

F.A.Q. - Week 1

## 1. Do animals go to Heaven?

First of all, animals and humans are not created equal. Humans have dominion or rule over animals.

### Genesis 1:26

**26** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Humans bear the likeness and image of God, animals do not. There is no indication that Jesus died for animals, only that he died for the sin of man. However, the Bible does indicate that there are animals in Heaven.

### Isaiah 65:17, 25

**17** For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

**25** The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

Also, John's vision of Heaven included Jesus and Heaven's armies "riding on white horses" in Revelation 19:14.

I can't say whether our pets will be there or not. For that, we will have to wait and see.

## 2. Is inspirational music okay to listen to even though it's not christian?

I would say, yes. But there must be a line.

Some people would say that we should only listen to music that glorifies God and is used for worship, but that is not biblically accurate. *Most* music in scripture was used as worship, but not all. For example, when Saul was tormented by evil spirits, he called on David to play the harp in order to soothe him (1 Samuel 16:14-23). The Israelites used musical instruments to warn of danger (Nehemiah 4:20), and to surprise their enemies (Judges 7:16-22). So although the primary purpose of music and instruments in the Bible is worship, the Bible definitely allows for other uses of music.

If we were to say NO to all secular music, then Mozart and Beethoven would be out. However, we must be careful where we draw our lines. Sometimes a song can sound "inspirational", but when you do a little digging, you realize that it is promoting

worldliness and things against God's Word. For example, Katy Perry's "Firework" sounds quite inspirational when you first listen to it, but if you watch the video, you quickly realize that it is promoting, among other things, gays and lesbians coming out of the closet.

Songs that openly, or even subtly, promote sin are dangerous. So many songs today have sexual undertones, drug and alcohol use, cursing, homosexual scenarios, depictions of parties, violence, racial slurs, etc. If one of the lyrics is "smoke weed every day", then I would say it is off limits. It is promoting something that is ungodly, and furthermore you are entertaining thoughts that could ultimately lead to actions in a moment of weakness.

Ghandi once said, thoughts become words, actions, habits, values, etc.

### **Philippians 4:8**

**8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on (listen to) these things.

### **3. Is it biblically wrong to smoke? Cigarettes? Marijuana?**

#### **Cigarettes**

Even on cigarette packs, companies are forced to put "anti-smoking" ads by the government.

Smoking causes disease (cancers, lung disorders, smokers cough), it takes years off your life (an average of 10 years less), it is addictive, it wastes money (a pack a day costs over \$5000 per year. Is that being a good steward?), there are literally thousands of different chemicals ingested, including over 60 known to cause cancer, etc.

I think these things alone should deter us from wanting to smoke cigarettes.

#### **Marijuana**

Pot smokers have all kinds of arguments in favor of this drug. They say marijuana isn't addictive, you can't OD, it doesn't make people aggressive, it's natural, etc.

In reality, pot is addictive. Around 10% of people who smoke pot regularly experience withdrawal symptoms. This is definitely less than cigarettes, but still addictive.

Even if pot isn't very addictive physiologically, it is quite addictive psychologically. Our minds get addicted to the high.

Scripturally, addiction is wrong.

### **1 Corinthians 6:12**

**12** All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

Pot is a suppressant. It makes people very docile and chill. I don't think this is a good thing. Our generation is very complacent, apathetic, and indifferent. The last thing we need is something else to make people more lazy.

Pot is a gateway drug. It tends to lead to harder drugs.

Another scriptural argument against drug use is found in Galatians 5.

### **Galatians 5:19-21**

**19** Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

**20** Idolatry, **witchcraft**, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

**21** Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

The word “witchcraft” in verse 20 is the Greek word “pharmakeia” which is where we get our word pharmacy today. This word pertains to sorcery and the use of potions/drugs. Sorcery is basically when people open themselves up to evil spirits and demons. People would often achieve this by using different potions/drugs to alter their conscienceness and state of mind. The abuse of substances to alter one’s conscienceness falls under the umbrella of “pharmakeia”, and this is sin.

This is the main reason that drugs are a sin. God desires for us to have a “sound mind”, and marijuana definitely hinders this.

### **4. How do we explain why drinking is wrong?**

BIBLICALLY, there are almost too many scriptures to quote indicating that alcohol is a bad idea.

