Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Bible Questions and Answers, Part 11
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 1301-I

We are so blessed to be together again tonight; and we have about an hour, an hour and a few minutes, to share together. The Apostle Paul went into a city, and he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, the word is dialego, dialogue, interacted, shared; and I just think it's an important thing to do. We...we did it this summer in our Radio Rallies, and it was really kinda fun, just standing there and letting folks talk; and we shared; and it was really great. And this is something we've done at Grace Church for many, many years; and it's always been a refreshing time. We want you to feel free to ask questions about the church, about my ministry or the ministry of our church in any dimension that interests you, about the Bible, something you don't understand. It's not...the idea is not to make me look bad. Try to preserve my reputation, if you will. Be kind; but, no, we want you to...if you have a question about something or you have a concern or you don't understand a certain part of the Word of God, I'm not really up on all there is to know; but maybe we might be able to help with your question. And, if not, we'll sure know we don't know the answer, and we'll dig around and find it and let you know later. So it's your time, and the microphones are placed in the aisle. All you have to do is go up to a microphone and get in line; and we'll just kinda move along that way; and when the line gets to be two or three people, don't get up yet, because you might have to stand there for a while. Okay, right in the middle. Good.

QUESTIONER: My question, I have three urgent questions. My first question is what do you think of Dr. Walter Martin and his book, Kingdom of the Cults?

JOHN: Well, I think that's a very good book and a very helpful book in terms of giving direction to a believer in understanding the cults. I think, basically, the book is sound. The research is...is sound. There is a book that I would suggest to you as an equal to that book. It's called The Chaos of the Cults, and it's written by a man named Van Baalen. That's pretty much a similar book to...to Martin's book; but I think that book Walter Martin did a long time ago, and it had some good, substantial research. I think it's basically a pretty good book.

QUESTIONER: But he's a charismatic.

JOHN: Right, but I think...well, I don't think that reflects upon his research on the cults; because I think he, in the first place, even the charismatics love the Lord and study the Scripture. They...they may have a little element that we don't agree with; but, in many...I mean they're right about the deity

of Christ, and they're right about the Trinity, and they're right about the doctrine of salvation, and they're right about the Heaven and hell and so forth. And...and, also, they've made some good contributions in that area. I will hasten to add, however, that book was written before his association ever with the...the charismatic situation.

QUESTIONER: Okay, fine. My second question is my half-brother is a Unitarian minister, and he's been a Unitarian minister for many years. How do I witness to him? He knows more about the Bible than I do.

JOHN: No, he lows...knows less about the Bible than you do, much less; because, if he is not a Christian, then he has no way to comprehend the Bible. He can use the Bible to articulate his false system, but he does not know the Bible; but the key thing, you see, people never become Christians until they have a deep-felt need.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: And you can't create that need. That need has to be created in his heart through circumstances that are brought into his life by God Himself. Therefore, the best thing you can do for him is pray for him.

QUESTIONER: Pray.

JOHN: Pray that God will somehow create an utter dissatisfaction in his life with everything he's involved in.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: You see, we say that these people know the Bible, but the fact is they do not know the Bible. They simply know how to use the Bible by misinterpreting it, misapplying it, and...and arranging it in a...in a way that teaches error; and so don't be intimidated by it. But the thing you need to do with those kind, you cannot argue a person into becoming a Christian.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: There's no way. A man unconvinced against his will is unconvinced still. What...what has to happen is a desperation in his life, a dissatisfaction that drives him to look for something other than what he has.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: And, you see, in order to do that, he's gonna have to deny things he's been teaching all his life. He's gonna have to step down from his position, which is a big blow to his ego and all of those kinds of things. So it's a very, very...that's why it's so difficult when someone is in the apostate system to get them out.

QUESTIONER: I understand they don't believe in the deity of Jesus Christ.

JOHN: They do not believe in the deity of Christ. They do not believe in the deity of the Holy Spirit. They do not believe in the Trinity; and anything anybody comes and preaches any other Christ than the Christ of deity of the New Testament is cursed; and there's no...you know, there are other groups that do that. There's a thing now called Jesus Only, and it's a branch of Pentecostalism. I think it's through the United Pentecostal Church. Is that right, Dave? I think it is. The United Pentecostal Church, and they are a Jesus Only. They believe...they don't believe in the Trinity. Well, you can't... you can't have the true Gospel if you don't believe in the Trinity.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: So that's...but they talk about Jesus, and that's the subtlety of it.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum, my last problem is I've been passing out the tapes that you preached on in Revelation, prostitution, religion in the last days, to a lotta Catholics; and I recently passed one out to this Catholic and...and...and this is what she wrote to me. She says, "About the tape, Eddie," she says, "we have been Catholics all of our lives and don't intend to change now. We are content believing in our...in our faith, and have no desire to search elsewhere." What do I do?

JOHN: See, you're in the same thing again, Ed. The problem is you cannot bring someone to the water unless they're thirsty.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: You can't create a change in a person's commitment until they sense the inadequacy of the system they're in.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: Therefore, and that is a work of God. That's why, for example, whenever you want to bring someone to Christ, the primary thing you do is not go to them, but go to God about them.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: Because it is God who has to draw. It is God who has to create that dissatisfaction. So the greatest thing we can do is to pray and to be available.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: And in that availability, when the time comes, and their heart breaks, and they sense the faultiness of that way, and in their desperation, they reach out, they know you're there.

QUESTIONER: Okay, but they claim to be born again, saved Christians. What happens to them? Do they go to Heaven or hell?

JOHN: Well, only the Lord knows that, because you could be...you could be truly regenerate and stuck in a...in a false system.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: You know, I mean you really could just because you're unwitting or because of tradition or whatever. In most cases, they come out eventually; but anybody in a false system is gonna tell you they're okay.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: Because they have to do that to preserve their own sense of security.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum. Okay, thank you, John.

JOHN: Thank you for asking. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: I have a question that's been kind of bothering me for a while.

JOHN: _____

QUESTIONER: What is your stand on contemporary Christian music?

JOHN: Oh, I'd like to stand on a whole lot of it.

QUESTIONER: Okay, my...my main question would be in terms of where do you draw the line between basic rhythmic principles, the separation between quote unquote rock and roll and a rhythm that would tend to make you wanna tap your foot.

JOHN: Yeah, I like the Rock of Agesand When the Roll is Called Up Yonder; but beyond that, I'm, you know, no. It's as far as I go with rock and roll. You know, the best thing I can...I can tell you to do on that is, when we were going through Ephesians chapter 5, went through a section on speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, does singing make a melody in your heart to the Lord. This has been some time back. I don't know if were here, Mark, at the time; and I did a series on that whole thing of music; and it is a...I can't give you a quick answer except to say maybe some basic things. I think that, No. 1, music to be...what it oughta be must have the proper content. It must properly reflect Biblical truth. And, also, I think it should be primarily focused on the character of God and His work, rather than on my feelings. Do you know what I'm saying by that?

