Stoa Apologetics Preparation for Monument Members

Season 22 Monument Release #2



Directions: Work through the source material in this download to help you understand this week’s selection of apologetics prompts. This release addresses approximately 5% of the total number of prompts you will need to be prepared for in your next tournament, so keep up the studying from week to week to ensure your knowledge in Apologetics. This week’s prompts are:

**Category 1: The Character and Nature of God (Part 2)**

1. What does the virgin birth of Jesus Christ mean? Why is this important?
2. What evidence is there for the existence of God in our physical universe?\*
3. What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the Messiah? Why is this important?
4. Is there historical evidence for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? Why is this important?
5. Why is it important that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man?
6. What is the fruit of the Holy Spirit? Why is this important?
7. What is the role of the Holy Spirit? Why is this important?
8. What does it mean that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?\*

\*This question is not answered at this time in the Season 22 release schedule. A worksheet is provided for you to take your own notes for preparation.

The Virgin Birth *by Luis Garcia*

What does the virgin birth of Jesus Christ mean? Why is this important?

Bible Verses

[Psalm 111:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+111%3A9&version=NIV)

[Isaiah 7:14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+7%3A14&version=NIV)

[Matthew 1:18-24](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+1%3A18-24&version=NIV)

[Luke 1:26-38](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+1%3A26-38&version=NIV)

[John 1:1-5, 14; 3:1-6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1%3A1-5%2C+14%3B+3%3A1-6&version=NIV)

[1 Corinthians 15:22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+15%3A22&version=NIV)

[2 Corinthians 5:17-19](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5%3A17-19&version=NIV)

[Galatians 4:4-6](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+4%3A4-6&version=NIV)

Quotations

“Larry King, the CNN talk show host, was once asked who he would most want to interview if he could choose anyone from all of history. He said, ‘Jesus Christ.’ The questioner said, ‘And what would you like to ask Him?’ King replied, ‘I would like to ask Him if He was indeed virgin-born. The answer to that question would define history for me.’” —from *Just Thinking*, RZIM, Winter 1998

“Mary’s virginity protected a great deal more than her own moral character, reputation, and the legitimacy of Jesus’ birth. It protected the nature of the divine Son of God… Jesus had to have one human parent or He could not have been human, and thereby a partaker of our flesh. But He also had to have divine parentage of He could not have made a sinless and perfect sacrifice on our behalf.” –John MacArthur

“The issue comes down to this: If God created the heavens and the earth and everything in them, then is it so hard to imagine he can implant life in a young virgin, or re-create that life through a resurrection?” –Mark Mittelberg

Recommendations

<http://gracequotes.org/topic/jesus_christ-birth-virgin/>

<http://gracequotes.org/topic/jesus_christ-birth-general/>

Commentary

The beauty of the Virgin birth is that it was the first miracle/sign God shows on how He is beginning to fulfill His promises and renew His relationship with humanity. However, the Virgin birth also signifies Jesus’ unique nature. He was God and man in one person, and that nature was only possible by the Holy Spirit causing this miracle in young Mary. Moreover, by both of these truths, Jesus defines history. He defines life. He defines truth. He defines salvation. The foundation to Jesus’ ministry, death, and resurrection all originate with the miracle of the Virgin Birth.

Physical Universe

What evidence is there for the existence of God in our physical universe?

This question is not answered at this time in the Season 22 release schedule. This worksheet is provided for you to take your own notes for preparation.

Bible Verses

Quotations

Recommendations

Commentary

Jesus as Messiah *by Caleb Pena*

What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the Messiah? Why is this important?

Bible Verses

[Psalm 22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+22&version=NIV)

[Isaiah 9:6-7](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+9%3A6-7&version=NIV)

[Daniel 7:13-14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Daniel+7%3A13-14&version=NIV)

[Mark 14:61-62](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+14%3A61-62&version=NIV)

[Matthew 16:16-17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+16%3A16-17&version=NIV)

[John 1:40-41](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1%3A40-41&version=NIV)

[John 4:25-26](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+4%3A25-26&version=NIV)

Quotations

“The claim that Jesus was the Messiah places Paul, of course, in conflict with those Jews, both ancient and modern, who take a different view. But it also places him in conflict with Rome—the city to which this letter was written. If Jesus was the true king, Caesar was not.” – N.T. Wright

