



Ascetics: The Character of God and the Beauty of the Universe - Part 2

The Why Question

Though we may have great interest in discussions concerning causality, our focus will migrate away from causality and toward purpose. Belief that God created you, the universe and all things in it, is not sufficient. This answers the fundamental question of how but does not get to the fundamental question of why. The deist holds to a rather scant purpose statement with their belief in an impersonal Creator. This view holds that God created the universe and then, as an unengaged and disinterested observer, He peers in occasionally just to see the outcome of His scientific experiment. In the end, this worldview is

practical atheism. It addresses the overwhelming evidence that there must be a cosmic cause but fails to give a sufficient reason for the cause. Atheists believe there is no God. The deist lives as if there is no God. Intellectually there may be a difference, but practically speaking there is no distinction.

If God is impersonal, something along the lines of the impersonal deistic force from *Star Wars*, then this God is neither good nor evil. That is why the children’s catechism moves so quickly (just the third question out of 50 questions) from cause to purpose. The affirmation that “God made me and all things,” is helpful. However, this is insufficient and irrelevant in my life if that is the beginning and end of God’s involvement in the matter. Significance cannot be manufactured by insignificant pawns moving aimlessly in a deistic science experiment. Purpose must proceed from the reality of the God who personally made me and the universe. The third catechism question turns to the fundamental question of purpose, significance, and relevance. “Why did God make you and all things?” “Why?” The question is loaded with a pursuit of purpose and the answer explodes with purpose. “God made me and all things for His glory.”

When my son was about four, I brought home a new laundry sorter and declared with great excitement, “We’re going to put this together.” A father son project unfurled. Opening the box and dumping all the parts into the living room floor made him extremely happy. As we began our project Austin asked, “Dad, who made this?” I grabbed the box and read the company name off the front. Assuming this would satisfy his four year old mind, I plunged back into the sorting of parts and looking at the directions. (As a side note, I only looked at the directions to assuage my wife. All men know that you only look at the directions after you have attempted to put it together and it doesn’t work.) After a few moments of pause and reflection Austin asked, “Why?” Even a four year old sees the fallacy in the mind of the deist. No one would design, produce and sell a laundry sorter without some legitimate purpose. Why did the company make the laundry sorter? I assume they designed and built it to make money. They designed it to make a profit by producing a product that met the needs of consumers. The four year old knows instinctively that there must be a purpose behind any maker’s act. Notice the personal nature of my four year olds’ question, “WHO made this?” He asked WHO and not WHAT. Even four year olds know that designing and building requires a mind. There must be a mind behind every thought. A mind requires that there must be a person behind the mind.

Why? Why did these individuals at the company design and build a laundry sorter? “Why did God make me and all things?” “God made me and all things for His glory.” The statement brings clarity to both cause and purpose. We are here because God created us. God did this for the purpose of manifesting His glory. God made us to demonstrate His glory. God created the universe to display His glory. This brings us to the place of understanding the cause and purpose of His work. God’s desire to show His glory motivated Him to create the universe. As a personal extension of this, God’s desire to show His glory motivated Him to create you. This is the reason we are here. You and I, we exist for the glory of God. What is God’s glory?



How do things like the creation, the Bible, His Son Jesus, history and the church, demonstrate His glory? To understand how each of these may be instrumental in accomplishing this goal, we will spend some time defining the term “glory.” After defining the term, we will take a look at the various ways God’s work achieves this goal.

Show and Tell

When I was in elementary school, we had show and tell on Fridays. When it was my turn, I longed to ‘wow’ the class. I wanted my moment of show and tell to be the greatest on the planet. Since my last name is so late in the alphabet, my turn usually fell toward the end of the school year. This gave me time to observe others and to really think about the best way to stand out among the masses. In second grade, after listening to the paltry offerings of my classmates for twenty weeks, I finally got my chance. My selection – a miniature Civil War canon I purchased on our family vacation the summer prior. The class was mesmerized (actually they mostly ignored the entire 30 second presentation, but I’m retelling the story with no refuting eyewitnesses). I finally got my chance to show something of great value to me and it brought me great joy.