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: I'd rather sing Oh, How He Loves You and Methan Oh, How I Love Jesus. I mean I'd rather see a song that focuses on God and His character and His work than one that talks about my experience; and much of Christian contemporary Christian music is just a bunch of, I don't know what. It's just a buncha gooey, schmaltzy, you could stick anything in there. You could stick your girlfriend in there instead of God or...or Buddha or anybody, because it is utterly contentless. So I think, first of all, it has to have substantive content in order to have any validity. I also think that the vehicle should be distinctly Christian in some sense. In other words, if we simply mimic the styles of the world in what we do, we have admitted that they have something we want, and I'm not sure that's true.

QUESTIONER: Well, you know, you could say...you could also say that a lot of the like Bill and Gloria Gaither type music sounds like KBIG.

JOHN: Sure it does.

QUESTIONER: You know.

JOHN: Sure it does. Yeah, and I...I know that; but...but there's a big difference between what's played on KBIG and what's played on whatever other stations play that acid stuff; and I tried to point that out in the series. I think if...the best thing to do is have you listen to the series. There are physiological problems with a hard, driving beat, the stoppedanapestic rhythm. I went into all that kind of stuff, when you have two longs and a short and so forth. Literally, they've planted flowers, and they've put that music in there, and the flowers will die.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: In a few days, because it'll destroy the cells of the flowers. It destroys the ears of young people, and a lotta of the people even in our own church who play in the music, in the studio music

thing, say that they're losing their ability to hear tones and so forth over a period of time, because it just destroys their in...their inner ear. Anyway, I think the best thing is to listen to that thing, that series of tapes, if you can, because I tried to give a full range to it.

Now, I have another perspective, and that is this. That there are...people have music, musical tastes that vary, you know. And I mean I went, when I down in the Lake of the Ozarks, I went to the Ozark Opry. Foot-stomping, banjo-picking stuff, and I like that. But I...but, you know, I wouldn't do that here in the church. I mean it's okay to bluegrass music or whatever, and every once in a while I might like some kind of a contemporary sound that has a nice sound to it; and some of you would like a certain style, and others a certain. But my feeling is that, in the church, the key thing is that you find that which unifies the congregation, not that which segments it. Therefore, what you do is minister to the widest range of people in your music, and you do that by finding the music that touches the widest range possible. I mean we...we could say, "Hey, man, we're gonna do, you know, contemporary rock stuff to reach the kids." Well, in the first place, I don't think that's necessary. I think you can show kids what good music is.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: But if you did that anyway, what you do is alienate other people who are offended by that, and maybe rightly so. So I...I feel that there are a lot of considerations. I feel that the words are important, that they vehicle is important, that it should sound...now you...you say KBIG. That is distinctly beautiful music. There is beautiful music. There is music that manifests musicianship. You know, I had an interesting thing. A guy sang the...the Star Spangled Banner, I think it was, at the Dodger game last night, and he belongs to the group Sha Na Na. I was listening on the radio, the Dodger game, driving somewhere; and he sang; I mean he was horrendous. I mean the guy couldn't carry a tune in a wheelbarrow. He was awful, horrible, and yet he's making millions of dollars with his voice, and he can't sing at all. So it's...it's just, you know, there's a lotta problems with it; and I feel like Amos 5 really hits on it, too. Amos 5 says, "If your heart's not right, I don't want you to sing any song." And I think if you get peoples' heart right and their motives are pure, it'll affect the kinda thing they do.

You know, a guy said to me Sunday when he heard you guys sing in the joyful sound, he said...he said, "You know, I could sense in those young people the love of Christ coming through them." First time he'd ever been here. He said, "I could sense there was no show business. There was no look at me. There was a true spirit of love for Christ and worship; and that comes through; and if that's right, I'm not gonna worry about the vehicle you're gonna use, 'cause that'll...that'll kinda control that. I hope that gives you some idea how I feel.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: I just...I don't...I can't give you absolutes. You listen to the tapes and get some; but what I'm saying is the thing that concerns me most is a pure motive and a pure heart of worship, and...and doing it for the glory of God, and I think that becomes, in itself, the controlling thing; and I don't think anything wrong with rhythm. God gave us that. Right? I mean we walk with rhythm. That's why we walk. I mean everything in our life is rhythm. Our heart beats with rhythm. People say, "Well, you shouldn't have any rhythm." You know, they sing stuffy, stodgy things. No, I think rhythm is part of life, and I think, you know, playing a rhythm is a very normal thing. I mean when you were a baby, your mother rocked you to sleep with rhythm. You know, that constant rocking. That's rhythm, and she sang you a lullaby. I mean there is rhythm, and rhythm is a good thing; and there's nothing wrong with that; but when you have a hard, constant, driving, forcing beat which has sexual connotations or whatever, that's when you get into trouble. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

JOHN: Yes.

QUESTIONER: Hi, I have a question that's been in the news lately. Can God hear a Jew's prayers?

JOHN: Can God hear--

QUESTIONER: A Jew's prayers.

JOHN: A Jew's--

QUESTIONER: Prayers of the Jew or, really, any unbeliever, for that matter.

JOHN: Yeah, well, of course, God...God hears everything. The question is whether He answers.

QUESTIONER: Right.

JOHN: And the answer, really, to that, Elaine, is that God is under no obligation at all to answer the prayers of an unbeliever. Certainly, He hears them, 'cause nothing escapes His understanding, right? But He has absolutely no responsibility to answer. In fact, a Christian living in disobedience will not get His prayers answered either. You know what it says? It says in 1 Peter 3 that we need to make sure our relationship to our wife is right lest our prayers be what? Hindered. So even our own prayers would be hindered in terms of God's response if our lives aren't right. Now, I'm convinced that there are times when God works in the life of an unbeliever for His own cons...causes and His own providences; but it is for His will and His purposes, not because He is bound in any sense, like if a...if an unsaved person, you know, so many times their child is injured or is ill, and then they start turning to God and asking God to protect their child or to save their child. God is under no responsible

obligation to respond to that whatever. None at all.

The Bible is over and over telling us that He hears and answers the prayers of His children; but He does not have any responsibility to answer the prayers of those who are not His children, because they're not in His family. And, as I say, in His providence, He may choose to do certain things that appear that they are, I mean some people do get well, and people think maybe God answered; but that was in His providence and not in response, necessarily to their prayers.

QUESTIONER: Oh, my question is in regard to the latter half of the Tribulation period, when...when men will be required to have the mark of the beast in order to buy or sell. My question is once the person takes the mark, is there possibility of Him coming to Christ?

JOHN: Yes, I think, you know, in the seven-year Tribulation coming in the future, we're gonna get into this, so probably a week from Sunday night, maybe this Sunday night, maybe a week, I'm not sure. But the Tribulation is a seven-year period, right? The Rapture of the church, seven-year Tribulation, then Christ returns, sets up His Kingdom. Now, in that seven-year period, really two things happen. God begins to judge the world in...with a series of holocausts; and, at the same time, He begins to redeem His people Israel; and in the process of this, the antichrist establishes his rule; and in order to function in the economy of the antichrist, you have to take the mark of the beast. The mark being the number of a man, Revelation 13, 666. Six is the number of man, right? Seven is the number of perfection, and man always falls short of perfection, 666, always sixes, never seven. So the number man, and apparently what's gonna happen, you take the mark on your hand or on your forehead; and we've talked a lot about that, you know, that...that that's kind of the computer situation. We're now moving fast toward the time when we're going to have to do everything we do by cards and by numbers and all of that, and those number...the thing about a card that's a problem is you lose it, and they've already devised systems to put the number on your hand and on your forehead, and you go through a scanner and, you know, that's how you buy and sell. It's automatically deducted from your bank account.

