

Exposing Enemies Within the Church: A 7-Session Bible Study Series
Session 3: Situationism ~ Situation Ethics, or situationism, claims to be an ethical system,
but it actually is a system of non-ethics and emotions.

Note: This one-page teaching plan is a summary; a leader's
preparation should include studying all the material provided.

Bringing the session into focus: Are right and wrong objective (predetermined and existing outside of ourselves) or subjective (determined by each person based on his or her own circumstances and inclinations)? What a person believes about the nature of right and wrong reveals much about what he or she believes about God. Truth and love are friends, but through situationism, or situation ethics, the social justice movement pits love against truth. It therefore distorts the concepts of right and wrong, making it easy for people to follow their emotions rather than objective truth, and easy to mistake right for wrong and vice versa. You can access special resources for this Bible study session at <https://www.discoverbedrocktruth.org/00s3-resources-ewtcbs/>.

1. One dead giveaway that the social justice movement isn't really about justice is **the movement's emphasis on love as a major factor for determining right from wrong**, or what is "best" in any given situation. **This is situationism, or situation ethics.** This session warns against using situation ethics to make moral and ethical decisions. It is a foundation of sand.
2. **Use the video "Can You Be Good Without God?"** to help the members of your group understand that right and wrong cannot exist without God. Further, because right and wrong do indeed exist (and are self-evident) God exists. His existence is, in fact, self-evident.
3. Using **Item 3.1**, discuss the three basic ways of making ethical and moral choices: **legalism or foundationalism, situationism, and antinomianism.** Throughout this Bible study series, you are and will be exploring foundationalism and how to apply it. This session is about situationism and the next one is about antinomianism.
4. **What is situationism?** It is a "system" for making ethical and moral choices that relies on "love." **Use the clip of the Beatles' 1967 hit song "All You Need Is Love"** to help the members of your group understand that situationism has been around for more than 50 years. It quickly gained traction, and it has been winning people over ever since.
5. **Situationism has even invaded the church.** Using the audio **clip from Trevor Loudon**, talk about Joseph Fletcher (1905-1991). Summarize how situationism came on the scene, how it gained popularity, and why it is harmful. Explain that it is no coincidence that Fletcher became an atheist in his later years.
6. **Discuss how making "love" the standard for ethical decision-making isolates the decision-making process from an understanding of truth as objective or fixed and places it in an emotional arena.** Talk about why this is a recipe for making very bad choices. Use **Kirby Anderson's commentary** for November 25, 2022 (<https://pointofview.net/viewpoints/truth-5/>) to enhance your discussion.
7. **Explore the Scriptures** as described in the section titled "Love Is Important, But What Is Love Supposed to Look Like? Let's Look to the Scriptures First."
8. Divide your class into **three groups**. Use the case studies provided in **Item 3.2** (3 pages — one page for each group) to assist groups in exploring how situationism "works" in everyday life.
9. Read and discuss the choice **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego** faced in **Daniel 3:1-25**. If time allows, note the impact that the actions of the three had on others, including King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and as a result, everyone over whom he reigned (see vv. 26-30).
10. In conclusion, use the **quotes on integrity (Item 3.3)** to emphasize and reemphasize that right and wrong are 1) absolute, 2) intuitively understood, and 3) —refer back to the video "Can You Be Good Without God?" — evidence for God's existence. God has written the law on people's hearts (see Rom. 2:14-15).

Conclude by discussing how love and truth are not enemies, but friends. We cannot really have love without truth.