

***World Literature for  
Christian Homeschoolers***

**Volume 1:  
Ancient Writings**

**Answer Key to Review Questions**

**By Scott Clifton**

**Web: [www.homeschoolpartners.net](http://www.homeschoolpartners.net)**

**Email: [scott@homeschoolpartners.net](mailto:scott@homeschoolpartners.net)**

**For a FREE two-week sample of *Classic Literature for Christian Homeschoolers*, *World Literature for Christian Homeschoolers*, and a free copy of *The First Book of Homeschool Follies*, [click here](#).**



## Aesop's Fables, Part 1 – Week 1, Day 1

1. Compare “The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse” to Proverbs 15:17 and Proverbs 17:1.

*Both proverbs say that it is better to have a simple meal in peace than a fancy meal in the middle of a house filled with trouble and strife.*

2. Compare “The Fox and the Stork” to Proverbs 25:21-22 and Matthew 5:44.

*The Bible teaches a different approach to evildoers: that we should return good for evil, unlike the Aesop's fable.*

3. Compare “Androcles” to Luke 17:11-19.

*Both include thankfulness of a recipient of a good deed.*

4. Briefly define the phrase *sour grapes*.

*It refers to a person's downplaying the importance or desirability of something, simply to make himself feel better about not being able to obtain or achieve it.*

1. Compare “The Ant and the Grasshopper” to Proverbs 6:6-11.

*Both teach the lesson that the ant is a model for hard work and avoiding poverty and tell the reader not to be lazy.*

2. Compare “The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing” to Matthew 7:15-20 and Acts 20:28-30.

*In Matthew 7:15-20, Jesus teaches His followers to beware of “wolves in sheep's clothing,” and to test men by their fruits. In Acts 20:28-30, Paul warns the church that right away false prophets, whom he calls “grievous wolves,” would try to draw Christians away from the true church.*

3. Compare “The Ass in the Lion's Skin” to Proverbs 17:28 and Ecclesiastes 5:3.

*Proverbs 17:28 says that even a fool is thought of as wise if he keeps his mouth shut, so people aren't aware he's a fool! And Ecclesiastes 5:3 says that a fool can be discovered since fools often talk too much and/or give themselves away with foolish talk. Similarly, the ass gave himself away as not being a lion with his voice.*

4. Give another example you have seen or been a part of that demonstrates the lesson of “The Crow and the Pitcher.”

*Answers will vary.*

## Old Testament Prophecies of Jesus Christ – Week 1, Day 3

1. Write a brief paragraph (two or three sentences) that sums up the prophecies of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and *bring this to class*.

*Answers will vary.*

2. What does Genesis 22:13's description of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac (middle of page 38) have to do with Mark 15:17?

*God provides a substitute for Isaac as a sacrifice, a ram caught by its horns in thorns, which will remind the reader of Jesus, who wore a crown of thorns while he became a substitute for the sins of the world.*

3. Look up the term "Rod of Asclepius," describe what it is, and explain how it relates to Numbers 21:5-9.

*The Rod of Asclepius is the symbol of the medical profession; its origin is the serpent on the pole made by Moses that healed the Israelites who had faith that looking up at it would heal them of the bites of the venomous snakes sent by God to punish them.*

4. How do prophecies of Jesus Christ strengthen both the reliability of the Bible and the truthfulness of Christ as the way to God?

*Answers will vary, but the God who spoke these prophecies and gave them to men to write down is surely deserving and worthy of our faith.*

## Early Christian Writings – Week 2, Day 1

1. What differentiates Christians from non-Christians, according to “The Epistle of Mathetes”?

*They dwell in their countries as travelers, looking for heaven; they share their worldly goods with their fellow Christians; they don't kill their children; they do not commit adultery; they don't live “after the flesh”; they not only obey laws, but do better than that with their lives; they are persecuted and hated and evil spoken of, but never fight back or insult in return or seek revenge.*

2. What does the very last part of the last sentence mean?

*It means that although Christians are often hated, the ones who hate them have no reason to do so. This is a good commentary on the behavior and character of Christians.*

1. Name several examples that Athenagorus gives to prove that Christians are not guilty of murder or cannibalism.

*Christians would never be murders or cannibals, because they refuse to go to murderous gladiator contests, and they don't even want to watch someone executed (even justly). Athenagoras also points out that no one who is around Christians can give examples of supposed murder or cannibalism.*

2. What does Athenagoras say about the practice of abortion?

*That it is murder, it is evil, that God will judge those who commit it.*

1. What does a typical Christian worship service include, according to Chapter XXXIX of “Apology”?

*Christians pray for each other and for rulers, they read the Bible, they encourage and rebuke and judge each other.*

2. What does Tertullian say about the giving among Christians? What is the money used for?

*Believers donate to a “treasure chest,” putting in money if they are led to and are able, and all voluntarily. The money is used to support the poor, orphans, the elderly, and those banished or put in prison for their Christian faith.*

3. Describe the “Lord’s Supper” or “feast of charity” (Jude 1:12) practiced by the Christians.

*It honors the poor, there is not overeating or drunkenness, it is done modestly, it involves hymn-singing, and it opens and closes with prayer.*

4. How does Tertullian close this chapter?

*By stating that non-Christians have nothing to complain about Christians—that Christians are pious and gentle, and they do not harm or trouble anyone.*

## Selected Sayings of Confucius – Week 2, Day 3

1. Compare Saying #1 with 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

*And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

*Confucius says that fancy speakers rarely are virtuous. Similarly, Paul's presentation of the gospel wasn't effective because he was a brilliant speaker, but that he spoke the truth of God; God's message doesn't need the "wisdom of men."*

2. How does Saying #2 match up with God's Word in Hebrews 12:14; Proverbs 1:10,15; and 1 Corinthians 5:9-11?

*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).*

*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not....My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path (Proverbs 1:10, 15).*

*I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat (1 Corinthians 5:9-11).*

*This is similar to Saying #2, but Christians are not told to avoid all sinners; they are told to mingle with the sinners of the world, to give them the gospel.*

3. How is Saying #3 similar to James 1:19-20 and Proverbs 17:28?

*[L]et every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God (James 1:19-20).*

*Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding (Proverbs 17:28).*

*Both these Bible passages teach us to be slow to speak—and that even a fool sounds wise when he keeps his mouth shut!*

4. Compare Saying #4's exhortation to "keep aloof" from supernatural beings with what the Bible says in James 4:8 and Romans 5:8.

*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you (James 4:8).*

*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).*

*The Bible teaches that God, as a supernatural being, does not desire man to stay aloof from Him; rather, He draws near to those who draw near to Him, and sent His Son Jesus to die for us, even when we were sinners and far from Him.*

5. How is Saying #5 similar to Philippians 4:6-7 and 1 Peter 5:6-7?

*Be careful [anxious, “full of care”] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).*

*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you (1 Peter 5:6-7).*

*Both the above Bible passages teach Christians not to be anxious and worried, since we can make our requests known to God, have God’s peace, and cast our cares upon Him, since he cares for us.*

6. Compare Saying #6 to Romans 12:10-11, 17b.

*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord...Provide things honest in the sight of all men (Romans 12:10-11, 17b).*

*Similar to Saying #6, the Bible admonishes Christians to honor each other, to work hard at our business, and to be honest with all men.*

7. How do Jesus’ words in Luke 6:32-35, as well as 1 Thessalonians 5:15, match up with Saying #7? Compare Saying #8 to the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:12.

*For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil (Jesus in Luke 6:32-35).*

*See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men (1 Thessalonians 5:15).*

*The words of Jesus and Confucius are similar, since Jesus tells His followers to do good to those who do evil to them, to show that we are “children of the Highest.” Confucius says to return “good for good” and “justice for injustice.” This might, however, be Confucius’ way of saying we should strive for justice in the face of injustice, for the good of society.*

*Saying #8 and the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:12 are very similar: Jesus says there, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”*

1. Give an example of how Saying #9 can be put into practice by a government.

*Answers will vary.*

2. Sum up what Confucius is saying about participating in government in Saying #10.

*He says that it isn't necessary to hold office to take part in government—that being a moral part of one's family strengthens a nation's virtue, which affects the way the government is run.*

3. What does Confucius say about rulers in Saying #11? Do you agree with him?

*Confucius gives great credit to the influence of good government rulers, which he says could practically erase all crime within 100 years! Answers will vary on whether readers agree with him, but it seems extremely unlikely that crime would be completely unknown just because a nation had good rulers for 100 years.*

4. Compare what Confucius says in Saying #12 with what Jesus says in Matthew 7:1-5.

*Both say that a person should reform himself before he tries to reform others.*

## ***The Odyssey, Book I – Week 3, Day 2***

1. What main point about man's troubles does Zeus make in his address to the "gods"? Do you agree with his assessment?

*That humans blame the "gods," but their troubles are actually more a result of their own sins and weaknesses. Answers will vary, but most students will probably say "Yes"; people tend to bring most of their own troubles upon themselves. Job 5:1-7, for example, says among other things that "wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one," and "man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward."*

2. Sum up the predicament that Odysseus is in.

*He has been trying to get home for 10 years. Poseidon is angry at him for blinding his son Polyphemus, a Cyclops, and is delaying Odysseus.*

3. What does Athene do for Telemachus? What situation are Telemachus and Penelope in at their home?

*She goes to Telemachus at Ithaca—disguised as the man Mentos—to encourage him, telling Telemachus that his father is not dead but trying to return. Suitors are living off of the property of Odysseus, trying to woo Penelope, who refuses them.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- The polytheism of the Greeks is in full display, with the "gods" arguing on Olympus about how to intervene in the lives of the mortals.
- Telemachus gains boldness after speaking to Athene, and starts to become "a man."