Now, the question is, if you're living in the Tribulation period, and you take this mark, in other words, you identify with the beast's empire, will you still be able to be redeemed? And I think the answer to that is yes. Yes, otherwise there would be no salvation of anybody in the end of the Tribulation; and you've got to have the salvation of folks in the end of the Tribulation. You're gonna have the Jews redeemed. You're gonna have, according to Revelation chapter 7, "An innumerable number of Gentiles redeemed, so many they can't even be counted across the face of the earth." So I don't think the fact that someone takes that is a sentence to...to permanency anymore than you being a part of this world system once in your life means you have to be a part of the system all your life. Well, especially when 144,000 don't start their ministry till the second half.

QUESTIONER: Yeah, that's true, yeah.

JOHN: That'd make it a little tough.

QUESTIONER: Yeah. I have one other short question. Do you see any reference to Christ in the 8th chapter of Proverbs, specifically the 22nd verse on?

JOHN: Yeah, Proverbs 8, 8?

QUESTIONER: Eighth chapter.

JOHN: Twenty-second verse.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: Let's see, that's the Old Testament...Well, you're asking a very interesting question, very perceptive question. Periodically through the Book of Proverbs you have wisdom.

QUESTIONER: Right.

JOHN: And wisdom is frequently personified. In other words, wisdom is made into a person, and this is what you have, essentially in 8:1, "Doth not wisdom cry, and understanding put forth her voice? She stands in the top of high places by the way and the places of the paths. She cries at the gates, at the entry of the city, and the entrance of the doors; and she calls unto men," and so forth. Then in verse 22, wisdom is personified again. He talks about, "My fruit is better than gold. I lead in the way of righteousness. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." I think it's best to see this as wisdom simply personified, as the wisdom of God. Now, I will admit, and if you go back to Proverbs chapter 1, you'll see it perhaps a little more clearly. I will admit that many commentators take it that it is a veiled reference to Christ who is the personification of the wisdom of God.

QUESTIONER: Yeah, Scofield Referenceseems to take that viewpoint.

JOHN: Right, and--

QUESTIONER: In the notes, I mean.

JOHN: Yeah, now, if you go back to chapter 1 verse 20, says, "Wisdom cries outside. She utters her voice in the streets. She cries in the chief place of concourse in the opening of the gates. In the city, she utters her words, saying, 'How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?' and scoffers

delight in scoffing, and fools hate knowledge. Turn you at my reproof," and they see in the public ministry of Christ.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: Now, frankly, my own perspective on that is that, that that is not a primary interpretation of the passage. I do not see it as a clear reference to Christ. I think, obviously, Christ fulfilled it in a way, because in the streets he cried wisdom. But I think you have to see it best as the personification of wisdom.

QUESTIONER: What bothered me is he...in Dr. Scofield, in his notes, he had...has it referring to Christ, and that's what...

JOHN: Yeah, well, you see...

QUESTIONER: _____ the commentary.

JOHN: The problem is this, wisdom has cried in the streets through many people. It has cried in the streets through the prophets. It cried in the streets through the priests. It's cried in the streets through the people of God. Throughout the history of man. It's cried in the streets through Christ. It's cried in the streets through the apostles and the prophets and the preachers and the evangelists and the teachers, throughout all of the church age, anyone who stands up and proclaims the wisdom of God. So I think it's...it's forcing the exegesis a little bit.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: Okay, good questions. Okay, over here to my right.

QUESTIONER: Recently in the news, there's been a lotta talk about how evangelicals have started a lot of political organizations, and--

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: They're really marching out politically, and I'd just like know if you would give us some comments, what you know about it and how you feel about it.

JOHN: Well, you know, I've been asked that all over the country. Everywhere I go, you know, born-again politics. You know what fascinates me about this? Really fascinating, 20 years ago, the evangelicals and the fundamentalists of America were literally blasting away at the liberals for doing the very same thing they're doing right now. Twenty years ago, the liberals were up to their neck in

politics and social action, right? This was the big liberal thing. Social action, social engineering, and they were into that, and, you know, we were saying, "Preach the Gospel and live the Word of God and uphold the banner and build the church." And here we are, 20 years later doing exactly what we criticized the liberals for doing 20 years ago, which is kind of interesting.

Now, lemme tell you where I am on this thing. I think, in the first place, when people say, "We've got to save America," I don't know what they mean. I really don't know what they mean. If they mean we've got to save America the way it is, I don't know if it's worth saving. If...if...if they mean we've got to save America from the Democrats and give it to the Republicans, that isn't gonna help. I mean I might have a political preference, but I'm under no illusion that either party's gonna bring in the Kingdom...Right? I mean I'm not post-millennial. We're not gonna go waltzing into the Kingdom as soon as Reagan gets elected. So I really feel, I'll be very frank with you, I feel for a preacher called by God to teach the word, to get involved in politics is a prostitution of the priority of his ministry.

Now, we have political opinions. We oughta vote. We oughta do what we need to do within our society, but that is not the mandate that God has given us. If I wanna do something to change this country, then what we're gonna do is change this country by changing the lives of the people in it through the transformation of the Gospel of Christ, not by electing different leaders. You see, there's only two ways you can, and this was the thing. You see, it's just another way of saying what the Democrats have been saying for years. "We can change America," the Democrats said, "by social engineering," and...and Lyndon Johnson coined the phrase, "The Great Society." Okay, and it's...it's really been ever since Franklin Roosevelt. This has been the thing; but the idea is, if we can eliminate poverty, and we're well on the way to doing that, right? Everybody's got minimum wage. Everybody's got minimum housing. Everybody's got food stamps that needs it, you know, and so forth.

If we can just eliminate that, and we can eliminate unwanted children, so we abort babies to the tune of 7 million of 'em, you know, we...we save the bald eagle. Was talking to Dick Mayhueabout this. $5,000.00 if you break the egg of a bald eagle. Interesting, but you can kill 7 million babies, you know. Strange. Anyway, you know, if we can eliminate babies being born, if we can get everybody an education, equal education, busing, whatever it takes, and we could just create from the outside perfect society. Does that work? No, all you're doing is shuffling sinners into another kind of a deal. You're gonna come up with the same thing.

Last night on the news on ABC, I saw that crime in America has gone up dramatically in the last year. Every kind of crime has gone up high percentages. The Great Society didn't work, and that's why there is a...there is a moving away in our society today from the liberal perspective in politics. That's why there's even a fertile soil for Reagan, because Reagan is coming along anti-abortion. He's coming along saying, "Anti-big government." You know, and so forth, although he's not saying people need to be transformed on the inside by Christ. Now, I don't know what he believes about that, but...but people know now that, when you give it out for nothing, it's not gonna change people. You

can't change 'em on the outside; and, yet, what I see happening is that here comes a new wave of people who are saying, if we can just elect Reagan and elect certain guys who are anti-abortion and anti-homosexual and anti all of these things, and who support the traditional deal, we'll save America.

