4.

*These teaching supplements were written by Lynn Riley. Lynn is retired from the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, where he served as a team member in the areas of evangelism and church health. He and his wife Cheryl live in Smyrna, TN, where they are busy spoiling their grandchildren. They are members of Rolling Hills Community Church in Nolensville, TN.*

## Additional Questions

### Ice Breaker

- What’s the biggest move you’ve made in your lifetime?
- When have you been proud to be “unashamed”?
- What are some defining characteristics of our local culture?
- When have you experienced culture shock?

### Daniel 1:3-7

- In what arenas do you find your Christian worldview challenged these days?
- What are some of the biggest expectations and pressures present in our culture today?
- What are some firm convictions that have defined your life so far?
- What are some ways we might feel like foreigners in this world?

### Daniel 1:8-13

- How do you distinguish between matters of preference and issues of faith?
- As followers of Jesus, how do we navigate the tension between standing in our convictions and not isolating ourselves from the world?
- How can Daniel’s example help us determine when to compromise and when to stand firm?
- What is the connection between God’s Word and a believer’s personal convictions?

### Daniel 1:17-19

- What helps you to stand firm for your beliefs?
- When have you been rewarded for standing up for your convictions?
- Where do you have an opportunity to serve or stand for the Lord this week?
- What truths about God from today’s session will give you confidence to live unashamed this week?

## For Those in Your Group

Send the following link to your group members as either a teaser before the group meets or as a follow-up thought:

[Is “Fitting in” Good or Bad?](#)

## Magazine Article

[That You May Know](#)