## ***The Odyssey, Book II – Week 3, Day 2***

1. Describe the address by Telemachus to the suitors at his parents' home. How do they blame Penelope for their staying there so long?

*He tells the suitors they should leave his home and stop eating up all his family's sustenance. They accuse her of delaying in choosing a new husband; she promised to pick when she finished weaving a robe, but each night she unravels the weaving so she doesn't have to marry any of them.*

2. Why does Telemachus embark upon a journey?

*He wants to sail away to search for his father at Sparta and Pylos with a ship and 20 men.*

3. Whose form does Athene take to assist him? What is the significance of this person's name?

*Athene takes the form of Mentor, a family friend and advisor to Telemachus. The word "mentor" is commonly used now to denote a trusted friend or advisor.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- This chapter contains the first instance of dawn's being described as "rosy-fingered." *The Odyssey* is filled with various other adjective-laden names of events and persons (a list is provided at the end of this document).
- Telemachus first embarks upon a ship in this chapter, which serves to link him to his father, who is often seen sailing and landing in *The Odyssey*.

### ***The Odyssey, Book III – Week 3, Day 3***

1. What are the citizens of Pylos doing as Telemachus arrives?

*They are sacrificing to Poseidon.*

2. What does Telemachus ask of Nestor?

*To tell him the truth of what happened to his father.*

3. How does Nestor advise Telemachus? Where does Telemachus set sail to?

*To ask for Athene's aid and visit Menelaus. Telemachus sets sail for Sparta.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- Nestor's example of hospitality to Telemachus is one of many displayed in *The Odyssey*.

### ***The Odyssey, Book IV – Week 3, Day 4***

1. How do Telemachus and Menelaus view the wealth of Menelaus that is on display at the chapter's opening?

*Telemachus is very impressed, but Menelaus would trade most of it for the lives of the men who fell in Troy, especially Odysseus.*

2. What does Menelaus predict what will happen to the suitors at the home of Odysseus?

*Odysseus shall bring "ghastly doom on these."*

3. Sum up the difficulties that Menelaus had trying to get home after the Trojan War.

*He is unable to escape an island after fighting the war. The daughter of Proteus (the old man of the sea) tells Menelaus to ask Proteus how to escape the island. Menelaus and three men "jump" Proteus by wearing seal skins, and Proteus tells them they must travel to Egypt and offer a sacrifice to the gods.*

4. What does Proteus inform Menelaus of regarding the predicament of Odysseus?

*That Odysseus is on the island of Ogygia, in the hall of Calypso, who holds him there by force.*

5. Explain the latest plans of the suitors at the home of Odysseus.

*The suitors are having a party. They find out that Telemachus has sailed off, and they plan a journey to find and kill him.*

**Additional Notes:**

- The generosity of Menelaus toward Telemachus is sharply contrasted with the ugly, evil plans of the suitors to murder Telemachus when he returns home.

### ***The Odyssey, Book V – Week 4, Day 1***

1. Sum up what is decided at the latest council of the “gods.”

*That Hermes will send a message to Calypso to free Odysseus.*

2. What happens to Odysseus when he sails away from Ogygia?

*Poseidon tries to kill Odysseus with a storm. Ino tells Odysseus to swim for the shore of Phaeacia. Odysseus drifts for two days and finally makes it to shore, with the aid of Athene.*

**Additional Notes:**

- More polytheistic bickering among the “gods” is here, and more meddling in the “fates” of mortals.

### ***The Odyssey, Book VI – Week 4, Day 2***

1. How does Athene assist Odysseus when he awakens in Phaeacia?

*She visits Nausicaä, the daughter of Alcinöus, and gives her a dream of her need to wash clothes. Nausicaä comes upon Odysseus while washing clothes in the stream.*

2. How does Odysseus avoid frightening Nausicaä?

*He uses “winning words” to win her favor and trust.*

3. Regarding the appearance of Odysseus, (a) what animal is he compared to as he decides whether to approach the maidens, and (b) how is his appearance described after he finishes bathing?

*He is (a) compared to a lion, and (b) his appearance is described as when “a man lays gold on silver.”*

**Additional Notes:**

- Nausicaä is shown as a sensible young girl (probably what we would call a “teenager”).
- The importance of tact and “winning words” is emphasized in this chapter; it is what helps Odysseus not to scare off Nausicaä.

## ***The Odyssey, Book VII – Week 4, Day 3***

1. In what two ways does Athene assist Odysseus as he walks into the city?

*She shows him the way in the form of a little girl, advising him to keep to himself. She also hides him in a mist to keep the leery Phaeacians from questioning him, a stranger.*

2. What special skills are the Phaeacian men and women known for?

*The men are good shipbuilders; the women are expert weavers.*

3. Give the two significant comments on human nature that Odysseus observes about (a) young persons, and (b) “we sons of men on earth.”

*Young people are often foolish, and humans are generally suspicious of one another.*

4. What do Alcinöus and Arete promise Odysseus?

*Any ship or sailors he needs to get home.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- More hospitality to a visitor is shown here, this time from Arete and Alcinöus.
- Odysseus’s comment, “Suspicious creatures are we sons of men on earth,” is still true today.

## ***The Odyssey, Book VIII – Week 4, Day 4***

1. How is Odysseus affected by the songs of Demodocus? How does his reaction affect Alcinöus and Arete?

*He weeps because they remind him of his participation in the Trojan War, and the things that happened. Alcinöus and Arete are deeply affected by it, and it increases their trust in him and their willingness to help him in his journey.*

2. Describe the conflict Odysseus has regarding whether or not to participate in the athletic games during the banquet. How does the situation reflect upon the young men participating?

*At first he is too sad and tired to think of games, but Euryalus is so rude to him, laughing at his assumed lack of ability, that Odysseus agrees to play. Their reaction to Odysseus is rude, and it contrasts markedly with the hospitality of Alcinöus and Arete.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- There is a tradition that Homer was blind. Many think that this idea came from the description of Demodocus, the blind bard who sings songs of the Trojan War. Some think that this was Homer’s way of slyly inserting himself into the story of *The Odyssey*.

## *The Odyssey, Books IX-X – Week 5, Day 1*

1. Summarize the troubles that Odysseus has with the Ciconians and at the land of the Lotus-eaters.

*His men do not leave quickly after defeating the Ciconians, and a few are killed. Zeus sends a storm, bringing Odysseus's ship to the land of the Lotus-eaters, who strongly tempt some of his men to stay after they eat the lotus.*

2. Give details of what happens during his encounter with Polyphemus the Cyclops.

*He eats two men for every meal and locks the men in a cave with a huge stone. Odysseus and his men get the Cyclops drunk and blind him, escaping under sheep and rams so he can't feel them. Previously Odysseus had told the Cyclops (Polyphemus, the son of Poseidon) that his name was "Noman." When Polyphemus cries out for help, he says "Noman" is hurting him, so the other Cyclopes think nothing is happening. (This is an example of brainpower that the Greeks appreciated.) Odysseus taunts Polyphemus, and Polyphemus hurls great stones at the ship, pushing it back to shore so they can't leave until the next morning.*

3. How does the defeat of Polyphemus lead to more trouble for Odysseus?

*Polyphemus calls upon his father, Poseidon, to avenge him, and Poseidon, we will see, makes more trouble for Odysseus.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- Odysseus shows his quick thinking by saying his name is "Noman," which keeps other Cyclopes from coming to Polyphemus's aid.
- The lack of trouble Telemachus has on his journeys over the seas serves to show how badly Odysseus is suffering with all of the awful troubles he is experiencing with his sails toward home.