No, we won't. Won't save America at all, because America's problem is not a political problem. America's problem is a spiritual problem. People say, well, this is a great nation. Listen, the only great thing ever about this nation has been its Christians. The rest of it hasn't been great at all, and so I believe that the mandate that God has given to me is to teach the Word of God so that people can be changed from the inside, and then they can produce that glorious society. For example, the millennial Kingdom is gonna be a glorious Kingdom, because it'll be populated by people whose lives have been transformed and ruled by Jesus Christ.

Somebody asked me, "What do you think'll happen if Ronald Reagan gets elected?? I said, "Absolutely nothing." Absolutely nothing is gonna happen. Well, it might happen superficially, but it is not gonna happen in the souls of men, because he is a politician and not a preacher. The churches have to do the job, and the thing that...that I...and that's why I get a little upset about this, is pastors have abandoned the primary role to rally their people into political issues when that is not the thing they oughta be concerned about. And I'll tell you something else that bothers me. When you line up Christianity with right-wing politics, we lose, because we are not a political organization. You see? We're not, and we are now utterly identified with right-wing, hard-line, traditional politics of a Republican nature. Very conservative, and you may agree with that, and I may agree with that, but that is not a definition of the Christian faith. We are not a political subgroup. We have diverted ourselves from our main message.

I mean how would you like it if all of the doctors in the city of Los Angeles decided to give up their medical practice for one year to campaign to get certain people elected? You'd be in real trouble, wouldn't you? I mean, we couldn't go to a doctor. If we could just get the right people elected, we'd get a new medical plan. We don't need a new medical plan. We need doctors. I think the same thing is true. Preachers all over the country have been diverted into this political stuff, and I think, you know, I don't know, I think some of 'em get Potomac fever. You...you just start hobnobbing with politicians, and so I believe that we oughta concentrate on preaching the Word of God. I don't have time to get involved in politics, because the responsibility I have is more than I can handle right now. Now, I'm not against, you vote now, and you do what you feel you, by your conscience, need to do. You know, that's the thing; but even the name of the Moral Majority bothers me. Our morality is not determined by any majority. You know, it's determined by the Word of God. Okay?

QUESTIONER: I'd like to know if you've read Hal Lindsey's new book, The 1980s Countdown to Armageddon.

JOHN: No, I haven't read that. That's the book he published himself, and he advertises on TV?

QUESTIONER: Yes.

JOHN: Yeah, no, I haven't read that.

QUESTIONER: Okay, I have another question. What do you think of Christians in the armed forces?

JOHN: What...do...do I think a Christian could be in the armed forces?

QUESTIONER: Well, do you feel that...that it's...that it's not wrong.

JOHN: Oh, I don't feel it's wrong. No, I mean the Apostle Paul had a great time with the soldiers, didn't he, in Philippians; and he said, you know, he was winning the soldiers to Christ. At the end of Philippians, he says, "The saints in Rome greet you chiefly, they of Caesar's household," you know. Those soldiers that were chained to Paul were getting evangelized, and so I don't see any problem with that. I think the Roman centurion was...came to Christ and there was never a comment made about it being wrong to be a soldier. If it was wrong to be a soldier, I don't think Paul would've taken so many wonderful metaphors in the New Testament from the soldier to use as illustrations of spiritual truth.

I think there's something right about that. Now, I'll tell you how I feel about it from the Biblical viewpoint. I believe that...I believe that you have responsibility, right, to the subject of the powers that be that are ordained of God, right? And if your government asks you to be a part of that, then I think you need to respond to that. Now, I could fight for my own country against an evil, godless, oppressive aggressor, because I would be upholding the right and defending the innocent; and I think that is a very right thing to do. For example, I could...I could take a role in my own government in a war against godless, atheistic communism trying to oppress...I'll put it simply. I wouldn't have had any trouble fighting in Vietnam for American. Not so much because I'm warlike, because I'm not, but because, when we didn't fight, we didn't defend a right thing against an evil, godless aggressor and oppressor that swept in there and just slaughtered millions of people; and I think that there needs to be a preserving influence in society; and I think that was a reflection of the loss of our Christian values and the dignity of man.

Okay, but if I were in Russia, I could never fight, because Russia is the aggressor. I could defend the innocent, and I could defend the right, and I could protect the poor and the needy; but I would not be an aggressor in attacking and consuming other people. So I think it's the perspective that you have. I think Paul even dignifies in his metaphors the place of a soldier. I think he gives it great dignity by talking of a Christian as one who is a soldier of Christ, who takes the armor of...of Christ. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: I'm Joe, and, John, would you please explain James 5:14, and is it pertinent for the church today?

JOHN: If any sick among you? If any sick among you?

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: "Let him call for the elders of the church?"

QUESTIONER: Right, "And let 'em pray over you and anoint you."

JOHN: "They may anoint him with oil and prayer over him?"

QUESTIONER: Yeah, um-hum.

JOHN: "Prayer of faith shall save the sick?" Okay, let's look at that. James 5:14. That's a very good text, and a good question, too. I think one of these days, we're gonna study the book of James, 'cause there's so many good things in there. I'm trying to finish the New Testament. That's kinda my goal, and, at the rate I'm going, be sometime in the 18th millennia...But, anyway, we're having fun while we're doing it.

James 5. I think you have to see the context, all right? It says, "Any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over them...him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." Now, one of the things we've always done at Grace Church, done it ever since I've been here, is this very thing. Sunday mornings, every Sunday morning, the elders meet in the prayer room over here, and we pray; and, frequently, we have folks in. We lay our hands on 'em. If they ask, we anoint them with oil, and we pray for them. So we will respond to people who have his desire. Very frequently I've gone to hospitals and taken a little oil and a couple of the elders, and we've prayed. This is not an uncommon thing. We do this when people in good conscience ask us to do this based upon this Scripture.

But I think there's a context here that you have to understand. Now, "Any sick among you?" Let him call for the elders...and so forth...anointing him with oil." Now, there are two perspectives on the oil. One is that the oil is a...it's sort of a symbol of the Holy Spirit; and that, when you're praying, you're sort of symbolizing the presence of the Holy Spirit, who is the healing power. The other is that the oil was medicinal, that it was an oil that was used to anoint, and...and that what they're really saying is that, if you want the person to get well, give him a little prayer and little medicine; and we know that

the Lord was an advocate of that, because he picked a very special man to be a companion of the Apostle Paul and to write the Book of Acts and the Gospel of Luke by the name of Luke, who was a physician. So the Lord is not anti-medicine. So either way you can take it as the Holy Spirit, or you can take it as a medicinal thing, and I don't have a problem with either one, really. It's really difficult to know which.

But, "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up...now watch this part...And if he'd committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your sins one to another and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Now, the assumption here is that his sickness is a result of what? Sin. Sin. And where sickness is a result of sin, it is a chastening, right? And I feel that when the sin has been recognized and confessed, and the chastening has had its remedial effect, then the chastening is sufficient, right? If you've learned the lesson; and, at that point, when the sin is confessed and the sin is dealt with, if the illness is due to a sin and a chastening, once that sin is dealt with, and the chastening is accepted, and the confession is made, the sin is removed; and, at that point, I think the affliction can be removed, too.

