NCFCA Apologetics Preparation for Monument Members

Season 22 Monument Release #10



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:

APPLICATION QUESTIONS (PART 2 OF 4)

6. Does God care if I am involved in a local church as long as I pray and read my Bible?

7. Respond to the common phrase, "You do you."\*

8. Should I keep a commitment if I'm unhappy?\*

9. Should Christians stand for love or truth in the public square?\*

10. Respond to the friend who says, "I pray and hear nothing. I must be doing something wrong."

11. Respond to a common perception that Christianity is responsible for oppression and injustice.

\*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.

For a list of all the prompts for the year and all other downloads for NCFCA apologetics, visit your download page at <https://club.monumentmembers.com/ncfca-apologetics/download-category/ncfca-apologetics>.

The Church *by Luis Garcia*

Does God care if I am involved in a local church as long as I pray and read my Bible?

***NOTE: This is the same prompt to the question posted on October 18, 2021, “What is the church and why is it significant?”***

Bible Verses

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Matthew 28:19-20

Acts

Romans 12

1 Corinthians 12-15

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Ephesians 4

Hebrews 10:23-25

Quotations

“People who were not Christians themselves helped me to Christianity. But usually it is those who know Him that bring Him to t’other. That is why the Church, the whole body of Christians showing Him to one another, is so important. You might say that when two Christians are following Christ together there is not twice as much Christianity as when they are apart, but sixteen times as much.” –C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Recommendations

<http://carm.org/questions/about-church/what-purpose-church>

<http://thegracetabernacle.org/quotes/Church-Purpose.htm>

*Radical* by David Platt

*Radical Together* by David Platt

*Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever

Commentary

The Book of Acts is an amazing display of what it means to be a part of the congregation, what the early church looked like, and really they are the model of what it means to be the body of Christ. The purpose of the Church in its most concise form is Jesus. We are to magnify His Name in fellowship, lifestyle, worship, evangelism, teaching, serving, and discipleship. The CARM article in the recommendations thoroughly goes over the purposes of the church and include Scripture to support their points. The above passages I have included are only a few general references because they are too many to list.

In breaking this down, I would address the following issues:

* What is the church? Where did it originate?
* What is its purpose? Are we exemplifying that purpose in today’s church?
* Why should we care?

I would encourage you to make this card a challenge in urging yourself and fellow brethren to reevaluate what we consider is the church and how are we to live in community. We need to revive the family of God as Scripture prescribes. Only then can we become that unstoppable force to spread the glory and gospel of Jesus. However, the primary audience I would focus on it the perception of church to the secular world. Think about the questions they ask. Focus on these and bring the beauty of the gospel and power of God’s Word.

* Why should I go to church?
* What’s the point of the meeting? A social club?
* How can I go if the place is all hypocrites acting like they are righteous when we all know what happens when they drive out of the parking lot?
* How can I go if I feel so judged?
* I worship God in my own way. Why do I need organized religion?

You Do You

Respond to the common phrase, "You do you."

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

Happiness

Should I keep a commitment if I'm unhappy?

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

Love vs Truth

Should Christians stand for love or truth in the public square?

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

Purpose of Prayer *by Luis Garcia*

What is prayer and why is it significant?

***NOTE: This is the same prompt to the question posted on October 18, 2021, “What is prayer and why is it significant?”***

## Bible Verses

Psalm 102:17

Proverbs 15:29

Matthew 6:5-15; 26:41

Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-14; 22:39-46

Romans 8:26-28

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Hebrews 4:14-16

James 5:13-18

## Quotations

“The objective of prayer is to get our will in alignment with God's will. Prayer is not trying to align God's will with ours; prayer is aligning our will with His. So the thing we need to ask ourselves is, "Is this prayer according to the will of God?" And how would we know that? Through careful study of Scripture.” –Greg Laurie, Daily Devotion *Effective Prayer*

“No one is a firmer believer in the power of prayer than the Devil; not because he practices it, but because he suffers from it.” –Guy H. King

## Recommendations

<http://thegracetabernacle.org/quotes/Prayer-Purpose.htm> (This has too many good quotes!)

*With Christ in the School of Prayer* by Andrew Murray

## Commentary

Prayer is a part of the weaponry we carry as described in Ephesians 6. It is our direct communication to God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Without it, we lose half of our relationship with God. For our relationship is built on Scripture and Prayer, founded and mediated on Jesus' Ministry and Blood, filled with the Holy Spirit, and exercised in obedience to our Abba.

Prayer has multiple purposes, but if it could be summed up, I think it would be, as Greg Laurie points out, to align oneself with the will of God. There is profound wisdom in that, and I don't even fully understand it. Prayer is mind-boggling. God's children are given direct access to Throne of God. We can come boldly to Him to intercede for others, praise and hallow His Name, open ourselves to pour out our struggles, express our passions, simply chat, come for our daily needs, plead for strength in time of trouble, find refuge, fellowship with Him, seek forgiveness, ask for His blessings, hear His voice, offer and surrender Him our everything, give Him the glory, and align our hearts with His. Prayer truly is an effective tool and weapon for the children of God.

Oppression and Injustice *by Maggie Topper*

Respond to a common perception that Christianity is responsible for oppression and injustice.

