

CSF Weekly Gathering - October 21



*We're glad you're here! CSF's weekly gathering is intended to be a space where students can meet together, discuss scripture, pray and build relationships. Our vision is to **Make Disciples of Jesus on Campus**. We are a Christian organization, but wherever you are on your spiritual journey - lifelong Christian, uncertain believer, part of another faith, or unsure God even exists - you are welcome to here. We seek to interact, and even disagree, with kindness and respect.*

Stay Up To Date:

Website – <https://www.csfpa.com/psu-berks>

Instagram @csfberks

Twitter - @csfberks

Discord and GroupMe too!

Upcoming Events:

Hike - Sunday, October 24 - Nolde Forest!

Meet at 1:45 in lot G1 for a ride OR meet at 2:00 at the Sawmill Parking Lot at Nolde.

Volunteer at Hope Rescue Mission - Saturday, November 6

Meet at 8:45 in lot G1 for a ride OR meet at 9:00 at the Hope Outlet Store. We will get a tour of the facility, work in the store and then eat lunch with the residents.

Concession Stand - November 20

Leadership:

President – Emily Clapper (ezc80)

Secretary – Ayomide Ogunleye (afo5187)

Worship Coordinator - Katie Lowery

Pastor - Dave Hershey (dave@csfpa.com)

Vice President – Danny Frederick (dpf5238)

Treasurer – Nathan Bonslaver (njb5515)

Exec-at-Large - Nivia McNeil

Advisor - Sgt. Mark Groff (mdg116)

What is God Like? All Truth is God's Truth

How we answer this foundational question will impact every single area of our lives. *What is the purpose of life? How do I make things right when I make mistakes? What should I do with my money? What career should I pursue?* We all have some assumptions about what life is about, whether we believe in God or not. These assumptions, if we think of them, are connected to our understanding of what is Ultimate Reality. "God" is simply the word we use for this ultimate reality. It begs the question - who or what is God? How do Jesus and the Holy Spirit relate to God? Is God far off or near? What does God desire of me? This semester we are going to investigate these questions.

God Becomes Human to Reconcile Humans to God

Icebreaker - Imagine being offered a glass of juice. But before the juice is given to you, a cockroach is dropped into it. Would you still drink the juice? Why or why not?

What if the juice was purified? What if purified and boiled?

Negativity Dominance (Source: Richard Beck's book Unclean)

- Clean meets unclean – we assume unclean overwhelms the clean thing
- Most people say no. Beck tells of psychological experiments where respondents are asked if they would drink the juice if it was purified. Most still say no. What if it was purified and boiled? Again, most say no. Beck writes: *“Interestingly, most people still refuse to drink the juice despite knowing, rationally speaking, that the boiled and filtered juice is purer than most tap water. Intellectually, people understand that the boiled and filtered juice is clean. The juice has been sanitized before their very eyes. And yet people still reject the juice. Even while they admit the illogical nature of their response.”*
- Once the cockroach touches the juice, part of us thinks that the juice is corrupted forever.
- The negative dominates, the juice is forever impure.

The Book of Leviticus

- The Ten Commandments begin with 4 in regards to our relationship with God and then 6 in regards to how we are to relate to others
- Leviticus is similar where chapters 1-17 center on how Israel is to worship God and 18-27 center on how they are to relate to each other
 - Lev. 1-7 – Kinds of Sacrifice
 - Lev. 8-10 – The Beginnings of the Priesthood
 - Lev. 11-15 – Distinguishing Clean and Unclean (Purity and Impurity)
 - Lev. 16 – The Day of Atonement
 - Lev. 17-25 – Rules for Daily Life (Including Year of Jubilee)
 - Lev. 26-27 – Blessings and Curses – traditional in concluding a covenant

Read Leviticus 10:8-10 and 20:26 - What do these passages tell us about God? About holiness, purity and impurity?

*The Hebrew verb that animates the book of Leviticus is *hivdil*, meaning "to divide."

“All through the book, the Israelites, and especially the priests, are to mark distinctions and to make separations. Leviticus is about "dividing" the pure from the common and the clean from the unclean”

Leviticus 11-15 - Clean and Unclean

- Unclean (impure) is not the same as being sinful
- Sin is about guilt, missing the mark or falling short. In Leviticus, there are certainly times and ways to make yourself unclean through sinful or guilty actions. But there are other things that are not sinful: getting certain diseases, bodily discharges.

The purity laws in Leviticus are laws of negativity dominance - when something clean touches something unclean, the unclean things dirties the clean.

Read Leviticus 15:1-32

Read Luke 8:40-56

What does this tell us about God? What does this tell us about Jesus?

Negativity Dominance and the Incarnation

- Non-Christians struggle to see Jesus as divine. They tend to see him as a great teacher or prophet. Christians, at least in my experience, struggle with the opposite: how could God become an actual human?
 - Humans are kind of gross (body odor, gas, going to the bathroom, sweat, etc.). How could God become human, become stinky and sweaty?
 - These questions reveal our own negativity dominance - we can't imagine something clean (God) touching something unclean (humanity) without being corrupted.
- Jesus touched people who were seen as untouchable. This was scandalous because based on the OT law the impurity of those he touched would make him unclean.
- But the healings demonstrated that the flow was going the other way - the purity (cleanness) of Jesus cleansed the impurity.
 - This is not without precedent in the OT - there are passages that speak of touching something holy/pure and becoming pure: Leviticus 6:18, 27; Ex. 29:37; Isaiah 6

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome

“Uncreated divine nature, which we glorify in giving glory to the divine persons of the Trinity, becomes wedded to our nature in the incarnation. The union of fallen human nature with the utterly holy divine nature necessarily changes the unholy: divine nature acts like a refining fire, burnishing away the tarnish of sin and death – and everything changes for us and for the whole cosmos as a result of this blessed marriage of the uncreated with the most cherished of all creatures” (Heresies and How to Avoid Them, page 38).

Jesus as God and man is directly related to our salvation. God was not afraid to get down into the trenches and neither should we.

Gregory of Nazianzus on how Jesus is fully God and fully man: *“He was baptized as man – but he remitted sins as God...He was tempted as man, but he conquered as God...He hungered – but he fed thousands...He was wearied, but he is the rest of them that are weary and heavy laden...He prays, but he hears prayer. He weeps, but he causes tears to cease. He asks where Lazarus was laid, for he was man; but he raises Lazarus, for he was God. He is sold, and very cheap, for it is only for thirty pieces of silver; but he redeems the world, and that at a great price, for the price was his own blood...As a sheep he is led to the slaughter, but he is the shepherd of Israel, and now of the whole world also. As a lamb he is silent, yet he is the Word, and is proclaimed by the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He is bruised and wounded, but he heals every disease and every infirmity...He dies, but gives life, and by his death destroys death.”*

Key Points

1. After the Council of Constantinople settled the issue of the nature of God (God is Trinity) the debates shifted to the nature of Jesus. How could one person be two natures (God and Human) at the same time?
2. One teaching was that Jesus was two distinct persons – a human person and a divine person. In other words, human and divine stayed separate. But if they are not united, how could God save humanity? The orthodox church opposed this, affirming that Jesus was one complete person.
3. This means that in Jesus the divine truly became human – God stepped down and became a human complete with all the warts and smells of humanity.