In the same way, God hosts show and tell. Unlike my one Friday out of the school year, God’s show and tell occurs continuously. Creation becomes an instrument through which God shows His attributes. His intervention in the course of human history becomes another tool through which God puts His attributes on display. God works in my life and in yours, bringing salvation, producing good works and preserving you in and through death to eternal life. God speaks through the Bible, demonstrating His attributes as they are communicated through written words. All of these works function as a means to an end. They are God’s show and tell. God demonstrates His specific attributes through His works. God chooses when and how to display His attributes. He demonstrates His particular attributes in specific divine works at specific moments for maximum impact. His intentionality in this allows us to focus our minds on His specific attributes. Each one of these attributes is infinitely beautiful and infinitely glorious. For instance, the creation of the stars reflects God’s power (and a host of other attributes) while God’s kindness may not be readily obvious when studying the heavens. The cross of Jesus reflects God’s justice and mercy (and a host of other attributes) but the attribute of God’s invincibility may be cloaked in that event – at least until the resurrection when the invincibility of God is demonstrated in full force. God communicates each of these attributes with purpose and intent. Nothing that God does is by accident. He acts in a manner to maximize the revelation of His own glory for His own pleasure. It pleases God to reveal His attributes. He created the universe in order to accomplish His revelatory desire.

Jonathan Edwards gives us some help on this front. In The End for Which God Made the World, Jonathan Edwards says that it seems “proper and desirable, that the glorious attributes of God... should be exerted in the production of such effects as might manifest his infinite power, wisdom, righteousness and goodness.” Edwards goes on to argue that these attributes, and many more, would still be present within the Godhead without the creation but without the creation “these attributes never would have had any exercise.” God inherently possesses these attributes. However, it brings God delight to “exercise” His attributes. Edwards reflects on the joy and goodness manifest in our own lives because God has made His glorious perfections known to rational beings beside Himself.

All things exist for God’s glory. All creation and each individual work of God in creation display specific attributes of God. Glory is the term to summarize all of these attributes condensed or coalesced in a single expression. **God’s “glory” describes the summation of all of His attributes.** His glory is shown in the individual attributes of God woven into the fabric of our lives.

(Part 3 in the June Newsletter)

Jonathan Edwards The End for Which God Made the World, (in The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Vol. 1, Hendrickson Publishing, 2000), 99.

Ibid.

Children's Ministry



Wednesday Nights, for kids ages 3* - 6th grade
6:30pm - 8:00pm

*3 year olds in Cubbies must be potty trained, and have turned 3 by Sept. 1st. A parent must stay on campus through the duration of the program. See our website to see what Adult Bible Study classes we have for you.

Sunday Nights 5:30pm
Education Building
2nd floor



This Spring we are studying the book of Matthew! Join us as we learn what it means to be a disciple committed to going out into the world to make disciples! For K - 6th Grade.



Sunday School

Join us every Sunday morning from 9:45-10:45am as we journey through the Gospel Project.



PRETEEN CAMP
AT MT. LEBANON
JUNE 27TH - JULY 1ST
SEE BRITTANY

- VBS: June 13th - 17th
- Preteen Camp at Mt. Lebanon: June 27th - July 1st
- Camp 3:17 Sports & Arts Day Camp: July 18th - 22nd



Matthew Road Academy



MRA will be having a Fundraiser at the Camp Wisdom Chick-fil-a on Thursday, May 19th from 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Mention MRA and they will receive a % of your food sales!



Student Ministry

For any questions about anything @ anytime, contact Zach (210-818-8002)

June 20th-25th
High School Camp
Cost:\$300



June 27th-July 1st
Middle School Camp
Cost: \$300

Music Ministry



Children's Choir: 6:00-6:30, Education Building (2nd floor)
Adult Choir: 6:30-7:30, Sanctuary

Ride to Rescue



2016 Ride to Rescue
Sunday, May 1st, 3:00pm

Join us Sunday, May 1st, 3:00pm at Lynn Creek Park, Pavilion #2, for a time of fun, fellowship, food and worship!

All proceeds will be used to benefit the orphanage in Myanmar, Burma.

Register in the Worship Center lobby or bring your completed release forms to the event.