“Most of [first century Palestine] was looking for a Messiah who would be a political revolutionary. They were looking for a king who would come in and release the nation from Roman domination. The demand for the release of Barabbas, a political zealot, instead of Christ ([Matt. 27:15–23](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%2027.15%E2%80%9323)) shows that most of Israel wanted a political savior. While these expectations were not wholly erroneous, most of the nation failed to grasp the full role of the Messiah. They failed to grasp the expectations in the prophetic writings (especially Isaiah 53) that the Messiah would not only be a political ruler but also a suffering servant.” – R.C. Sproul

Recommendations

*Messianic Prophecy* by Charles A. Briggs, DD., Hendrickson Publishers. 1988

*Messiah Prophecies Fulfilled* by D. James Kennedy

“What Does It Mean to say, ‘Jesus is the Messiah’?” by Walter Russell, *The Apologetics Study Bible*

*More than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell, Chapters 8-11

Commentary

Christians living 2000 years after Christ’s birth often have an understanding of Christ as Messiah that underappreciates the term’s 1st century Judaic context. The role of the Messiah is rich and complex. This makes sense when we realize that well over 400 Old Testament prophecies deal with this subject. Scripture doesn’t oversimplify this concept and neither should we.

Broadly speaking, the Messiah has three roles. He serves as a savior (both political and spiritual) for the nation of Israel. He is a prophet bringing the word of the Lord to His people. And he is a Suffering Servant who is martyred for his faithfulness to God’s commands.

Resurrection *by Luis Garcia*

Is there historical evidence for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? Why is this important?

Bible Verses

[Psalm16:9-11](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm16%3A9-11&version=NIV)
[Isaiah 25:8-9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+25%3A8-9&version=NIV)
[Jeremiah 32:17](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+32%3A17&version=NIV)
[Hosea 13:14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hosea+13%3A14&version=NIV)
[Matthew 12:38-42](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+12%3A38-42&version=NIV)
[John 2:13-22](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+2%3A13-22&version=NIV)
[1 Corinthians 15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+15&version=NIV)
[Revelation 1:18](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+1%3A18&version=NIV)

Quotations

“Many people have died for causes they believe in. In the 1960s many Buddhists burned themselves to death in order to bring world attention to injustices in Southeast Asia. In the early seventies a San Diego student burned himself to death protesting the Vietnam War. In September 2001 several Muslim extremists hijacked airliners and crashed them into the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon to inflict damage on a nation they consider an enemy to their religion. The apostles thought they had a good cause to die for, but they were stunned and disillusioned when that good cause died on the cross.” –Josh McDowell, *More than a Carpenter*

 “Christ never lost a battle even when He lost His life.” –William Gurnall

 “Jesus gave the greatest proof of His authority by accurately predicting His death and the time of His bodily resurrection. Of all people, the temple authorities should have been alert to His promise, but they never dreamed that it would actually come to be. They were sure it was an empty boast. The fulfillment of that prediction reveals the uniqueness of Jesus above all contenders.” –Ravi Zacharias, *Jesus among other gods*

Recommendations

<http://carm.org/dictionary-resurrection>

<http://gracequotes.org/topic/jesus_christ-resurrection/>

Commentary

Without the resurrection, Christianity is no different than any other worldview. Why? Because all of the significant figures that founded the belief systems are mere men that are now in the grave. But Christ is much different. He is not dead, but has risen and lives forever more. All the question is asking is how the resurrection is an essential pillar to what we hold true. What does it found? If the resurrection did not occur, what would crumble in our faith? What would crumble in us?

Fully man and fully God *by Luis Garcia*

Why is it important that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man?

## Bible Verses

Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Ezekiel 22; Daniel 7:13-14

Mark 15:39; Luke 22:70-71

John 1:1-5, 14, 18, 34; 8:57-58; 17:11; 20:30-31

Romans 5; 2 Corinthians 5:21

Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 2:13-14; 1 Timothy 2:5-6

## Quotation

“[I]f Christ is not both man and God, He cannot be our Mediator. He had to be one of the human race, in order to be able to represent sinners...and be a perfect example to His followers...

Moreover, it was necessary that He should be very God, in order that He might bring a perfect sacrifice of infinite value...so as to deliver others from the curse of the law, and might be able to apply the fruits of His redemptive work.” - Louis Berkhof, *Manual of Christian Doctrine*

## Recommendations

<http://thegracetabernacle.org/quotes/Jesus_Christ-Birth-Incarnation.htm>

## Commentary

Jesus’ purpose in coming to the world is founded in the concept that He is both man and God. Redemption hangs on the fact that this man was a man that lived a sinless life and He was also God to bridge the gap sin had divided. The purpose of mediator is the ability to represent and connect both parties. Jesus fulfills exactly that.