1. How does Aeolus attempt to help Odysseus, and how is this attempt spoiled?

*Aeolus sends him home with a favorable west wind. The bag of winds, which some crew members think is treasure, is opened, releasing the winds and pushing Odysseus farther back. The men come to the land of the Laestrygonians, who attack Odysseus's crews, and only one ship escapes.*

2. Who is Circe? What does she do to the men of Odysseus, and how is he able to fight back? What duty does she give him?

*Circe is a "goddess" on the island of Aea, and she turns Odysseus's men to pigs. Odysseus escapes because Hermes gives him a drug that prevents Circe's spell from working. He threatens her, and she turns the men back, allows the crew to stay there for a year, and tells him he must travel to the land of the dead before he goes home.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- With all the rough-and-tumble fighting and killing and difficulties Odysseus has endured, the "bag of winds" seems a little silly-sounding.
- Even without having gone there yet, the dark, foreboding nature of the "land of the dead" is palpable.

## ***The Odyssey, Books XI-XII – Week 5, Day 2***

1. Make a short list of those whom Odysseus sees in Hades.

*Wailing, miserable dead persons, some of whom he knew in life (his mother Anticleia and Elpenor, his friend in battle), including old, young, brides, unwedded, men killed in battle, and so on.*

2. List the predictions of Teiresias.

*Odysseus will be able to get home only if they resist taking cows and sheep from the island of Thrinacia. He will find trouble at home, but will overcome it, and should offer sacrifices to Poseidon to pacify his anger. Odysseus will then live to be old and prosperous.*

3. What does Odysseus learn from his “mother”? What other women does he encounter?

*Penelope is still unmarried, his father is waiting for death, his mother died brokenhearted about Odysseus. Odysseus sees wives and daughters of the great men and “immortals” throughout history.*

4. How does the audience of Odysseus react when they finish hearing his story? What do they judge about his character, and why?

*They beg for more of his story and promise him gifts to take back with him. Based on his storytelling abilities, they judge him to be honest and upright.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- The “land of the dead” reminds the Christian of hell. There seem to be very few who ever are able to leave it or not end up there after death, which is a sharp contrast to the Christian view of the afterlife (see Question #7 in “For Additional Thought” at the end of this answer key).
- Tyro is the name of the first woman Odysseus sees in Hades. The word “tyro” in modern usage is a synonym for “beginner” or “novice” (or “newbie” in modern slang).

1. What advice does Circe offer to Odysseus regarding (a) the Sirens, (b) the Scylla, (c) Charybdis, and (d) the island of Thrinacia?

*To stop up the men’s ears from hearing the Sirens, beware the Scylla, avoid the Charybdis, and leave the sheep and cows of the island of Thrinacia alone.*

2. What happens to Odysseus and his men during their encounters with the four challenges above?

*He passes the Sirens, and the Scylla eats six of his men. They go to the island of Thrinacia, and Zeus sends winds to prevent their leaving. Eurylochus leads the men in a mutiny, deciding to slay the forbidden sheep and cattle. The winds stop, they leave the island, Zeus strikes their ship with lightning, all are killed but Odysseus.*

3. Where does Odysseus end up after his difficulties above?

*He drifts until he comes to Ogygia (and Calypso), and this is where he is held captive for seven years.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- The saying “caught between the Scylla and Charybdis” is an axiom that originates from this chapter. It describes a situation in which a person is forced to choose between two unpleasant alternatives.

## ***The Odyssey, Books XIII-XIV – Week 5, Day 3***

1. How is Odysseus sent off by Alcinöus, and how is his journey?

*With rich gifts loaded onto a beautiful, swift Phaeacian ship. Odysseus quickly reaches Ithaca; his men place him, still sleeping, with his gifts onto the sand, hiding the gifts so they won't be stolen.*

2. Where does Odysseus awaken? How does Athene again come to his aid?

*He doesn't know where he is. Athene places a cloud around him until she can set up his return. She comes to him as a shepherd, assuring him that he is in Ithaca. She then shows her true form, tells Odysseus of the situation at his home, turns him into an old man to hide his identity, and goes off to assist Telemachus in Lacedaemon.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- The Phaeacians again show their hospitality by loading up Odysseus with wonderful gifts and getting him to Ithaca, and his men are even careful not to wake him when they reach the shore!
- Odysseus doesn't recognize his home when he wakes up (although this is partly because Athene puts a cloud around him). This is also a phenomenon felt by people in today's world. Often when you return to a place you knew long ago, it has changed dramatically. American author Thomas Wolfe even wrote a novel titled *You Can't Go Home Again*.

1. Describe the encounter of Odysseus with Eumaeus. What does Odysseus learn from this encounter about (a) his home, (b) Telemachus, and (c) the character of Eumaeus himself?

*Eumaeus is kind to Odysseus (who is disguised as an old man), feeding him and protecting him from the herd dogs. Odysseus learns (a) that the suitors are draining his wealth, (b) that Telemachus has gone searching for him, and (c) that Eumaeus is wise, compassionate, and faithful to Odysseus.*

2. How does Odysseus test Eumaeus?

*He lets Eumaeus know subtly that he needs a coat by telling a tale of how he needed a coat long ago while fighting with Odysseus. Eumaeus understands the message and gives “the old man” a coat.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- The interaction between Eumaeus and Odysseus (as an old man) underscores the appreciation that the Greeks had for friendship and loyalty.
- Odysseus again tells a good story that wins him trust with a “stranger,” but it is a false one.

## ***The Odyssey, Books XV-XVI – Week 5, Day 4***

1. Explain the specific directions that Athene gives Telemachus.

*Go to Ithaca, the suitors plan to kill him, so to go through Eumaeus so they won't get to him.*

2. What sign appears to Telemachus as he thanks Menelaus? How does Helen see this omen?

*An eagle carrying a white goose appears. Helen says it is an omen of Odysseus: As he came from the hills, so shall Odysseus, coming through hardships, come home.*

3. How does Odysseus again test Eumaeus?

*As the "old man," he says he should not burden Eumaeus, but Eumaeus begs him to stay.*

4. Where does Telemachus send Theoclymenus, and what sign appears?

*Telemachus sends Theoclymenus to Eurymachus, one of the suitors, because he doesn't think it safe at home. A hawk tears a dove, which is a sign that the returning Telemachus will regain his home and property.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- Again we see more signs from the "gods" in the form of birds.

1. What is unusual about the dogs' behavior? What is the explanation for it?

*They do not bark; it's because they recognize Odysseus as he arrives.*

2. How does the "old man" exhort Telemachus when he hears of his troubles?

*That Telemachus should go face the suitors, and that it is better to die fighting alone against them than to allow them to take his property and home.*

3. How does Odysseus instruct Telemachus after he reveals himself to him?

*Go home; wait for him to show up (and don't interfere if the suitors mistreat him); collect armor, spears, and swords; and wait for the right moment to attack the suitors.*

4. Describe Penelope's address to Antinoös.

*She upbraids him for plotting to kill Telemachus, warning him of Zeus's judgment, especially since Odysseus was kind to his father.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- Penelope's harsh words for Antinoös are well spoken; Antinoös comes off looking as despicable, because as Penelope points out, he is returning evil for good.

## ***The Odyssey, Books XVII-XVIII – Week 6, Day 2***

1. How does Telemachus get his father to the family home?

*He takes him to his home as a beggar, still looking like an old man.*

2. Sum up the meeting between Telemachus and Penelope upon his return. What prediction does Theoclymenus make?

*Telemachus is careful not to give away the fact that Odysseus is on Ithaca; Theoclymenus says he saw an omen that Odysseus is now at Ithaca.*

3. Describe the confrontation with Melanthius.

*Melanthius ridicules the appearance of Eumaeus and the “old man,” wishing for the death of Telemachus. He is obviously disloyal.*

4. How does Odysseus test the suitors, especially Antinoös? How do they respond to him?

*He begs to see who will be generous. Antinoös is not even generous with food that isn't his, and he throws a stool which strikes Odysseus.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Odysseus is taking careful note of who is for him and who is against him. This will come up again later in the book as to how he treats those who are involved in his household.

1. Describe the fight between Odysseus and Irus.

*The beggar fights Odysseus for “rights” to the house. Odysseus attempts to avoid a fight, but Irus attacks him, and Odysseus beats him badly.*

2. What does Athene do for Penelope? How does this affect the suitors? Why does Penelope tell Eurymachus that she has decided to marry one of the suitors?

