

GOD IS _____

Part 21: God is Corrupt?

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Christianity has (by certain people) been used throughout history as an excuse for some of the most brutal, heartless, and senseless atrocities known to man. The historical examples are not difficult to recall: the Crusades; the Inquisition; the witch burnings; the Holocaust... I did not see much in Christianity that I considered to be worth the having. - Ken Schei, Atheist

With or without religion, you would have good people doing good things and evil people doing evil things. But for good people to do evil things, that takes religion.
- Steve Weinberg, Nobel Prize Winner

The place of agreement is the place of power.

Three Powerful Words: Can we agree?

Can we agree that...

- The Church has done a poor job of engaging the world in meaningful dialogue?
- There is no defending sinful action done in the name of God?
- Defending sin shows a profound lack of ownership and responsibility?
- Humans are often the poorest example of God's heart?
- Not everything done in the name of God has anything to do with God at all?
- Jesus had something to say about those who carry out evil in his name?

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

Can we agree that...

- There has been good fruit that came from people acting in the name of God?
- The answer to both nominalism and fanaticism is more of Jesus?
- The answer to both extremes is not simply moving to the middle but instead living out the call and character of Jesus?

Isaiah 58:1-9

“Shout it aloud, do not hold back.

Raise your voice like a trumpet.

Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.

²For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God.

They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them.

³“Why have we fasted,” they say, “and you have not seen it?”

Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?”

“Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.

⁴Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists.

You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

⁵Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves?

Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?

Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

⁷Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

⁸Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

⁹Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream. –Amos 5:24

God is justly benevolent.

Small Group Questions

- 1) Have you ever encountered this type of conversation? Does this type of frank conversation energize you or make you uncomfortable?
- 2) What is your thought process in dealing with Christianity’s dark past? (for example, The Crusades, The Inquisition, or slavery)
- 3) Read the Isaiah passage aloud. What is God’s call for his people to pursue justice? How have you lived that out in the past week?
- 4) Where are you on the scale of nominalism versus fanaticism? Can we agree that the answer is not simply being in the middle?
- 5) How can you use the phrase “can we agree” in dealing with people who are far from God? On what other points do you think we could agree?
- 6) What do you need prayer for today and this week?

OUR MISSION | To create an authentic Christian community that effectively reaches out to unchurched people in love, acceptance and forgiveness so that they may experience the joy of salvation and a purposeful life of discipleship.