Get Connected

Missed a sermon?
Want to share our sermon series with a friend or family member?
Check out our website and listen to or download our sermons:
www.matthewroad.org



Women's Ministry



Weekly Bible Studies:

Sunday mornings

Rachel Sullenger & Tiffany Marich
- the book of Acts
Joy Richards & Chris Anderson
- the book of Acts

Sunday nights

Meg Trihus
- the Epistles

Monday Nights

Nina Wilhite
- Genesis

Wednesday Nights

Cyndi King
- the book of Luke

Friday Mornings, Chick Fil A

Cyndi King
- The book of Luke
Book Discussion
- "Fervent" by Priscilla Shirer
at the McClellins' home,
701 Gentry Drive, Arlington
11:45am





"Take-a-Slice"

Feeling led by the Lord,
but don't want to "bite off"
a big commitment?
Then join us for this fun and
informative meeting.

Who: Any one currently involved in
Women's Ministry or women that feel
God's calling on their lives to serve in
Women's Ministry

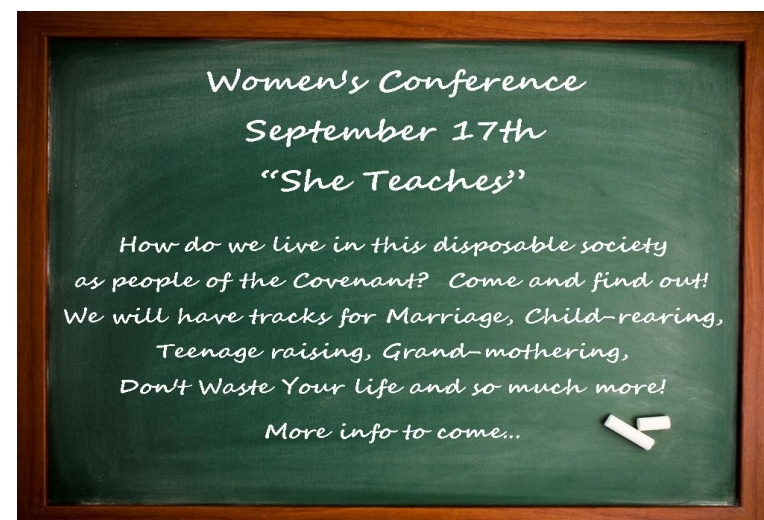
When: Sunday May 29th, 12:15pm

Where: Fellowship Hall

What: Update on the past year and a
look forward to the year ahead with
ideas for the future
and lunch

You are invited to the
"take-a-slice" meeting
for the
MRBC
She Teaches
Women's Ministry!

RSVP to rachel@matthewroad.org



Watermelon Social



Parents Night Out



**We no longer always meet on the third Friday of each month,
so check out the new dates:**

May 27th
June 24th
July 15th
No PNO in August

Please note: You must RSVP to cyndikking@msn.com to ensure your child's spot.

Grace Groups

Do you or someone you know struggle with a mental health difficulty? Consider joining a grace group! Grace groups focus on the positive with each meeting hopefully ending in greater understanding and vision concerning mental health difficulties. While the Grace Group does allow time to share pressing needs and pray for one another, another aspect each week is spent is on learning how to filter difficulties through God's grace and implementing the many practical skills and tools presented during the meetings.

Family Grace group (for someone supporting a loved one with a mental health difficulty) meets on Monday evenings at 6:30 in the Teller room. Contact Greg or Meg Trihus (greg.trihus@sil.org, or meg.trihus@wycliffe.org) for more information.

Living Grace group (for someone struggling with a mental illness) meets on Thursday evenings at 6:30 in the Teller room. Contact George Fritts (gfrittslpcintern@gmail.com) for more info.

20Somethings & Singles



20something @ the Rangers game May 15th!
Meet at church office at 12:00 pm.
(Cost Free for the first 5 to sign up.)



Activities:

- ☺ May 15th - Ranger Game, see Rachel
- ☺ July 24th - 30th: Mission trip to Mexico, cost \$250, see Rachel

Classes:

- ~ Sunday Morning 9:45 am: Daniel Sweet leading
- ~ Sunday Night 5:30 pm
a study of various books of the Bible (Fellowship Hall)
- ~ Wednesday Night 6:45 pm: Steve Hines leading
Acts/Epistles (Teller Room)

Contact Rachel at rachel@matthewroad.org
to find out the latest events & activities!