*She makes Penelope sleep soundly, and improves her beauty as she sleeps. The suitors are stricken with “love” for her. Penelope readies to marry again because Odysseus told her that when Telemachus was old enough to grow a beard, then she would be free to marry, and the returned Telemachus is bearded. She is actually plotting against the suitors.*

3. How do Melanthe and Eurymachus treat the “old man”?

*Melanthe insults the “old man,” and Odysseus rebukes her. Eurymachus insults his bald head and speaks rudely to him.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- What is it with the stools? Odysseus again gets a stool thrown at him, which further demonstrates that the suitors are not just troublemakers, but violent, even to an “old beggar.”
- The great strength of Odysseus is on display here; there is no question as to if he will beat Irus—the only

question is “Will he accidentally kill him?”

### ***The Odyssey, Book XIX – Week 6, Day 3***

1. What does Penelope ask the “old man,” and how does he pass the test? What news does he share about Odysseus?

*Of his past and his work with Odysseus. Odysseus describes clothing that Penelope gave him. That he has heard that Odysseus is on his way home.*

2. How does Eurycleia recognize Odysseus? Why doesn't Penelope recognize him?

*As she bathes “the old man’s” feet, she sees a scar a boar gave him when Odysseus was a boy. Athene draws Penelope’s attention elsewhere, and Odysseus prevents Eurycleia from telling her.*

3. Describe Penelope’s recurring dream, and its meaning.

*A single eagle breaks the necks of twenty geese she keeps at her house. Meaning: Odysseus will return and kill all the suitors.*

4. What contest does Penelope propose to determine which of the suitors she will marry?

*She will marry the man who can shoot an arrow through a row of axes, like Odysseus used to do.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Again we see an athletic contest that young men are eager to join in.
- The scene with Eurycleia is a great one when she discovers the “old man’s” true identity.

### ***The Odyssey, Book XX – Week 6, Day 4***

1. With what two dilemmas does Odysseus wrestle? How does Athene reassure him?

*Whether to kill the suitors now or give them another night, and how he is going to stand up against all of them. Athene promises that she will help, and that he will defeat all suitors.*

2. Who else demonstrates his loyalty to Odysseus?

*Philoetius, the cowherder.*

3. Describe how Telemachus displays his newfound boldness.

*He warns the suitors not to insult “the old man,” and threatens Ctesippus after he throws an ox-hoof at Odysseus.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- For the third time, Odysseus has something thrown at him. This just serves to make Odysseus (and readers) more sure that justice should be served to these evil suitors.
- There is suspense here—not knowing exactly how Odysseus and Telemachus can beat the suitors.

### ***The Odyssey, Book XXI-XXII – Week 7, Day 1***

1. Whom does Odysseus enlist as allies in his upcoming battle with the suitors?

*Eumaeus and Philoetius.*

2. Describe what happens when the suitors try to bend the bow.

*They are unable; Odysseus asks for a chance, they ridicule and want to deny it to him, but Telemachus and Penelope insist he must be given a chance. Odysseus strings the bow and shoots through all twelve axes.*

3. Why do Eurycleia and Philoetius lock the doors?

*The doors are locked so the suitors cannot escape.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Odysseus again shines in an athletic contest (like he did earlier in *The Odyssey* against the young men of Phaeacia). The stage is set for the even bigger “contest” that will pit Odysseus and Telemachus against the suitors.

### ***The Odyssey, Book XXII – Week 7, Day 2***

1. Describe the battle.

*Odysseus and Telemachus slaughter the suitors, Antinoös first.*

2. How does Athene aid Odysseus and Telemachus?

*She appears as Mentor, encouraging him; she also helps in the battle.*

3. What is the “fate” of Leiodes, Phemius, Melanthius, and the disloyal maids?

*Leiodes – beheaded; Phemius – guiltless, spared; Melanthius – nose, ears cut off; disemboweled; hands, feet cut off; disloyal maids – hanged.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Odysseus does show mercy to Medon and Phemius, but all the other suitors are killed.
- Although Odysseus does stop Eurycleia from joying in the slaughter, the gruesome way that Odysseus kills and mutilates his enemies is disturbing, especially to the Christian.

### ***The Odyssey, Book XXIII – Week 7, Day 3***

1. Discuss Eurycleia's revelation to Penelope that Odysseus has returned.

*Penelope doesn't believe her; she thinks that Eurycleia has gone mad or that a god has killed the suitors.*

2. How does Penelope test Odysseus?

*To find out if it really is Odysseus, she speaks to him and then asks Eurycleia to move his bed frame. Odysseus says, harshly, that this is impossible, since a tree had grown through the bed frame and it would be immovable. Penelope knows then that he really is Odysseus, and runs to him.*

3. What tasks does Odysseus explain to Penelope that he still has before him?

*He must make a sacrifice to Poseidon and go to his father's house to reveal himself.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- The test that Penelope puts Odysseus to—to prove he really is Odysseus—echoes the earlier test that the suitors failed and Odysseus passed. How different he looks to Penelope after 20 years is not directly addressed, but it's a fascinating question: Would we recognize a wife/husband/child if we had not seen him/her for 20 years?

### ***The Odyssey, Book XXIV – Week 7, Day 4***

1. What scene opens this book?

*The suitors are in Hades, bemoaning their fate.*

2. Describe the reunion between Odysseus and Laertes.

*Odysseus visits Laertes as he farms, disguising his identity. He tests his father, who he finds is still mourning his death. He reveals himself to his father, proving his identity through the boar tusk scar.*

3. What happens with Odysseus and the families of the slain suitors?

*They demand vengeance on Odysseus and gathering arms against him; they fight and Laertes and Odysseus begin to badly beat them. Athene stops the fight and encourages peace.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Again we see the woe and despair of those in Hades.
- The reunion between Odysseus and his father is touching, with Odysseus gently breaking the news.

## ***The Odyssey: For Additional Thought/Essay Topics***

1. Write a list of the “repeated phrases that describe characters or events” mentioned in the “Suggestions for Reading *The Odyssey*” at the beginning of the book.

*Here is a non-exhaustive list of phrases used in The Odyssey to describe events or persons:*

- *rosy-fingered dawn*
- *Aegis-bearing Zeus*
- *passed the barrier of your teeth (describes words spoken someone)*
- *long-tried/princely/royal/high-born Odysseus*
- *princely/discreet Telemachus*
- *winged words*
- *revered Alcinöüs*
- *clear-eyed Athene*
- *heaven-descended/light-haired Menelaus*
- *heedful Penelope*
- *noble swineherd (Eumaeus)*

What effect do you think this has on *The Odyssey* as a literary work?

*Answers will vary. Students might think it adds consistency to The Odyssey and helps establish characters as certain types.*

2. Hospitality toward friends and strangers is an important part of *The Odyssey* (and, it can be inferred, in ancient Greek culture). Briefly describe the hospitality shown by the following examples:

- (a) Book I – the treatment of Athene/Mentor by Telemachus
- (b) Book III – the treatment of Telemachus by Nestor
- (c) Book IV – the treatment of Telemachus by Menelaus
- (d) Books VI-VIII – the treatment of Odysseus by Alcinöüs, Arete, and the Phaeacians
- (e) Book XIV – the treatment of “old man” Odysseus by Eumaeus
- (f) Book XVI – the treatment of “old man” Odysseus by Telemachus

- (a) *Telemachus welcomes Athene/Mentor into his home, apologizing for the suitors.*
- (b) *Nestor welcomes Telemachus, telling him stories of the warriors in the Trojan War.*
- (c) *Menelaus receives Telemachus, welcoming and feeding him.*
- (d) *Alcinöüs and Arete welcome Odysseus, prepare him for his journey, and furnish him with a ship and rich gifts.*
- (e) *Eumaeus treats the “old man” (Odysseus) kindly.*
- (f) *Telemachus gently treats the “old man,” even refusing to take his seat.*

How do the following examples of “hospitality” compare to the ones above?

- (a) Book VIII – the treatment of Odysseus by Euryalus regarding the athletic games
- (b) Book IX – the treatment of Odysseus and his men by Polyphemus
- (c) Book XI – the treatment of Odysseus and his men by Circe
- (d) Books XVII, XVIII, XX – the treatment of the “old man” Odysseus by the suitors, Melanthis, and Melanthius, respectively

- (a) *Euryalus mocks Odysseus for his supposed lack of athletic prowess, which is in sharp contrast with how Odysseus has otherwise been welcomed.*
- (b) *Even though he is asked respectfully by Odysseus for help, Polyphemus still kills and eats a number of his men and tries to kill the rest before being blinded.*
- (c) *Circe turns Odysseus's men into pigs when they land on her island (and tries to do the same to Odysseus), which is another strong contrast to the hospitality shown by others when Odysseus (sometimes with his men) land on unknown islands.*
- (d) *The suitors, Melantho, and Melanthius are all rude and inhospitable to Odysseus.*

How is the situation with the suitors at the home of Odysseus an especially revolting reversal of the examples of generous hospitality in *The Odyssey*?