I really think that that's probably the best way to...to interpret this difficult passage. That it is referring, because, you see, it says, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." Now, does every prayer of faith save every sick person? No, it really doesn't. So there has to be some conditioning here, and I think it is the idea of someone who is ill, because it is a chastening for sin...And, you know, I...I think we don't always know that. Sometimes we pray for someone, they don't get well, and the real reason they don't get well is because they've never dealt with the reason they're sick. Now, other times they're sick for the glory of God. Like John 9, the blind man, he hadn't done anything. They said, "Who sends this man or his parents?" He said, "Nobody, but for the glory of God, he's blind."

So don't assume that every time someone's sick and they don't get well, they're evil and haven't confessed it. That's just a good place to start, and then you can go from there. But I think that's primarily the matter that James is talking about. At this point, that's how I would interpret it. When I get into it a little later, maybe in a few years or so, maybe we'll be able to even clarify it more. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Hi, John.

JOHN: Hi.

QUESTIONER: I have studied Daniel with Duane inthe Starlighters pretty much.

JOHN: Um-hum.

QUESTIONER: And I've also studied Daniel with what I feel is a Bible scholar, and I really find it difficult to understand how, if the promise of the Holy Spirit is to lead us into all truth, how we can come up 190 degrees opposite from one another in the prophecy of Daniel; and it just seems to divide from that point completely...completely through Revelation and everything.

JOHN: Um-hum.

QUESTIONER: And I can't count the time accurately in the Bible either way. I don't, you know, it doesn't make sense to me.

JOHN: You talking about the prophecy of the 70 weeks?

QUESTIONER: The prophecy of 70 weeks _____

JOHN: I'm gonna get to that Sunday night. Well, lemme respond by saying this. First of all, the promise given in John 14, that he will lead us into all truth, is not primarily given to us. It's given to the apostles. The statement there made, I think it's verse 26, Jesus said, "And He will...He will...when the Spirit has come, He will lead you into all truth and bring all things to your remembrance." That was primarily a promise to the writers of the Gospels. In other words, the...the apostolic writers were going to re-record the Gospel. Now, how were they gonna remember all those incidents? Well, the spirit of God was gonna come upon them, bring all things to their remembrance, and lead them into all truth, so that the writing of the Gospel records would be absolutely accurate. That is a primary prophecy to the Biblical writers, not to us.

In a secondary sense, I do believe the spirit of God leads us into truth; but we don't go from John 14:26. We go from 1 Corinthians chapter 2, where the Apostle Paul says that, "The Spirit teaches us." Or we go to 1 John chapter 2, "We have anointing from God who teaches us all things, so that we need not to have a man teach us," and so forth. So what I'm saying is that we do not have the absolute guilt-edged guarantee that the Holy Spirit is gonna lead us into every single truth. Now, all Christians, all Bible students who are true in the faith, substantially agree on those cardinal realities of the faith that are manifest in Scripture. Where we find our...our...our basic disagreements is in passages that are not obvious in themselves as to their interpretation. You know what I'm saying?

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: Now, what makes it difficult to interpret a passage? I'll tell you what. You have to close some gaps. First gap is a language gap. The Bible was written in, say you take Daniel, Hebrew, part of Daniel in Aramaic, but that part in Hebrew. We speak English.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: Well, you could say, "Well, let's go over to Israel and see what it is in Hebrew," but you can't do that, because it also, you have a time gap. The Hebrew then was very different than the Hebrew now, so we have to close a language gap. We have to re-determine what the words were in the Hebrew, at that time, what they meant. We have to close that time gap. We have a culture gap. Hebrews didn't think like we think. We think, basically, from an abstract Greek concept. They think from a concrete Hebrew perspective. So we have to close that gap. We have to close a geography gap. We have to close a philosophical gap. We have to close a religious gap.

So here we are trying to close all these gaps. We don't have sufficient data in the text. I mean he doesn't tell us it starts in this year and it ends in this year. So what we do then is we do our very best to close those gaps. Now, the problem comes at this point. No. 1, and I...I hope you understand what I'm saying, a lot of this could be resolved if people just were better students. There's an awful lot of superficiality, and guys'll come up with conclusions that, if they were really put in the vortex of an academic situation, and were shot at by some erudite scholars, they'd tear 'em to shreds, because they really haven't done their homework. That's one of the problems.

The second problem is, if you go to the Scriptures with presuppositions, then you're gonna push it into your own mold. I mean if you assume, you, take for example, this is just...this is riotous, if you wanna know the truth. I've been reading what...what, you know, what amillennialist are? People who believe there's no Kingdom at all. All right? They believe there's no restoration of Israel at all. There's no Tribulation at all. Okay, so their basic supposition in the Book of Daniel is that Daniel is not talking about what we think he's talking about at all. That's their supposition before they ever read the text. See?

Well, they read..."Well, it certainly isn't talking about a Kingdom, and it certainly isn't talking about a Tribulation. Therefore, it must be talking about something else, so let's find what else it's talking about." So, you see, before you even start, you've eliminated a whole category of truth. So they go in with these presupposition. For example, I was reading one, and a very, very fine scholar by the name of Loophold, who takes the view of Kyle, who's written probably the most definitive Hebrew commentary on the Old Testament, Kyle Daylich; and they say, "Well, the...the 490 years of the prophecy aren't real years. Some of them are a few weeks, and some of them are a few years," and they just...they make absolute hash out of the thing. I mean they would take, for example, they would say, "The first seven weeks are not really 49 years, and the 483 are probably many, many more years, and...and the last seven, it's just a general symbol for a little it of time." I mean they just, and where do they get that? That's just utterly arbitrary on their part. They do not want to have things fit into a mold, and so they determine their presupposition.

A classic illustration, many scholars, for example, assume that...here's their basic presupposition. "There's no such thing as prophecy." That's their basic, "No such thing is prophecy, therefore, Daniel couldn't predict anything before it happened. Therefore, Daniel had to say these things after he already saw these events. Therefore, they all speak about a certain thing that happened before Daniel came along, and he's looking back in retrospect. So they shove the date of Daniel up hundreds of years till after the events they think he was talking about have happened. See? That's presupposition, and I think that if you really look at it carefully, you'll find that the problem in disagreement in Bible study is, No. 1, a lack of careful scholarship, and, secondly, is a pile of presuppositions. You really have to vacuum out your head. If you go in with some preconceived system, you're in trouble.

QUESTIONER: Is it true that...that...are the...the seven groups of seven that breaks up the period of time from beginning to end, and the way that we interpret the 70 weeks, came out of the Council of Trent during the Reformation? Where the Catholic scholars and the...and the Hebrew scholars got together in the Council of Trent, and...and set this up? 'Cause that...that worries me.

JOHN: Yeah, no.

QUESTIONER: We're adopting something out of the Catholic system.

JOHN: Well, hey, no--

QUESTIONER: _____

JOHN: I don't know that that--

QUESTIONER: In this situation.

JOHN: I don't know that that's true. I don't know that that's true.

QUESTIONER: This is what I've been told.

JOHN: I can't speak specifically to that, but I do not know that that's true. I would be very...I'd be interested to maybe pursue that a little bit. I have never...I have read about 15 books on that text in the last two weeks, and I've not come up with that substantial in any sense. You...if you're Sunday night, you can hear where I'm coming from, and there are alternatives.

QUESTIONER: I...

