

Q4 Reading Assignments

How Christianity Transformed the World – Sharon James

Online resources

Introduction and Chapter 1: Freedom

1. Before reading the chapter (and without googling it)... How would you define “freedom?” What does it mean to be a “free person?” How do we know what freedom is? (3-4 sentences)
2. What is the most important Biblical doctrine underpinning universal freedom and human rights? Why do you think that is? (2-3 sentences)
3. Rummel writes, “No one can be trusted with unlimited power... As a government’s power is more unrestrained, as its power reaches into all corners of culture and society, the more likely it is to kill its own citizens.” Do you think this is true? Why or why not? Why do you think a government would think it’s okay to kill its own people? (3-4 sentences)
4. What do you think of the phrase, “If it’s legal, it’s acceptable?” What is the difference between something being legal and something being good? Why is it important to maintain this distinction? (3-4 sentences)
5. What did some of the non-Christians referenced in the chapter think about universal freedom and human rights (2-3 examples)? (2-3 sentences)
6. What did some of the Christians from history think about universal freedom and human rights (4-5 examples)? (4-5 sentences)
7. Why is the idea of freedom and human rights relevant today? What are some current topics and events that are related to these ideas? Why should freedom be important to Christians, especially? (4-5 sentences)
8. Write 2-3 questions you had about the reading.

Chapter 2: Religious Liberty

1. Before reading the chapter... What do the terms “religious liberty” or “freedom of conscience” mean to you? Where have you heard of these ideas? (2-3 sentences)
2. Based on your reading, in your own words how would you define religious liberty? What are some Biblical examples (from the book or not) where we see this concept? (3-4 sentences)
3. Name 3-4 examples of Christians who advocated for religious liberty. How did they advocate for it (What did they argue)? (3-4 sentences)
4. What is “the sacral principle?” What are some examples of people and places where this principle was enforced? (2-3 sentences)

Is Religious Liberty for Non-Christians Too?

<https://www.russellmoore.com/2016/06/08/religious-freedom-non-christians/>

5. The author writes, "To empower the state to command or to forbid worship is not fidelity to the Bible." Do you agree? Why or why not? (3-4 sentences)
6. What is the difference between religious liberty (all people have the right to choose how they worship, and should not be compelled otherwise) and religious pluralism (all religions are basically the same)? (2-3 sentences)
7. Do you think that the government can make people Christians, or should try to make people Christians? Why or why not? (2-3 sentences)
8. Should Christians who are committed to the Great Commission support government support of religion? Why or why not? (3-4 sentences)

Chapter 3: Justice & Chapter 4: Protecting the Vulnerable

1. Before reading the chapter... How would you define justice? How can we know what justice is? (3-4 sentences)
2. Besides the Scriptures quoted in chapter 3, do some more research to answer the question: What does the Bible have to say about justice? What does that mean for you individually? (4-5 sentences)
3. Why should Christians care about justice? What can you do to contribute to a just society? (3-4 sentences)
4. Do some outside research to see how Christians are involved in justice work around the world. See International Justice Mission, One More Child, Samaritan's Purse, Accord Network ministries, or find other organizations. What are they trying to accomplish? How are they doing it? Why does this interest you? (5-6 sentences)
5. What are some ways the early church sought to protect the sanctity of human life? (3-4 sentences)
6. How does the doctrine of the image of God relate to protecting the vulnerable? (2-3 sentences)
7. What are some arguments you have heard arguing for abortion? Against it? What do you think about this issue? (4-5 sentences)
8. What are some ways that you can advocate for protecting the vulnerable at all stages of life? What are some attitudes you could adopt in your own life, or ways you could serve the vulnerable in your church or community? (3-4 sentences)
9. Write 2-3 questions you had about the reading.

Chapter 5: The Dignity of Women & Chapter 6: Philanthropy

1. What do you think it means to be a godly man? A godly woman? Do gender distinctions matter to God? (3-4 sentences)
2. According to the reading, what made the Christian perspective so radical in the early church? (3-4 sentences)
3. Have you ever heard the argument that Christianity is bad for women? What did they say? How would you respond? (3-4 sentences)

4. Besides your mom, who are some women in your life who have positively influenced you? How so? Have you thanked them recently? (3-4 sentences)
5. Are there ways that our culture today does not respect the dignity of women? How so? (3-4 sentences)
6. Why should Christians care about the dignity of women? What can you do to ensure the women in your life are respected? (3-4 sentences)
7. Describe 3-4 examples from the reading of how Christians cared for the vulnerable in church history. What did they do? What motivated them? (5-6 sentences)
8. Read James (the Biblical book!) chapter 2. How does James describe the connection between faith and compassion for the poor? Why should Christians care about the poor? (3-4 sentences)
9. Do some outside research to see how Christians are involved in philanthropic work and mercy ministry locally, here in Jacksonville. What are they trying to accomplish? How are they doing it? Why does this interest you? (5-6 sentences)
10. Write 2-3 questions you had about the reading.

Chapter 7: Healthcare & Chapter 8: Education

1. What made the Christian approach to healthcare and hospitality different from everything that came before in antiquity? (2-3 sentences)
2. Describe 3-4 examples of Christians who made an impact on healthcare in church history. What did they do? What motivated them? (4-5 sentences)
3. Why should Christians care about healthcare (3 reasons)? (3-4 sentences)
4. Why did Christians think it was important to learn about more than just the Bible and theology (math, science, history, rhetoric)? Do you think it's important to learn about these varied subjects? Why or why not? What does that mean for you in your PEP studies? (4-5 sentences)
5. Describe 3-4 examples of Christians who made an impact on education and literacy in church history. What did they do? What motivated them? (4-5 sentences)
6. Why should Christians care about quality education for all (3 reasons)? (3-4 sentences)
7. Write 2-3 questions you had about the reading.

Chapter 9: The Creation Mandate & Chapter 10: The Triumph of Christ

1. How is the Biblical view of work different from that of the ancients (3 ways)? (3-4 sentences)
2. What is the difference between biblical "dominion" and exploitation of the world's resources? Should Christians care about the environment and sustainability? (2-3 sentences)
3. Are there certain jobs that are more or less valuable than others? Are there jobs that are more or less dignified than others? Are there jobs that Christians should never take? (3-4 sentences)

4. What does it mean to steward something? How can you steward your life for the good of others and God's glory in the next week? Next year? 10 years? (3-4 sentences)
5. Look up the website for the Northeast Florida Christian Chamber of Commerce (<https://neflchristianchamber.com>). What is their purpose statement on their About page? Look through their Directory. What kind of businesses do you see represented there? Do you think those businesses are fulfilling the Creation Mandate? (This is not an endorsement of any particular businesses or ministries on the site) (3-4 sentences)
6. What are some ways that Christian entrepreneurs and business-owners can do business in a distinctly Christian way (3 ways)? (3-4 sentences)
7. What are some ways that Christians in the marketplace can work in distinctly Christian ways (3 ways)? (3-4 sentences)
8. Consider some of the topics we have covered in this book. How would the world be different if Christianity had not had its influence on that topic? How would your life be different? (4-5 sentences)
9. Can you think of anything you care about that Christianity has not affected, or Christianity has not yet had its full effect? What would it look like if Christian principles were applied to it? How could you play a role in making that happen? (4-5 sentences)
10. How does the gospel give us hope to persevere, even in the places where we see Christ is not reigning? How does the gospel help us overcome fear and despair in those areas? (2-3 sentences)