*They arrogantly and rudely impose themselves upon the home of Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemachus, which looks especially terrible in contrast to the free and generous hospitality shown by others in The Odyssey. And even though the suitors are essentially stealing from Odysseus, they are still greedy about sharing it with others like beggars (how Odysseus appears to them).*

3. What are some character traits admired by the Greeks? Give examples in *The Odyssey*.

*Answers will vary, but might include*

- (a) *loyalty – Odysseus's shipmates, servants, son, friends, and wife all show degrees of loyalty that are praised; Aegisthus is condemned for killing Agamemnon, a family member.*
- (b) *strength – Odysseus, just as one example, fights numerous enemies, overcoming them with physical strength; he performs well at the athletic games at Phaeacia; he strings the bow and shoots through the axes with an arrow.*
- (c) *brainpower – Odysseus outwits the Cyclops and successfully plans how to take back his home from the suitors, Circe tells Odysseus how to get past the Sirens with wax in the men's ears and by tying him to the mast,*
- (d) *tact – Odysseus graciously speaks to the Phaeacian young women when he lands there, and he tactfully reminds Alcinoüs that he needs to leave.*
- (e) *storytelling ability – Alcinoüs and Arete judge Odysseus to be honest and upright mainly based upon his storytelling ability, and Eumaeus helps Odysseus partly based upon the "story of his life" (a false one) that he tells.*

4. List some examples of the belief in "fate" or the idea that events were preordained to happen to different characters in *The Odyssey*.

*A few examples are as follows (these are not exhaustive, of course).*

- *"The gods delay his [Odysseus's] journey" (Athene in Book I).*
- *For nine years long we plotted their destruction, busy with craft of every kind; yet still the son of Kronos hardly brought us through" (Nestor in Book III).*
- *"Now it is appointed you to see your friends no more nor reach your stately house and native land till you have gone again to Egypt's waters" (Proteus in Book IV).*
- *"Zeus himself distributes fortune to mankind and gives to high and low even as he wills to each" (Nausicaä in Book VI).*
- *"Let me tell you of the grievous journey home which Zeus ordained me on my setting forth from Troy" (Odysseus in Book IX).*

- “We shall not, friends...go to the halls of Hades until our destined day” (*Odysseus in Book X*).
- “These are the threads of destiny the gods themselves have spun” (*Odysseus in Book XI*).

5. In Book XVI Eumaeus the swineherd puts the “old man” (Odysseus in disguise) in Telemachus’s hands. Telemachus is concerned about the “old man’s” safety because of the suitors, and he responds, “Hard is it even for a powerful man to act against a crowd; because together they are far too strong.”

How is this still true in our day? How should a Christian act in a situation similar to the one that Telemachus faces?

*Answers will vary, but there are numerous situations in which a person who is right is faced with standing up to a crowd. Teenagers will be able to name various pressures from peers to do wrong. A Christian’s response must be based upon not what the crowd—or a majority—does, but what God’s Word says is the right thing to do. A few examples in the Bible:*

- God told the Israelites, “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil” (*Exodus 23:2*).
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego resisted the dictate of the king to worship the idol (*Daniel 3*).
- Peter told the high priest and council, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (*Acts 5:29*).

6. Odysseus tells Alcinoüs upon being taken to him, “Upon the shore I saw your daughter’s maids, playing a game, and she among them seemed a goddess. To her I made entreaty, and she did not lack sound judgment, such as you could not hope that a young person meeting you would show; for usually the young are giddy [foolish].”

Apparently in the time of Odysseus, many teenagers or young persons were foolish. Are teenagers or young adults even in today’s society too foolish or immature? Give examples of why you do or do not think so.

*Answers will vary, but most readers will probably be able to think of examples of foolish teens or young adults!*

7. The concept of death and being consigned to Hades was an event that Greeks dreaded, and the abode of Hades is a depressing, gloomy, horrible place, as described in *The Odyssey*. Achilles, for example, tells Odysseus, “Mock not at death, glorious Odysseus. Better to be the hireling of a stranger, and serve a man of mean estate whose living is but small, than be the ruler over all these dead and gone.”

How does what a Christian has to look forward to in the afterlife contrast with this view? (See for example 2 Corinthians 5:1-8, Luke 23:35-43, John 14:1-3.)

*For a Christian, to be “absent from the body” is to be present with Jesus Christ. The thief on the cross who believed Jesus was told by Him, “Today thou shalt be with me in paradise.” Jesus told his disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me” and that when he left earth, he would prepare a place for those who believed in Him, so they would be together.*

## Karma and Nirvana – Week 8, Day 1

1. What does the householder/treasurer do to create both “good karma” and “bad karma” for himself? What are the good and bad results?

*He creates “good karma” by giving food to a “Buddha,” and receives “good karma” in the form of being born seven times in a higher state of existence and obtaining the high position of treasurer seven times as well.*

*He creates “bad karma” by repenting of his generosity and murdering his nephew for money, and he receives “bad karma” in the form of going to hell, being without sons in seven different lives, and therefore forfeiting his property to the king seven times.*

2. Sum up the meaning of the poem that concludes this selection.

*A man can take nothing of his life with him in death, but he does take his deeds with him to the next life, and they affect how his next life turns out.*

3. Look up the following passages, and evaluate how God’s Word compares or contrasts with the belief in karma.

*Proverbs 28:27 – Those who give to the poor will not lack, similar to the belief in “good karma.”*

*2 Corinthians 5:10 – Everyone appears at Jesus’ judgement seat, to answer for our deeds on earth. This is similar to “karma,” but different from reincarnation, since when we die the first time, we must make an account of our deeds.*

*Galatians 6:8-9 – Those who follow fleshly desire will reap “corruption,” but those who follow spiritual pursuits will gain everlasting life. This is similar to karma, but different in that it directs people to follow Christ, not just some vague pursuit of “good.”*

*Ephesians 2:8-9 – God’s grace is what saves us, through faith in Jesus, not anything else (including good works), so no one has a reason to boast.*

*Hebrews 9:27 – Man dies once, then is judged, unlike the belief in reincarnation held by many Buddhists, where a man dies and is rebirthed numerous times.*

4. Write the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism. Now, compare or contrast them, along with the general notion of nirvana with these passages from the Bible:

*Experiencing suffering, realizing that the world is temporary, removing all desires, and following the “Eightfold Path.”*

*Job 5:6-7 – Man is “born unto trouble,” and will experience hardship and sin in his life, which is a similar teaching to Buddhism’s belief that evil comes upon men.*

*Psalms 37:4, 42:1-2 – Unlike the Buddhist teaching that nirvana is attained partly through removing all desires, the Bible teaches that if you are able to “delight in the Lord” then He will give you “the desires of thine heart” (Psalm 37:4). David wrote that his soul thirsted after God (Psalm 42:1-2).*

*Matthew 24:35 – This compares favorably to the idea in Buddhism that the world is temporary, since Jesus said that “heaven and earth shall pass away” (which is not to say that Christianity is the same as or even similar to Buddhism, of course!*

*Luke 23:39-43 – Unlike the idea of nirvana, which is attained by human works, Jesus tells the thief on the cross he would be with Him in paradise as soon as he died. Also, unlike the idea of nirvana as extinguishing the soul, Jesus said the thief would live again in heaven.*

*John 3:36, 14:6 – Unlike Buddhism, Jesus says that anyone who has faith in Him will have “everlasting life” (John 3:36), and that He is the only way to God (John 14:6).*

*Romans 8:11 – Unlike the state of nothingness promised by nirvana, the Bible says that Christians will live again, raised up by the Spirit of God.*

*James 5:10 – Christianity agrees with Buddhism is that there will be suffering in the world, and says that Christians should work to endure it, looking at the prophets of old as examples of being patient under suffering.*

*1 Peter 2:19 – The Bible again teaches that Christians will suffer, and that it is “thankworthy” if a Christian endures suffering wrongfully.*

## **Early Christian Writings, Part 2 – Week 8, Day 3**

1. What is Justin Martyr’s main point in “Folly of Idol Worship”? What does he point out about those who make “gods”?

*That it is ridiculous to build “things” out of materials and call them “gods,” since they require constant attention and fixing and upkeep—that God is the only God, and that the one built by the Romans are devils.*

*Justin Martyr points out that those who are supposedly trying to honor “gods” by building idols actually commit sins with the girls who work with them, and therefore show by their immoral behavior that they’re not trying to really honor any “god” or the true God.*

2. Write a brief summary of Justin Martyr’s argument in “Christ Taught Civil Obedience.”

*Christians obey government rulers, pay their taxes, and pray for those in authority, just as Jesus taught them to do.*