JOHN: I mean you can't be dogmatic in...in that thing, but you can sure be pretty well right on the target. Sir Robert Anderson says, "You can name the day," and I'll show you how you do that Sunday night. It is unbelievable. That specific approach. But, again, this is a question that comes up all the time. Disagreements come about because, basically, we're human, and we don't always do what we oughta. For example sometimes I'll interpret a text, and I don't have time, and then a few years later, I'll go back to it and change my view in some sense. Not a...not a monumental problem, but because I have time to do a better study. So I think we have to be careful about that. Okay? Mark.

QUESTIONER: My question involves abiding in Christ, and it's taking from...taken from 1 John 2:28. It says, "And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence, and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming." Now, I've been listening to your tapes on that, and I believe you say that "abide in Him" is in the imperative there. So that John is saying to the Christians, you know, this is your responsibility. You're supposed to abide, and that you also say that no Christian will be ashamed. You know, we have confidence because Christians are abiding, that is their nature to abide. So my question would really be, there seem to be a lot of Christians that do not really abide; and I _____

JOHN: No, the answer to that, Mark--

QUESTIONER: I'm surprised that there won't be any type of, gosh, you know, I wish I had--

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: Read the Bible more or built a closer relationship with Jesus Christ.

JOHN: Yeah, I hear you, and I'm dealing with that in the text in Peter, too, exactly the same problem. Christians, "If any man be in Christ, he is a...what?...new creature. Old things have passed away...what?...all things become." There has to be change, so what I say is all Christians abide. They just don't abide all the time.

QUESTIONER: Okay.

JOHN: That's the only thing you can say. I mean you take...you show me someone who says, "Well, I received Christ," and never in their life have they shown any evidence, and I'll show you someone who's not a Christian. That doesn't mean that at times in our lives we don't fail. For example, that what we saw last week, you know, you have received it. "You've been made partaker a divine nature. You have received great and precious promises. You've been delivered from the corruption that is in the world through lust," and then it says, "Therefore, add to your faith, virtue," so forth, so forth, so forth, so forth. You know, so our position is affirmed, and I...I don't think you can be a Christian and

not have some things new, and I realize that may be a positional statement, but I think if you're a Christian, there's going to be fruit. There's going to be a product some of the time, not necessarily all the time; and what he's saying there is, it should be a constancy in your life.

Now, I don't...I don't see Christians ashamed at the coming of Christ. I really don't see that. Now, maybe in...in a sense, but I don't...I can't see that. First Corinthians 4 says that, "Then every man shall have praise of God." I don't see that the...that the beamacywhere we...we face Christ is a time of great intimidation when we say, "Ohhhhh, I've failed miserably." I think it's a time of great grace and great acceptance and great affirmation and great reward. So I think the best you can do with that, it's a very difficult question, and you're touching on one of the hardest paradoxes in all of Biblical theology, that is that all Christians will show it. James says, "Faith without works is...what?...is dead." And yet many Christians don't; and the answer to it is, all Christians do. They just don't always do; and they're enjoined always to do that; and this is a...for example, we say in our study in the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount, that if you look at your life, and you don't see any evidence...then you don't really know whether you're a Christian or not, because a person living in disobedience will be exactly in appearance like an unbeliever.

Now, what Peter says, and I'll steal a little of my thunder from Sunday morning, Peter says, "If you look at your life, and you don't see any fruit, and you see barrenness in your life, you won't know that you're saved. You will have forgotten you've been purged from your old sins. Therefore make a calling and election sure." How? By adding to your faith, virtue; and to your virtue, so forth, and, you see?

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: In other words, when you see a person who is fruitful, fruitless or barren, you see a person who is not abiding in the sense of the fullness of that. Then, I'll show you a person who won't even himself have a sense of being secure in Christ.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum.

JOHN: And I'm gonna hit on this on Sunday morning; but the difficulty in that verse is, you see, he...he definitely seems to be talking about Christians; and, yet, John himself, because he uses the term for abiding to speak of Christians in John 15, and that's the comparative passage. He says in John 15, "If you don't abide in me, you're cast forth as a branch and burned." Now, I see that as an unbeliever. A true Christian does abide; but he doesn't always abide; and I think John kinda picks that up there. That's a very difficult passage. Okay. Yes.

QUESTIONER: My question is where or how do you build a line between leaving it to the Lord or taking care of it, the situation yourself?

JOHN: Well...was it "Praise the Lord, and pass the ammunition"? I guess that's a hard thing to do, to draw that line. I think this would be it, maybe, Joe. You would give it to the Lord, and then you would do everything you could short of compromise or loss of integrity or disobedience. For example, I might say, "Lord, I want a job," or a better...better, "Lord, I wanna pass this test." Right? "I'm gonna study. I'm gonna leave it to You." Well, that's fine, but before you leave it to the Lord totally, you better put it in your head, right? So you work as hard as you can, get it in your head.

QUESTIONER: Right.

JOHN: But you don't cheat, right? In other words, I think it's that wonderful...I love the...the statement in the Old Testament where it says, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon." That's really good, isn't it? "The sword of the Lord and Gideon." I mean I see a tremendous cooperation there, and I know in my own life there are many things that I say, "Lord, I want You to do this." I mean I could say that about my sermons. I could sit in my office, say, "Lord, I want You to give me a good sermon," but if I just sit there and say that all week, I'm not gonna have a thing to say. So I have to commit myself to the discipline of preparing my heart to say it; but I never wanna get to the point where I so am committed to the goal that I push myself past the point of integrity or honesty, and I do that which is not right, to gain men. Do you know what I'm saying?

I think there's a...it's very difficult to draw any other line than that. I think, like the Apostle Paul, Apostle Paul literally just slugged it out, sweated it out, pushed and forced and...and worked himself to the bone to get the work done, and all the while, he gave it to the Lord; but he had to give every bit of effort in the process, but short of doing that which was disobedient or self-willed or, you know, whatever. Okay? Good question.

QUESTIONER: Hi, John, my name is Gary. I had two questions I wanted to ask you. No. 1, with the family becoming more or less extinct to how we used to know it 20, 30 years ago, what should a Christian's viewpoint be on birth control?

JOHN: Well, I think that's very easily answered. I think God has given us the choice to have children or not to have children. God's given us a choice to get married or not to get married, right? And I think we have the choice to have...people say, "Oh, you know, you shouldn't...the Catholic church for years said no birth control, right?" But I...I think, to me, and you can't find anything in the Bible. Of course, I do think it's good to have a lotta kids. You have Biblical word for that. "Children are like arrows, blessed is a man who's quiver full of 'em." So, you know, fill up that quiver. Not a thing wrong with that. I don't care what day of society we're living in, you raise your children in a godly way, and they'll

influence the world for good and for God. That's your responsibility, and I, you know, that's fine; but I believe God has given us control of that. You know, if God wanted us to have nonstop babies, women wouldn't be cycled the way they're cycled, right? I mean within the marriage relationship, you can control the bear...the bearing of children, right? Because God has so designed the woman that she can only have a child a certain time each month. Now, God has given us that recurring option on a monthly basis, so that 12 times a year, you can make that choice.