Bible Verses

[Hebrews 8:12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+8%3A12&version=NIV)

[1 John 1:9](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+1%3A9&version=NIV)

[Titus 3:5](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Titus+3%3A5&version=NIV)

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

[Proverbs 21:15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+21%3A15&version=NIV)

[Isaiah 30:18](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+30%3A18&version=NIV)

Quotations

“A God who could pardon without justice might one of these days condemn without reason.” - Charles Spurgeon

“Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that ‘the just shall live by his faith.’ Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise.” – Martin Luther

“The good news is that God himself has decreed a way to satisfy the demands of His justice without condemning the whole human race. Hell is one way to settle accounts with sinners and uphold his justice. But there is another way. The wisdom of God has ordained a way for the love of God to deliver us from the wrath of God without compromising the justice of God. And what is this wisdom? The death of the Son of God for sinners!” – John Piper

“We read you best in Him who came to bear for us the cross of shame; sent by the Father from on high, our life to live, our death to die.” – Hymn, “O Love of God”

Recommendations

<http://www.monergism.com/unfailing-mercy-god>

<http://www.reasonablefaith.org/a-question-of-justice>

<http://www.gotquestions.org/mercy-justice.html>

Commentary

This question was originally published as “How can God be both merciful and just?”

Mercy and justice are two ideas that seem contradictory. To embrace one is to exclude the other: justice demands punishing wrongdoing and mercy requires pardoning wrongdoing. In a court of law, when a case is presented before a judge, he is supposed to hear the evidence and mete out what he determines by the law to be just and right. If a man has committed a crime that requires a $1,000 fine to be paid, in order to rule with justice the judge must rule that he pay the fine. Mercy cannot be shown, pardon cannot be given, if justice is to be held up perfectly. How can mercy and justice ever work in harmony in our world? It just doesn’t seem possible.

We face the same confusing question when it comes to salvation, and God’s nature. Scripture very clearly teaches that God is a just judge, and He will be the one to right all wrongs. It also teaches us that God is abounding with a mercy available to each person individually. In Scripture, we learn that God demands complete and total purity from every human being. This is because we were designed to bear His perfect image and any sin renders us unfit to fulfill our design. We cannot come before God’s presence or exist with Him eternally if we have even the tiniest fraction of sin’s taint within us, for God should not and will not tolerate sin. The prescribed punishment for sin is death. In order for God to show justice to wrongdoers, then, all those who sin must face that punishment. The Bible also tells us that the whole of mankind is riddled with sin. There is not a single one of us who can truthfully say, “I have never sinned.” If this is true, then, all of humanity must face death, for all have sinned. Yet, the whole Bible testifies to God’s plan of redemption! It tells us that if we simply come to him with a sincerely repentant and contrite heart, then He will show us mercy. It tells that His mercies are new every morning, and they *never* come to an end. It tells us that God is *rich* with mercy! How could God forgive the sins of humanity and be merciful if justice demands their death? Wouldn’t one of these attributes of God’s nature have to be sacrificed in order for the other to be maintained? It would seem so, until you dig a little bit deeper and begin to understand the immense wisdom of God’s plan for salvation. He has created a way to be both completely merciful and completely just. The cross of Christ.

When God sent His son to die the most excruciatingly painful death ever conjured up by man, Jesus Christ’s death on the cross, it was the one point in history where it has been said that justice and mercy kissed. Jesus Christ took the punishment for sin that humanity deserved, and He paid for it Himself, so that mercy might be shown to us. Because He was God incarnate, Jesus was the only man to ever walk this worth in total sinlessness. He was the only man who didn’t deserve punishment, and yet the very man who bore it. He bore all our sins on that cross. He took on the wrath of God for the sins of the world. Therefore, God could mete out His justice—the punishment for sin was paid. The Father could also show mercy to those who saw that great sacrifice and repented of their sins. He can be both fully just and fully merciful because of what Jesus did for us. Hallelujah!

Now all of the above will give you a grasp on the basic answer to this question. If you’re looking for a way to address some more “complexities” in the topic, like the Stoa ballot looks for, then there are several options.

One issue intricately connected with the question that people will take up is the question of how was God merciful and just eternally? Sure, Christ’s death makes it possible for God to show mercy to everyone that came after His death, but how could God have been merciful *before* Christ died? The Word of God is very clear that God is unchanging, and His attributes have been completely part of His nature for all eternity. God didn’t just start being merciful after Christ died two thousand years ago. He has both been a justly judging God, and shown that abundant mercy to people throughout the history of the earth. In the Old Testament, there are many passages where God offers mercy to people as long as they seek Him with a sincerely contrite spirit, broken over their sin. The answer to the “how” here is still Christ. Paul constantly emphasizes that Abraham’s faith was accounted to him as righteousness. What did Abraham have faith in? Abraham, and the many other people in the Old Testament admired for their faith, looked to the cross. They looked to the Messiah who was promised to come. They had faith in the Messiah who *would* come to pay for their sins. Because God is eternal and time is not relevant to Him, Christ’s sacrifice at Calvary covered all of history in God’s eyes. Anyone who had a repentant heart and faith in the Messiah, whether they came before or after that event in history, could reap the benefits.