1. List the main predictions of the Old Testament that Justin Martyr relates about the coming of Jesus.

*That Jesus would be a ruler, He would be the desire of nations, He would be a descendant of the tribe of Judah, that He would be a descendant of Jesse, and that His blood would be shed for His followers.*

2. What does listing such predictions prove about the person of Jesus?

*That He is more than just a nice man or moral teacher—He is the one that the Old Testament is written about, the Son of God, which is great evidence of God’s divine power—His ability to predict the future, showing He is the one true God.*

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter I – Week 9, Day 1***

1. What do the Romans in the coliseum, regardless of “class,” share in common? What does this say about the culture?

*Their enjoyment of blood sport. It speaks of the absolute decadence of the culture.*

2. What happens to the Mauritanian and Batavian fighters?

*They fight to a draw and are sent back to fight again later against a weakened group of single fighters. The Mauritanian is wounded, but the Batavian is not allowed to finish him off.*

3. What is Macer known for, and how is he used to entertain the crowd? How does he surprise everyone present?

*Macer is a skillful fighter. He is placed with only a small sword to defend himself against, first, a hungry tiger, and second, a lion. He surprises everyone by refusing to fight the wounded Mauritanian, since, as he says, he is a Christian and cannot harm others.*

4. What is troublingly ironic about the crowd’s reaction to Macer’s refusal to fight the Mauritanian?

*Instead of rejoicing or seeing Macer’s refusal to harm a wounded man as noble, they are angry!*

5. What is learned about the Christians in Rome from the conversation between Marcellus and Lucullus after Macer is killed?

*That Christians refuse to fight and accept death willingly, and that Emperor Decius has been killing them to reduce their numbers and enforce adherence to the Roman religion.*

6. Describe the scenes with Alexander and the Christian young women.

*They are killed by wild beasts, willingly dying for Jesus and praising Him with their last breaths.*

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter II – Week 9, Day 1***

1. Describe the characters of Marcellus and Lucullus.

*Marcellus has traveled much and is a Praetorian guard. Lucullus is from a wealthy family and has not been outside of Italy.*

2. Why does Marcellus oppose the Coliseum murders of the Christians?

*He calls them butchery, and opposes the killings of old men, women, and children..*

3. Why does Lucullus accuse Christians of? How does Marcellus answer?

*Lucullus calls the Christians evil and dangerous because he says they undermine the government by opposing fighting and the falseness of the Roman religion of many “gods” and “goddesses,” and by*

*supposed immoral conduct. Marcellus replies that the Christians he has seen are calm and noble as they face death, pure in conduct, and obedient to laws.*

4. Explain Marcellus's new duty and how he reacts to it.

*He is ordered to hunt down Christians in the catacombs; he is gravely disturbed by this.*

5. Give some information about the catacombs, including fossors, that Lucullus explains to Marcellus.

*They honeycomb under the city; they are complicated and difficult to find people in; they are used to hide Christians from their persecutors. The fossors are the experts in the catacombs, and are mostly Christians, and will not betray their brothers and sisters.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Marcellus's opposition to the murders of the old, women, and children show that he has not been totally debased by his military or Roman training. He still has common decency to oppose these types of wanton acts against humanity.

### ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter III – Week 9, Day 1***

1. One description of the great tombs Marcellus sees reads this way: "The epitaphs of the dead showed not faith, but love of life, triumphant; not the assurance of immortal life, but a sad longing after the pleasures of the world." What does this mean?

*That the great tombs do not give real meaning to a person's existence other than his "accomplishments" in his earthly life—an indictment of the hopelessness of the belief system of the ancient Romans.*

2. What two characteristics of the Christians is Marcellus curious about regarding their approach to death?

*First that they have "conquered the fear of death," and second, that they "die rejoicing."*

3. What about a man's appearance leads Marcellus to pick him out? What is the suspected reason for his appearance?

*The man is pale-skinned, which makes Marcellus think he is a fossor.*

4. Explain how Marcellus determines that Pollio is a Christian. How does he convince the boy to take him down into the Catacombs?

*He asks Pollio to help him sacrifice to the "gods," and he cannot. Marcellus swears that he will not betray any Christians if Pollio leads him down into the Catacombs.*

#### **Additional Notes:**

- Marcellus in this chapter doesn't seem to be a one-track minded Praetorian guard bent on the persecution of Christians. He seems genuinely curious and a seeker of truth, especially in light of his thoughts on how Christians approach death, which contrasts how the Roman religion dealt with the subject.

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter IV – Week 9, Day 2***

1. Why does Marcellus have little fear about being led into the Catacombs into the mercy of the Christians, even though he will be rightly seen as a persecutor?

*His experience with them indicates that they are not violent or vengeful, and he feels safe.*

2. What does Marcellus notice about the wording on many Christian tombs?

*They speak of the Christians' being dead "in peace."*

3. Describe the appearance, demeanor, and actions of the Christians in the small room that Pollio leads Marcellus to.

*They are pale and thin, but their eyes reflect hope, not despair. They are singing praises to God.*

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter V – Week 9, Day 2***

1. How does Marcellus assure the Christians that he does not mean to harm them?

*He reminds them that he can never leave the catacombs without their help, and that he is helpless and in their hands.*

2. What does Marcellus say about his religious training and his opinion of the “gods”? What questions and sights lead him to seek out Christianity?

*He was trained in the Roman and Greek religions and philosophies, but he despises the “gods” and “goddesses,” who behave worse than he does. His questions about life and death and truth and knowing God, as well as his observation of Christian behavior, lead him to seek out Christianity.*

3. How does Honorius answer Marcellus’s questions? What about Jesus does he explain to Marcellus?

*He explains the true God and Jesus Christ to him—his mentions in prophecies, his birth, death, and resurrection.*

4. Explain what happens to Marcellus.

*Marcellus is converted, and becomes a Christian.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- Honorius answers Marcellus’s questions by referring to Bible prophecies of Jesus Christ. This is an effective way of witnessing; no other book supposedly divine in origin is like the Bible in this way.

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter VI – Week 9, Day 2***

1. How do the many grave inscriptions that Marcellus reads affect him?

*They read that Christians died bravely and without fear because of their faith, and this strengthens Marcellus's faith.*

2. What does the “fish” symbol represent?

*The Greek letters represent “Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior.”*

3. What do the pictures of Jonah and Lazarus represent to the Christians, as Honorius explains?

*The resurrection of Christ and of the dead.*

4. What does the officer's tombstone inscription represent to Marcellus? What about the other inscriptions of Christians?

*An example for him to follow by dying for Christ if necessary. The other Christians' tombstones demonstrate their love for each other.*

5. Why does Marcellus call the death of a Christian “sweet”?

*Because the fear of death is gone, and a Christian goes to a blessed reward from Christ.*

6. What major difference does Christianity have from other religions, as does Honorius explain?

*Unlike pagan religions, Christians need no priest; Jesus is the mediator between God and man.*

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter VII – Week 9, Day 3***

1. What is your reaction to the general's words to Marcellus: “A soldier's feelings have no right to interfere with his duties”?

*Answers will vary, but there will no doubt be a realization that the general is wrong in this case, and in many other cases, because a soldier should not obey an order simply because it is an order.*

2. Why does Marcellus tell Lucullus about how he (Marcellus) feels about the philosophies that he has been apparently satisfied with before?

*That he has not been satisfied with them, because of their emptiness, and that the Christian faith has satisfied his soul.*

3. What does Lucullus tell Marcellus he (Marcellus) must choose between? How does Lucullus tell Marcellus he can be “forgiven” by the general?

*He can either be a soldier or a Christian. The only way Marcellus can be “forgiven” is for him to forget his conversion, and to go again to arrest the Christians in the catacombs.*

4. Why do you think that the richness and opulence of Rome is described in such detail as Marcellus walks through the city at the chapter's end?

*It is to provide a similarity to Babylon, which the disturbed man speaks about (quoting Revelation 18), which Rome and the Roman religion will play a part in during the last days.*

**Additional Notes:**

- There is a notable contrast in how Lucullus's appeals to Marcellus to resume his military career repeatedly focus on this earthly life's benefits and rewards, while Marcellus's focus has shifted to the eternal.

### ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter VIII – Week 9, Day 3***

1. How does the state of Christians in the catacombs compare with the condition of the Roman Empire?

*The peace and harmony underground contrasts strongly with the ugliness of the culture of the Roman Empire, with its "plots, rebellions, and treasons" and hearts of people dulled into feeling no compassion for others.*

2. How does the corruption of the empire affect those who are Christians?

*Persecution grows, becoming a Christian often means death, and Christians must make choices between their faith and everything else they have.*

3. How are the catacombs, paradoxically, both a source of comfort and gloom?

*They are a safe refuge for Christians, who can worship and bury their dead, but they are also without light, and Christians who stay too long underground lose their color and health.*

4. How are the catacombs decorated? What is the effect of these decorations?

*With pictures of great Christians who stood strong in their faith. This brightens up the dark underground and encourages Christians in the catacombs.*

5. List several positive effects that the Roman persecution has upon Christians.

*It gives them "zeal, faith, and love," it shows who is truly a Christian, it made them brave, it brought the Christians closer to each other, and it makes Christianity more than just a belief system, but a way of life and devotion to Jesus Christ.*

**Additional Notes:**

- It is ironic that in the midst of so much darkness in the catacombs, the area is filled with so much "light" of the truth of Jesus Christ, and the love the Christians have for each other.

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter IX – Week 10, Day 1***

1. Explain how the increased persecution of Christians affects the catacombs.

*More Christians are persecuted, which includes those who helped those living in the catacombs, so life is more difficult for those who receive less aid. Christians are more reliant upon “neutrals” for aid. Also, there are more Christians crowding the spaces below.*

2. What are the thoughts of Marcellus as he completes his task in the Coliseum?

*He wonders how long it will be until he is not gathering the bodies of slain Christians, but being gathered by someone else.*

3. Why are the Christians allowed into the Coliseum, instead of simply being captured by the gatekeeper?

*They help the empire by burying their dead, and those who would try to force them to betray their Christian brothers and sisters know it is nearly hopeless, because the Christians will refuse, and the persecutors would be lost in the catacombs.*

4. What bad news does Marcellus learn about Lucullus?

*That another of the Praetorian guard converted to Christianity, and the emperor is so angry that he put Lucullus in charge of rounding up Christians.*

5. Why is Marcellus recognized for who he is by a crowd?

*He commands the crowd to step aside in his soldierly manner (and even says he is of the Praetorian guard), and they recognize him as the member who converted to Christianity.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- Christians are shown often quoting Scriptures to each other to strengthen one another. This is a good lesson for us today!

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter X – Week 10, Day 1***

1. How does the outlook of Marcellus affect the other Christians?

*His resolve and courage inspire them, especially when he quotes Scriptures to them.*

2. What two items of bad news do the Christians receive?

*The death of Chrysippus, and the capture of Pollio by the Praetorians, with Lucullus in charge.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- The introduction of Lucullus in this chapter sets up a possible confrontation between his old friend Marcellus and himself.

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter XI – Week 10, Day 2***

1. What surprises Lucullus about Marcellus's report on how he has been?

*Lucullus is surprised that Marcellus is happier than he has ever been, because Lucullus expected more unhappiness from the persecution.*

2. To what does Lucullus attribute Marcellus's courage? How does Marcellus respond?

*Lucullus attributes it to madness, but Marcellus says it comes from God.*

3. What request does Marcellus make of Lucullus?

*To release Pollio in exchange for himself.*

4. How does Lady Caecilia react to Marcellus's news?

*She dies from grief.*

### **Additional Notes:**

- Lady Caecilia's reaction is an example that Christians are subject to the same emotional reactions as non-Christians. The difference is the hope that they have in the face of sorrow or danger.

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter XII – Week 10, Day 2***

1. How does Pollio face the inquisition? How does he answer their questions?

*He faces it bravely, answering questions truthfully and making the inquisitor look foolish, with his comments about "crime" and "treason."*

2. How does the examiner's offer to Pollio reflect the difference between his (or the Roman government's) worldview and the Christian view?

*His offer of clemency if Pollio recants demonstrates his love of the power and wealth of earthly life, instead of eternal considerations.*

3. Explain Pollio's statement to the examiner: "The death which you threaten me with has no terrors; but the life to which you invite me is more terrible to me than a thousand deaths."

*To live as a non-Christian, with no eternal hope, is much more frightening than dying for his faith.*

### ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter XIII – Week 10, Day 3***

1. How does Pollio hold himself in the arena? What delays his killing by the tiger?

*Fearlessly, awaiting death and his reward, praying to God. Cinna is thrust into the arena after he shouts to the crowd, and is killed first.*

2. How does Marcellus enter the scene? What does he resolve?

*He shouts in anger at Pollio's murder and is surrounded by the crowd. Lucullus attempts to let him go, but he refuses.*

### ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter XIV – Week 10, Day 3***

1. What options does Lucullus give Marcellus? What is Marcellus's response?

*To give up Christianity for a short time, until the lust for persecution subsides, or to still be a Christian, but to pretend he isn't. Marcellus refuses.*

2. How is Marcellus more severely treated? Explain his last words and their importance.

*His death is by being burned at the stake. His last words, praising God and proclaiming victory, magnify God and speak highly of the Christian faith.*

### ***The Martyr of the Catacombs, Chapter XV – Week 10, Day 4***

1. How has Marcellus's death affected Lucullus?

*He is deeply saddened, but curious about Marcellus's way of facing his torture and death.*

2. Sum up the conversation between Lucullus and Honorius.

*Honorius asks for Marcellus's remains, which Lucullus refuses initially. Lucullus comments on the strong impression that Marcellus made during his death, and asks if he can take his ashes down to the catacombs.*

3. Describe the service for Marcellus. How does it affect Lucullus?

*Honorius reads 1 Corinthians 1 and prays. Lucullus is deeply moved by the Christians' devotion even in the face of death, and feels that he can never be happy again. He now appreciates the devotion of Marcellus toward the poor Christians, whom Lucullus feels have the only virtue left in Rome. He becomes a friend to Christians, helping them escape persecution, and eventually becomes a Christian himself.*

4. How does the author compare the Roman Empire to the faith of the Christians?

*By comparing the ruins of ancient Rome, which is dust, to the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## ***The Martyr of the Catacombs: For Additional Thought/Essay Topics***

1. Even more disturbing than the fact that the Roman government would allow and even promote such bloody murders in the Coliseum is how the general public reveled in the violence. Are there modern-day parallels in our society, in which large numbers of people—not just a twisted few—get thrills from violence? What does this say about our society?

*Answers will vary, but students might mention the great number of Americans, even those who call themselves Christians, who engage in “killing” while playing gruesomely violent video games, or those who pay to see gory films where people are killed and tortured by monsters, serial killers, or soldiers.*

2. The songs the Christians sing in the Catacombs reflect their joyous hope in the midst of tribulation, and are based upon actual Scripture passages. Are there songs that use the Scriptures that encourage you in times of trouble?

*Answers will vary.*

3. Marcellus is open-minded and dissatisfied with the “gods” the Romans worship. (Maybe he had been exposed to *The Odyssey*!) In what ways do modern non-Christians also try other “gods” and become dissatisfied, and more open to salvation through Jesus Christ?

*Answers will vary, but many modern “gods” that people worship are different ways to worship and please themselves—money, power, prestige, illicit relationships, and so on. The emptiness that this kind of life and pursuit brings can lead a person to seek the true God and salvation through Jesus Christ.*

4. In Chapter VI, Marcellus sees that Christianity is different from other religions in that (a) there is no priest class, and (b) by the way Christians live their lives. Sum up what 1 Timothy 2:1-6 has to say about these two topics.

*1 Timothy 2:1-6 says, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”*

*This passage says that Christians are to live a life of peace, honesty, godliness, and prayer for others, including government authorities. Christians also have no “priest class”—they have direct access to Jesus Christ himself, the only mediator between God and mankind.*

5. The “splendid arms” and “gorgeous armor” Marcellus wore as a soldier contrast with his “simple tunic,” which he later wears. What might this change of clothes represent?

*This is a visual representation of his decision to simply follow Christ and leave behind his former life.*

6. The murder of Pollio underscores in a more personal way the gruesome evil and desperation of the Roman government, who would interrogate and execute a boy who is barely more than a child. In what ways are modern governments and the average person also hostile—and even a threat—to children and teenagers?