Mexico Mission Trip
July 24th - 30th
Cost - \$300
More info to come...

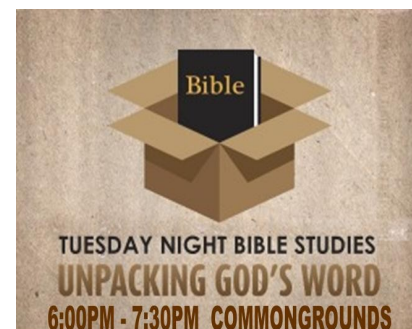


College



Class: Sunday Morning, 9:45am
Ed. Bldg., 2nd Flr.
Teacher: Kevin & Caitlin Marek
Studying: various books of the Bible

Contact Steve at
stephen@matthewroad.org
to find out the latest
events & activities!



May 2016 Events & Activities

For more information, please see our website, www.matthewroad.org, or call the church office at 972-641-2717.

- May 1st:** Ride to Rescue, Joe Pool Lake Lynn Creek Pavilion #2, 3:00pm
- May 3rd:** MRA Night to Remember, Sanctuary, 6:30pm
- May 5th:** Young @ Heart Breakfast at Outlaws, 8:30am
- May 8th:** Mother's Day - all our regular services & activities will be held, including 717 service
- May 12th:** MRA Graduation, Sanctuary, 6:30pm
- May 15th:** 20Somethings at the Ranger game, see Rachel
Deacon Meeting, Conference Room, 4:00pm
- May 18th:** Last Wednesday Night Dinner until Fall Semester
- May 22nd:** Youth Teaching Observation Day, see Zach
- May 25th:** Youth Senior Sendoff, CommonGrounds, 6:30pm
- May 27th:** Parents Night Out, Worship Center, 6:30pm, *please RSVP to cyndikking@msn.com
- May 29th:** Youth Led Sunday
Women's Event, see Rachel
- May 30th:** Church Office closed in observance of Memorial Day

Discipleship

Sunday Nights:

- ◇ 20Somethings - Fellowship Hall, 5:30pm
- ◇ Adult Discipleship - Choir Room, 5:30pm
- ◇ Ladies Bible Study - Conference Room, 5:30pm
- ◇ Young Marrieds Bible Study - Fellowship Hall, 5:30pm
- ◇ Adult Couples Class - Library, 5:30pm
- ◇ Guy Talk for youth - CommonGrounds, 5:30pm,
see Zach for exact location
- ◇ Girl Talk for youth - CommonGrounds, 5:30pm,
see Zach for exact location
- ◇ MD² for children - Education Building, 5:30pm

Wednesday Nights:

- ◇ AWANA for children - Ed. Building, 6:30pm
- ◇ Collide for youth - CommonGrounds, 6:30pm
- ◇ Adult Bible Studies - Library, 6:45pm
- ◇ Women's Bible Study - Conference Room, 6:45pm
- ◇ 20Somethings Bible Study - Teller Room, 6:45pm

Regular Scheduled Activities

Sundays

Morning Worship	8:30 & 11:00am
Morning Bible Study (all ages)	9:45am
Evening Bible Study (all ages)	5:30pm
7:17 Service	6:45pm

Mondays

K2 Primary Academy	8:45am
PAW Program	9:00am
Women's Bible Study	6:00pm

Tuesdays

MRA (during school year)	8:30am
Young @ Heart Activities	9:45am
College Bible Study	6:00pm

Wednesdays

K2 Primary Academy	8:45am
PAW Program	9:00am
Wednesday Night Dinner	5:15pm
Children's Choir	5:45pm
Collide (youth)	6:30pm
Adult Choir	6:30pm
AWANA (children)	6:30pm
Adult Bible Study	6:45pm
20Somethings	6:45pm

Thursdays

MRA (during school year)	8:30am
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Fridays

Chick time at Chick-Fil-A	9:00am
Book Study "Fervent"	11:45am

Saturdays

Men's Coffee Group (Good Day Café, GP)	7:30am
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Average Morning Attendance for April: 327

Average 7:17 Service Attendance for April: 153

Financials as of March 31, 2016

Budget Income	\$ 267,354
Budget Expense	\$(245,026)
Net Budget	\$ 22,328