Now, the very fact that God has given you that alternative, and that option, gives you the privilege of taking it. I really don't see any problem, then, with...with a birth control approach at all. In fact, very frankly, I don't even see a problem with a permanent kind of birth control, a surgical one, if you feel before God and in your own conscience that you desire to exercise that privilege, because it's no different than constantly doing it every month for the rest of your life, right? You've just done it in a more permanent way. So I really think that the fact that God has cycled the woman is indicative of the fact that God has rendered to us the choice. That's all.

And I think, I would add this thing. I think the problem really comes when we introduce into the body foreign substances and birth control pills and other things. I think that, for example, birth control pills are...are just creating havoc in many, many cases. I'm not a doctor, but I could tell you what doctors say, who have dealt with some of these things, that you need to be very, very careful. Be, you know, watch that, because it's...it's just...it's designed to influence the body in an unnatural way. Secondly, IUD is really a form of abortion. It literally kills what is born; and, also, I...I just feel that those kinds of foreign things in the body are not healthy things. So I would find some way to do that that is not particularly of that nature. So I don't have a problem with the birth control. Biblically, there's nothing in the Bible that mandates us to have nonstop babies, so you make that choice. Just go ahead.

QUESTIONER: Where the Bible teaches the fruit of the womb is his reward, is it possible to be over-rewarded?

JOHN: Yeah, I think that that's right. I think, you know, like "Blessed is the man who's quiver is full of them," that's up to you. That's your choice, but...but I think children are inherited from Lord. I think children are a blessing of God. I think children...the greatest thing that ever happened to our marriage was our children. They are the most life-fulfilling things there...there are. We adore...I mean they're life to us, so it's a great and glorious thing, but...and you have to take into account all the factors of your life, whether they're economic or whether they're social or whatever they are, and make your determination as to how God has designed that. Now, I'll give you my own illustration. Family planning for us is very easy. At the very beginning, we said we want one boy, then a girl, then a boy, then a girl. So that's what we had. See? So we said we want one, and then 22 months later another, 22 months later another, 22 months later another, and five years later, another one. That's what we had. Boy, girl, boy, girl, 22 months, 22 months, 22 months, and five years later. I don't understand

what the problem is.

But you know what's interesting? Until Melinda was born, we had a sense of somebody missing in our family. We talked about that. There's another...we always had this longing in our hearts to have somebody. But since Melinda has been born, we've said, "We never want any more children." No, no, we didn't. We said, "Since Melinda's been born, there is a sense of wholeness to our family." And that's a very subjective thing; but there is... there's nobody missing in our little family. This is the wholeness of our family. We feel this is the family God designed for us; and we tried to stay sensitive and prayerful all the way along, so we would know specifically what God had planned for us.

QUESTIONER: Do you feel you're trying to take advantage if you would apply Proverbs 3, 5, and 6 to your family?

JOHN: You mean--

QUESTIONER: "Trust in the Lord."

JOHN: "Trust in the Lord and commit your way unto Him?" Sure, that's the way to do it. I don't have any fear about my children. I'll be very honest with you. I know where they are, I mean in...in terms of spiritual things. I don't have any fear. I don't have any...I don't have the least bit of fear in my life that they'd abandon the faith. Maybe I'm naÃ¯ve, but I don't believe they will. I don't be...I don't have that fear. I have all in my heart joy, because I believe they'll grow up to love and serve Christ, because I believe that God has confirmed to us that He will bless His Word in their lives, and our love and commitment to them. So I don't have that fear.

Okay, we don't have too much time. Dave?

QUESTIONER: In regards to the Sabbath question and why we don't hold the Sabbath as holy anymore in the fourth commandment, I've been talking to some Seventh-Day Adventists, and in Colossians 2, it refers to the Sabbath as a mere shadow of things to come.

JOHN: That's right.

QUESTIONER: How is it a shadow, and is it to be abolished now?

JOHN: Well, Dave, I think the thing you wanna do on that one is look at Hebrews 4 and 5, because in Hebrews 4 and 5, it says we've entered into Sabbath rest. Now, what you have is very interesting concept. In the Old Testament, the Sabbath was not only a day of rest, it was a picture of a great rest to come; and when Christ came, the picture was over, and we entered the rest. And in Romans 14,

you remember that the Apostle Paul said, "Some people regard the day, and some do not." And if a guy does, don't offend him. You know, I mean if he's still hung up on the Sabbath from his Jewish background, I mean don't offend him. So like, you know, if he's still hung up on pork, don't force him to eat a...a...a ham sandwich at a Gentile picnic. I mean let him have his conscious, see. So what he's saying there is, the issue is not the Sabbath anymore. We've entered into that.

I think if you really look at Hebrews 4 and 5, over and over again the writer says we've entered into rest. We've entered into rest; and I really feel that what he is saying there is that, in the salvation of Christ, having entered into the fullness of Christ, the Sabbath is eliminated; and I think the early church is an absolutely immediately testimony to that, because when did they start meeting? The first day of the week, and every day became holy; and they not only met the first day of the week, but in Acts chapter 2, they met when? Every day of the week; and from day to day, from house to house, they were breaking bread and sharing in the Lord's table.

So I think that the Sabbath was a picture of things to come, Colossians 2. It was a...it was a shadow. When the substance comes, we don't need the shadow. I think that's...that's the heart of the matter; and Hebrews talks about that; and that is a tremendous passage; and that is a very misunderstood passage. More people apply that to some kind of second-level Christian experience, and I don't think that's what it's talking about at all. I think it's talking about entering into the fullness of salvation rest. And now, you know, I don't worship God one day a week. There's no temple, is there? "The veil was rent from the top to the bottom." The whole temple schmerewas over and done; and by 70 AD, it was wiped out; and it's never been rebuilt. There's a reason for that; and when the Jews do rebuild it, what'll happen to it? It'll get desecrated by the abomination of desolations, because that system is over with. It's over. The Lord wiped it out. He wiped it out when He "split the veil from to the bottom. He unmasked the Holy of Holies for the world to see," and then he wiped it out and Titus Vespasian came in 70 AD and mopped up the city and utterly destroyed it; and so we've entered into the fullness of salvation rest; and that now that the reality has come, that picture, that shadow of rest is no longer necessary.

However, let me suggest this to you. I still think it's well, as we share together on what became in the early church known as the Lord's day to make that a day of concentration on the things of God. I think that's a good thing to do, and I think also that it is true that the human body needs a recovery. God gave to the...to the land, didn't He, a Sabbath rest. In fact, we'll see Sunday night, one of the reasons for the captivity was that Israel had failed to give the Sabbath to the land. They got so materialistic that they never let the land rest, and the Lord took 'em into captivity to make up all the Sabbaths that they had not let the land rest; and all the time, 70 years they were captivity, the land was resting, making up for the Sabbaths that they had abused, see. So there is a sense in which there is time for recovery, and I think there's time for meditation and worship on the Lord's day, but I think we have entered into the fullness of the Sabbath rest.

QUESTIONER: John, why is it, though, that the fourth commandment is the only commandment in the Decalogue that we don't keep now, and all the rest we do?

JOHN: Because it's the...because it's the only one not repeated in the New Testament. See, the fourth commandment is the only one not repeated in the New Testament, because we have entered into that rest. It is fulfilled.