Now consider on a broader spectrum of whether or not Jesus was both man and God. If He lacked one of these characteristics, His whole story would be shot to oblivion. Everything about Him hinges on His identity. Hence, His identity was and is the most disputed part of Him because it is the crux of all Christianity. If this man really was God incarnate, then history is defined. Life is defined. Truth is defined. Faith is defined. Man is really found sinful before a Holy God, but is now offered grace and mercy by the justice executed on His Son.

In approaching this topic, break it down into its three elements: Jesus—the Son of Man, Jesus—the Son of God, and the Centrality of it to Him and the Christian Faith. It may sound simple at first glance, but do not lose sight of its profound nature. Who you are, how you live, what you believe, and why you believe, all is defined on who you believe is Jesus Christ.

Do you believe He was an actual man that lived? And do you believe that He is more than a mere man, more than a great moral teacher—but that He was indeed God in flesh?

Holy Spirit (Fruit) *by Alisa Stringer*

What is the fruit of the Holy Spirit? Why is this important?

Bible Verses

Genesis 1:1-2

Isaiah 11:2

Psalm 139:7-12

John 16:7-15

Acts 1:1-11

Romans 5:3-5

1 Corinthians 2:14

Galatian 5:16-25

Ephesians 4:4-7

Quotations

“Without the Spirit we can neither love God nor keep His commandments.” – St. Augustine[[1]](#footnote-1)

“The Christian’s life in all its aspects—intellectual and ethical, devotional and relational, upsurging in worship and outgoing in witness—is supernatural; only the Spirit can initiate and sustain it. So apart from him, not only will there be no lively believers and no lively congregations, there will be no believers and no congregations at all.” – J. I. Packer[[2]](#footnote-2)

“Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.” – (hymn by) Fanny Crosby[[3]](#footnote-3)

Recommendations

Mere Christianity Book IV by C S Lewis[[4]](#footnote-4)

While Lewis’ view on the Holy Spirit is a bit unorthodox, it is still fascinating and important material for any apologist attempting to understand modern Christian belief systems. C S Lewis draws on the common understanding that “God is love,” to argue that the Holy Spirit is the manifestation of love between the Father and the Son.

Commentary

In a world that champions rationality and laughs at devout spirituality, it may be easy to ignore the Holy Spirit as an equal in the Trinity. When we think of the Old Testament God, we tend to imagine God in His role as God the Father, and when we think of the New Testament, we think of God the Son. It is important that we acknowledge the Holy Spirit as an essential part in the Trinity, worthy of acknowledgement and praise.

According to the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Theology[[5]](#footnote-5), the term that we translate as the “Spirit” can literally be understood as spirit, wind, or breath. The word can also be used in the context of presence, life, and disposition. In addition to knowing the connotations of the term itself, diligent readers should also be familiar with the roles and titles that are ascribed to the Spirit. Among the many names for God used throughout Scripture, there are many that seem to specifically refer to the Holy Ghost. He is known as the author of the Scriptures, as Peter states in 2 Peter 1:21 that, “men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.’ John calls the spirit our Helper and Comforter, as seen in John 14:16-17, where Christ says, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”

Many theologians claim that the Holy Spirit is the only reason that Christians are able to live in faith and acknowledge God with their lives. St. Augustine wrote that it is only through the Spirit’s guidance that we are able to love God. While no person is perfect, Christian or otherwise, any good works from a Christian can, and should, be attributed to the Spirits work in us. In essence, the Holy Spirit is the presence of God Himself in individuals and groups of Christians, here to guide and inspire us in His will.

Holy Spirit (Role)

What is the role of the Holy Spirit? Why is this important?

Much of the same reasoning can be used from the previous prompt. Use the spaces below to fill out more specific verses, quotations, recommendations and commentary. Consider submitting your work to Monument for publication in Season 23.

Bible Verses

Quotations

Recommendations

Commentary

Temple of the Holy Spirit

What does it mean that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?

This question is not answered at this time in the Season 22 release schedule. This worksheet is provided for you to take your own notes for preparation.

Bible Verses

Quotations

Recommendations

Commentary

1. Augustine, St. Augustine: Homilies on the Gospel of John ; Homilies on the First Epistle of John ; Soliloquies. Grand Rapids, Mich: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2003. Internet resource. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Packer, J I. Keep in Step with the Spirit: Finding Fullness in Our Walk with God. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Terry, Lindsay. Heart-warming Hymn Stories. Murfreesboro, Tenn: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 2003. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Lewis, C S. Mere Christianity. 2017. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Balentine, Samuel E. The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Theology. 2015. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)