

Free literature review on literature analysis

[Religion](#), [God](#)



“The City of God” was an interesting book outlining how different entities can clash in their beliefs. During the time that this was written, Romans were blaming Christians on the fall of the Roman Empire (Augustine). This, they believed, was largely because Christians failed to be patriotic. The actions of the Romans are a clear example of human beings having free will. They did as they pleased and lived hedonistic lives. This can be related to “The Inferno” where stages, or circles, of hell are described. Each circle represents a kind of sin people commit. The seven sins are outlined, plus two more (Alighieri). The first circle are for those who are pagan or are not baptized. It is also known in the Catholic belief system as purgatory. You get in deeper in hell depending on the severity of your sins. However, you do not have to be a bad person per se. There is a place for those that do not believe in God or those who have not accepted Christ.

There is definitely a problem of evil in the world. A lot of people wonder why evil even exists. Many Christians believe that this is to give human beings a choice in life, so that they are responsible for their own destiny. God simply has a plan that he wishes to unfold, only on our consent. This is very evident in the book by St. Augustine. Dante’s book simply lets people know where they will be heading if they choose their own carnal desires.

Many Christians make it a point to spread the Word of God. This is because it is stated in the Bible that everyone has to know about Christ in order for them to receive salvation.

As Christ has put it in one of the Gospels:

“ Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don't you put it on a stand” (King James Bible, Mrk. 4: 21).

He was pertaining to the Word of God in this parable. This is why a lot of Christians go on missions in hopes to reach out to those who have not yet heard the Word. A lot of secular people think that this is quite impossible. Not only that, but there might be some people who have gone through their whole lives and not hear the Word. An example of this would be a man who has lived in a pagan tribe somewhere in a remote desert land unreached by modern technology.

In the book of Mark, Jesus states: “ Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear” (King James Bible, Mrk. 4: 9).

In this verse he was pertaining to the parable of the Sower. This talks about the Word of God and how people take it in. In a nutshell, the parable talks about a man sowing seeds. Some of the seeds fell on pavement, some fell amongst weeds and some fell in fresh and soft soil. The first few seeds were snatched up by birds since they were just lying on the pavement. The second set of seeds grew a bit, but then they were choked by the weed they were surrounded by. Lastly, the seeds that were sown on good soil sprouted and multiplied. This talks about how the word of God is sown and how believers take the word in. Those who are hard in heart do not take the word so welcomingly. After a tragic event happens, the word is snatched up from within them and forgotten. The second describes those who hear the word, but go on involving themselves with people or activities that are carnal or not in line with God and his commandments. The Word is choked down by

earthly lusts and eventually disappears. The last one is about those who hear the word, take it in and practice it. These people go on and are able to spread the word to multiply it a thousand fold.

This can be connected to St. Augustine's "The City of God". Christianity could not fully thrive at the time because there were so many hard core Romans (Augustine). They still wanted to believe in their gods and serve their offerings. They had their own virtues and ways of politics. This book is sort of a challenge to human beings, asking them which city they want to belong to.

However, there is a lot of question revolving around the Word and everyone's opportunity to hear it. Of course people who are born in to well-off middle class families in the suburbs, brought up as Christians will find it easier to believe that Jesus came down to save them. They have not gone through much tragedies to really hate the world and all its evils. But, what about the malnourished child born in a remote place, in a tribe very far from water and communication? Will that child know God? A lot of people believe that it is unfair for that one child because they will not get the chance of hearing about salvation and eternal life. Chances are that child will be stricken by disease and not see his or her teenage years.

In Mark 4: 12 (King James Bible) Jesus says:

" they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven."

With this, he talks about those who have heard the word but refuse to take it in their hearts. This might be more applicable to the second set of seeds that the sower threw in to the weed. We as humans have a choice. That is what Dante was talking about in "The Inferno". People have choices in where they are going. They have all the resources to make their choice; if they want to go to heaven or hell. Sin is not something shaded out in gray. It is a choice. In St. Augustine's work, it is the choice between the City of God or carnal and pagan life. When Jesus said that line to the apostles, he was saying that there are some people who refuse to believe the Word even after they have heard it. They choose not to give mind to it, because if they understood it deeper, they would repent for their sins and be forgiven, thus they will not end up in hell.

Works Cited

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