*Answers will vary, but for the government, they might include the government school system's focus on anti-Christian teachings and sexualizing children, its apparent tendency to kidnap children from good parents and put foster children in bad environments, the empty promises that military recruiters make to impressionable young persons in high school, and so on.*

*Society in general also seems bent against children in many ways. Homeschooling families can attest to the number of times they've been disdainfully asked, "Are those all YOUR children?" There is a general lack of kindness and enthusiasm for the idea of having children, an "I can't wait until school starts so I can get rid of the kids" mindset, and of course, the heinous evil of abortion.*

## The Hippocratic Oath – Week 11, Day 2

1. What items would Christians agree with in the Hippocratic Oath? Disagree with?

*Answers will vary, but Christians would obviously abhor taking oaths to Roman “gods,” and they would approve of statements advocating helping patients and refusing to provide abortions.*

2. What specific types of harm does a doctor taking the Hippocratic Oath swear to abstain from?

*He swears to abstain from doing anything to harm a patient, to give a patient medicine to commit suicide, to perform an abortion, to keep from corrupting himself or those under his care.*

3. What do you think is the importance of doctor-patient confidentiality, as expressed in the second-to-last paragraph?

*It keeps the patient’s condition private, in case it is embarrassing or would produce sorrow for his family or possibly give an advantage to his enemies. It also makes it more likely that a patient will be open about his symptoms to a doctor, instead of avoiding going to a doctor because he (the patient) is worried that details of his condition might be revealed by the doctor.*

4. Look up online the “Lasagna Oath” (mentioned in the headnote, and compare it to the ancient Hippocratic Oath. What main differences do you note? Why do you think these differences exist?

*Answers will vary, but the Lasagna Oath omits references to “gods,” and, sadly, it also eliminates any promise not to kill patients or give abortions to women.*

## The Law of Hippocrates – Week 11, Day 2

1. Why does Hippocrates claim medicine is “far behind all the other arts”?

*Many who practice it are “ignorant,” and are judged “inconsiderately” by others. Also, many physicians are unqualified, and the law does not punish them for malpractice; only societal disgrace affects these quacks.*

2. How does Hippocrates’ list of requirements for doctors really apply to *all* vocations?

*It explains that success in a certain career in whatever field is greatly aided by natural talent, a desire to learn more, and a willingness to work hard at it.*

3. Explain the meaning of Hippocrates’ statement “Inexperience is a bad treasure.”

*It hurts the effectiveness of a physician, who needs experience to improve and become proficient.*

4. What do you make of the last paragraph? Do you agree or disagree?

*Answers will vary.*

## Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 – Week 11, Day 3

1. What word would you use to describe the *tone* of this chapter?

*Answers will vary, but probably somber, serious, weary, and so on.*

2. How does Solomon's use of contrast affect how this chapter reads?

*Answers will vary, but it makes the things of the world seem starkly good or bad, worthwhile or worthless, and righteous or unrighteous. It brings into clarity many significant activities in life.*

3. Keeping in mind Solomon's time of life and experiences before writing Ecclesiastes, write three "lessons to be learned" from this chapter.

*Answers will vary, but certainly something to the effect of "Do good," "Obey God," "Don't put too much emphasis on material goods that won't last," or something similar.*

## 1 Corinthians Chapter 13 – Week 11, Day 3

1. Explain in your own words what the first verse of this chapter means.

*Great speakers who use great words, if they don't have charitable love for their fellow man, make their words into nothing more than noise.*

2. How does charity compare to prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, according to 13:8?

*Charity never fails, unlike prophecies, which will discontinue; languages, which will stop; and knowledge, which will vanish. Charity is everlasting!*

3. Why do you think verse 11 is included in this chapter?

*Answers will vary, but the quality of charity is something that adult Christians should work to improve and practice, being unselfish and seeking the good of others, unlike a little child's tendency to seek only to please himself.*

4. Explain briefly what the following verses say about *charity* (use a King James Bible to look them up):

*1 Corinthians 8:1 – Charity edifies others, unlike knowledge, which can cause arrogance.*

*1 Corinthians 14:1 – Christians should seek to better practice charity.*

*Colossians 3:14 – Christians should "put on charity," which is the epitome of Christian perfection.*

*1 Timothy 1:5 – The final aim of the commandment of God is charitable love.*

*1 Peter 4:8 – Charity should be the top priority of Christians, and it "covers a multitude of sins."*

## Aesop's Fables, Part 2 – Week 15, Day 1

1. How can both the lesson of “The Man, the Boy, and the Donkey” and Proverbs 11:14 be true?

*Proverbs 11:14 teaches that a person can often make a wiser decision if he listens to wise counsel. This can be true, just as it can be true that a person has to simply decide sometimes, without going back and forth trying to please everyone.*

2. Give modern examples of the lesson in “Belling the Cat,” “The Old Man and Death,” and “The Milk-maid and Her Pail.”

*Answers will vary!*

## Acts 17 vs. Greco-Roman Philosophy – Week 15, Day 2

1. What makes the Epicureans and Stoics call Paul a “babbling”?

*Paul preaches about Jesus and His resurrection, which was not like any other stories of “gods” or philosophical arguments they had heard.*

2. Who is the “unknown God” the Greeks refer to, according to Paul? How is He different from the Greek “gods” (verses 24, 25, 28, 29)?

*The “unknown God” is the God of the Bible. He is different from the Greek “gods” in that he does not live in temples, doesn't need upkeep, gives life to all mankind, and is not made by men.*

3. How does verse 31 contrast with the Stoics' view of the earth, similar to evolutionists' view, that the world is endless and will last forever?

*The world was made by God, and God will also judge the world at an appointed time.*

4. List the three main reactions that Paul's audience has to the gospel.

*Some mocked, some told him they would like to hear more another time, and some believed.*

5. Write a brief summary of what the Bible says about idol worship, according to 1 Corinthians 8:4 and 10:20.

*1 Corinthians 8:4 says that idols are not “gods” at all, and 1 Corinthians 10:20 says that when men sacrifice to “gods,” they are actually participating in the worship of demons.*

6. Sum up 1 Corinthians 1:17-25, and how it applies to the Greeks.

*The gospel of Jesus is not done by worldly “wisdom,” and it can appear foolish to the unsaved, but to those who believe the gospel, it is the power of God.*

*God's wisdom makes the world's wisdom seem foolish. Often Jews who hear the gospel require a “sign” of its proof, and often Greeks seek the world's wisdom. But instead of trying to provide signs and indications of worldly wisdom, Christians should preach the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. Even so, Jews often*

*stumble at this message, and it sounds foolish to those who seek other man-centered philosophies, like the Greeks.*

## **The Bible vs. The Quran – Week 16, Day 1**

1. How does the Quran’s description of the Israelites contrast with what the Bible says? How do you think this contributes toward Arab/Israeli conflict?

*The Quran says Allah has cursed Jews and made them pigs and apes; the Bible calls them God’s chosen nation. Obviously, when Muslims read this in the Quran, their view of Jews is twisted.*

2. How does a Christian’s approach to those who refuse to believe the Gospel differ from the teachings of the Quran regarding what to do about those who refuse to believe in Allah?

*The Quran advocates using violence against “non-believers,” unlike the Bible, which simply says to leave alone those who refuse to believe the gospel; Christians are not commanded to kill them and kidnap them, but to pray for them and to be gentle and harmless.*

3. Give several examples of the Quran’s teachings about Jesus that differ from what God’s Word says.

*In contrast to the Bible, the Quran teaches that Jesus is not God’s Son, is not a part of a Triune God, and did not actually die on the cross for the sins of the world.*

## **Colossians, Chapter 2 – Week 22, Day 3**

1. What “conflict” does Paul have for the Colossian and Laodicean Christians, and the others who haven’t seen his face (verses 1-2)?

*That their hearts will be comforted, knit together in love, and “unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,”*

2. Compare verse 8 to 1 Timothy 6:20-21. Then give an example of how a Christian today could be “spoiled” through “philosophy and vain deceit,” “the tradition of men,” or “the rudiments of the world.”

*Verse 8 warns Christians who can be “spoiled” through “philosophy and vain deceit,” and 1 Timothy 6:20-21 says, “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith.” Both warn Christians to follow Christ and the Bible’s teachings, not whatever is popular among current philosophies and ideas, as well as false scientific teachings.*

*Answers will vary on the second part of the question, but any Christian who tries new theories, new teachings, new philosophies instead of Christ is setting himself up for trouble.*

3. How could you refer to verses 10-23 to respond to a fellow Christian who tells you that you have to follow the same dietary and sabbath-keeping rules that the Israelites had to follow?

*Answers will vary, but Paul says that these are just a “shadow of things to come,” and that Christ has fulfilled these requirements, and Christians are “dead with Christ” (20) to the ordinances given to the Israelites in the Old Testament.*

4. Briefly sum up the use of the word “all” in verses 2, 3, and 9. Explain, then, how you could answer a Christian who says to you, “I have to have psychological counseling or modern methods to help me control my anxiety/anger/lack of self-control.”

*All means “all”—ALL riches of understanding (2), ALL wisdom and knowledge (3), and ALL the fulness of God (9). When a fellow Christian claims he “needs” something other than Christ to get him through some kind of personality issue or anger, he is denying that Christ is all that Christians need to sustain their hard times and personal struggles.*