**Proverbs 23:21, Isaiah 5:11-14, Isaiah 5:22-23, Isaiah 28:1, Joel 1:5, Joel 3:3, Hosea 4:11, Deuteronomy 21:20-21, Luke 21:34, Galatians 5:21**

Some of these scriptures only condemn DRUNKENNESS. So the question remains ... Is it biblically wrong to drink in moderation, as long as I don't get drunk?

Think about this passage:

### **Proverbs 23:29-33**

**29** Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

**30** They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

**31** Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

**32** At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

**33** Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

Anything that God compares to a snake, probably isn't a good idea.

There are two main groups in the Old Testament that were told directly not to drink alcoholic drinks:

### **Priests**

#### **Leviticus 10:8-11**

**8** And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying,

**9** Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:

**10** And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;

**11** And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

### **Kings**

#### **Proverbs 31:4-5**

**4** It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

**5** Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

The Bible would indicate that a New Testament believer is both a king and a priest, spiritually.

### **Revelation 1:5-6**

**5** And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

**6** And hath **made us kings and priests unto God** and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

That is why Peter refers to Christians as a “**ROYAL PRIESTHOOD**” (1 Peter 2:9).

Finally, some people use Paul’s advice to Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:23 as an excuse to drink.

### **1 Timothy 5:23**

**23** Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

Alcohol is known, even today, for its medicinal and antiseptic properties. Paul was merely suggesting to Timothy that he take some medicine when sick, just like we would take some cough syrup when we have a cold (which often contains ethyl alcohol). If we use this scripture as a loophole to drink anytime, then we must also stop drinking water anytime!

**5. How do you blaspheme against the Holy Ghost? Why can't God forgive that? And isn't that contradictory to His word that says all sins shall be forgiven?**

### **Matthew 12:31**

**31** Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

This verse seems to be in contradiction to 1 John 1:9 which says:

### **1 John 1:9**

**9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from **ALL** unrighteousness.

This verse, among many other verses, indicates that we can bring **ANY** sin to God and He will forgive. Is this a contradiction in scripture?

No.

**Blasphemy (Merriam-Webster)** - "the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God; the act of claiming the attributes of deity; irreverence toward something considered sacred."

Blasphemy of God's Spirit is basically when a person denounces the reality of God. Atheists, in this sense, are blasphemers. If a person doesn't believe in God, then they most definitely won't come to God for forgiveness, and therefore can't be forgiven. It's quite simplistic, really.

"Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost" can be understood as a continued and persistently stubborn rejection of Jesus. This would be an "unpardonable sin" because as long as a person remains in unbelief, he voluntarily excludes himself from Jesus' forgiveness of sin.

If a blasphemer were to repent of his ways and turn to God, he could be forgiven.

**6. Why aren't we having the revivals, the harvests and miracles that countries around the world seem to be having - what are the main barriers that prevent this?**

Personally, I think the main reasons are spiritual hunger and wealth, and the two are directly connected.

**Matthew 5:6**

**6** Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

People in other countries have little to nothing, and because of it, their focus isn't on their stuff, it's on God. God is their everything. Unfortunately, it seems we aren't hungry for God, in many cases, because we have a steady diet of worldliness, entertainment, etc.

It is just like Laodicea in Revelation 3. They were lukewarm and not overly hungry for God because they had so much stuff.

For many Christians in North America, God is just an add-on to their already full lives.

During my internship at the POA in 2009, just before a Sunday night service I went and talked to a family and invited them to church. They just happened to be homeless and had little more than the clothes on their back. They ended up coming to church that night, and to many other services. We started a Bible study and all four of them ended up getting baptized in Jesus' name relatively quickly.

I believe their receptiveness to God was directly connected to their lack in life. Many people who have lots of money and stuff often times don't sense their true need of God, and therefore never move toward Him.

Hunger is the key, and we can't be hungry if we are always full. Sometimes we have to empty ourselves to sense our full need of God.

It's not that Heaven has ran out of fullness, it's just that we have ran out of emptiness.

### **7. I'm the most lukewarm person ever. What do I do?**

Start by simply fasting and praying. Omit or at least cut back on all the time-wasting activities in your life, regardless of how much you might enjoy them. Get into God's Word.

If you feel like your heart is somewhere else, start investing your time, talent, and finance in God's Kingdom!

### **Matthew 6:21**

**21** For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.