

A Year Living Biblically

Ted Talks

TED is a nonprofit devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. It started out (in 1984) as a conference bringing together people from three worlds: Technology, Entertainment, Design. The talks are available online and now cover a large variety of topics with expert speakers from all over the world.

AJ Jacobs- A year of living biblically

A.J. Jacobs's book details his year long journey to follow the many rules, guidelines, and suggestions he uncovers in the Bible. He tackles not only popular injunctions like the Ten Commandments but obscure and perplexing rules like the ban on wearing clothes made of mixed fibers and the blowing of trumpets on the start of each month. In all, more than 700 rules. Jacobs hopes that his venture into a stringent and literal biblical life will reveal the Bible's enduring truths for modern consumption as well as what might not be relevant to our 21st century life. With a mix of reverence and irreverence, humor and earnestness, Jacobs plunges us in world where the mundane can easily become a profane or sacred act. Though we may be tempted to judge and dismiss biblical literalism as bizarre and out-of-sync, Jacobs' own wonderment at life's renewed beauty and preciousness cause us to pause; maybe following the Bible to the letter helps us find the transcendent in the routines of daily life. But following the Bible to the letter also has many pitfalls. Jacobs' book is both a personal spiritual journey and an examination of religion in America today.

Jacobs is a self described reverent agnostic.

The clip you are watching

The clip is a small collection of his thoughts from his TED talk. The clip is NOT the whole talk (which can be found in its entirety on the TED website). This part of the talk deals particularly with the issues of Sanctity and Belief. In later weeks we will refer back to the clip again.

Questions to discuss

- ❖ What point do you think Jacobs is trying to make?
- ❖ What is sacredness?
- ❖ Is there such thing as something sacred without belief in God?
- ❖ Is there a value in the type of sacredness that AJ Jacobs found?
- ❖ Do you feel that you have sacredness in your own life?
- ❖ How can you cultivate sacredness in your life?