QUESTIONER: You think it--

JOHN: And I don't have a problem with it being fulfilled. Okay, we just have another few minutes, so make the questions brief, and we'll to go through these six folks.

QUESTIONER: Okay, Pastor John, in reference to Matthew chapter 19 verses 23 and 24, Jesus has just talked to a young man, and he's gone away grieved, and "Jesus says to His disciples, 'Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. Now, it would seem to me, just on the surface in looking at those two verses, that Jesus is equating Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God. In other words, they're interchangeable terms. Taking those two verses, I do not see a distinction whatsoever between Kingdom of Heaven and Kingdom of God. I know there is an alternate view, of course, that would say that there is. I don't see it there. I wonder, is there another clear passage that would support the...that position as clearly as this one with the other?

JOHN: I would take the view that there's no distinction. You're right.

QUESTIONER: I see.

JOHN: I don't see the distinction between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God, and that is precisely the argument. How can you see a distinction between two things that are used to speak of the same thing in the same passage?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

JOHN: You're welcome.

QUESTIONER: Hi, my name is Peggy, and I'll try and make this as short as possible. I was looking for this one Scripture, and it's either a certain Scripture or some scriptural support to say a wife who takes herself from under the authority of her husband, and I remember reading that is that she opens

herself up more to satanic attack or to be more deceived or something like that. Do you know what I'm talking about?

JOHN: Hum...Hum? Bill Gothard 5:8. Is that what it is?...I...I think the only passage that comes to mind is 1 Peter chapter 3, where it talks about Sarah calling Abraham Lord.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: And it says that, "Those who are...who so call their husband Lord are daughters of Sarah." And there's an affirmation there of the fact of submission. Ephesians chapter 5. I'm trying to think if there is passage that specifically says, "When a woman takes herself out from under the control of her husband, she exposes herself to special satanic attack." Bill, you got a word on that?

BILL: I think this _____ 1 Corinthians 7:5.

JOHN: Okay, well, the whole of 1 Corinthians, but we might look at that, 1 Corinthians 7:5. "Defraud ye not one another, except to be with consent for a time that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Well, that...that would be a shade on that. What that means is that if you withhold the physical relationship with your...from your husband or with...or if you...the husband withholds the physical relationship from the wife, that's called incontinency or a lack of coming together. You will expose one another to Satanic temptation, 1 Corinthians 7:5. That's the only verse I can think that relates to that, and that's why it's so very important for couples to have a fulfilling sexual relationship; because, otherwise, there is the exposure to temptation.

QUESTIONER: Um-hum. Well, also, I was thinking of a couple of Scriptures that might give you a better ideas. The one, I think it's in Timothy...

JOHN: Yeah, 1 Timothy, he talks about a--

QUESTIONER: Oh, I was thinking of what he says about widows.

JOHN: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: When there's the younger ones, younger widow, it says--

JOHN: Yeah, it says that the younger woman--

QUESTIONER: To marry again, they suggested they marry again, because all of a sudden they fall into these...all these temptations and stuff.

JOHN: Well, they'll grow wonton. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: _____

JOHN: They'll grow wonton.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: And fulfill the life. If a...a younger widow is always called upon to remarry, and the older widows are not, they can be serving the church; but a younger widow, he says, "I charge them to remarry lest they grow wonton in Christ."

QUESTIONER: But I guess the main point I'm trying to get to is that when a wife is no longer, like she says it takes...she doesn't want to be under the authority. She, you know, she leaves, whatever. Is it a feeling normal that she...a normal feeling for her to be kind of like she feels uncovered or something, because--

JOHN: Oh, yeah.

QUESTIONER: Like the widow where, you know, she'll go on, be wonton, you know.

JOHN: Sure.

QUESTIONER: And then the...the Scripture where it says, "Let not the wife depart from her husband, but _____

JOHN: Sure, 1 Corinthians 7.

QUESTIONER: It's like you either remain unmarried or be reconciled.

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: Well, if there's no chance for reconciliation and she remains unmarried, wouldn't she have this feeling like she needs some authority from--

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: Someone on this earth other than, you know--

JOHN: I think that's very true, and I think, you see, what happens is a woman is designed to be responding to a husband, unless she has the gift of singleness, and then she doesn't need that. She can respond to Christ, as 1 Corinthians 7 says. But if she is a woman who has not received the gift of singleness or celibacy, then she will respond to the authority of a man; and when she's out from under that, there is a sense of isolation and lostness. That's right. That's why the Bible commands her to be joined again to her husband; and if, you know, that would be the primary thing. That's very true; and that's why, as you said, that, a...a widow, a young widow should find another mate, because there is a sense of incompleteness, a sense of lostness there. That's right.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: Now, there...the prohibition on this would be that if she were out from under her husband by her own sinful rebellion. She may have forfeited the right to another husband, see; and that's the issue there. Okay? Good question. Jamie, I think you were there first. You got it written down. Oh, no, I'm in for it.

QUESTIONER: Okay, in Isaiah 14:12, it says, "Lucifer, fallen from Heaven to ground," if...if there...if this happened before the earth was created, how can there be a Heaven and earth mentioned?

JOHN: How about that? How did you think that question? How do you know it happened before the earth was created? See, you're no better at this than I am...You know, that's a good question. Satan was cast to the earth, wasn't he, when he fell? And some Bible scholars believe that that is an indication of why the earth is what it is. In fact, some people would even go so far as to say that he was cast to the earth between...prior to Genesis 1, and that's why, when the earth was created, it was without what? Form and void. Some would say he was cast to the earth after the initial thing and created the chaos. Was cast to the earth as a serpent. Very difficult to know. Other scholars would say that he had fallen prior to that, and then, when the earth was formed, he was cast to the earth. There's really no way to know for sure on that question, but I think it's obvious that the final disposition of Satan in his fall was that he was cast to the earth in the sense that this is the dominion that God has given him. That's why he's called the God of this world. Okay? Good, Jamie, thank you. Okay, over here on the right.

QUESTIONER: Is there anything wrong with children going out trick or treating, like Halloween? And, if so, what specifically is...is bad in it, and what...what do the MacArthur kids do? And should Grace get involved in any alternatives?

JOHN: Yeah, I think it's not a wise thing to have children go out trick or treating. I mean I think it's kinda dumb for Christian kids to dress up like ghosts and witches and weird things and devil suits and

troublemakers and all that. I...I think, for example, you know, the whole thing of All Saints Day or All Hallows Eve has connotations, first of all, of...of Roman Catholic tradition. It has connotations of demons and spirits, plus the fact that little kids are exposed to screwballs, as well as to cars and all kinds of other things. What we do in our family is we have an alternative. Like you said, we...we do an alternative thing. We do something fun for the whole family. It varies from year to year, and our church has always done that, too, for the kids. Have parties and socials and things, because other little kids, you know, may get involved in things that are that way, and they get something to talk about anyway, and they can say that they had a good time, too, and what they did.

But I think we have to be aware of the fact that we have to deal with alternatives in those things. We do the same thing with Christmas. Our Christmas is a Christmas without Santa Claus. You know, I saw an ad in a Christian magazine the other day advertising some deal coming up for Christmas with Santa Claus kneeling at the manger. You know, that is so repulsive to me, you know. Santa Claus, I mean, what is he...he...Santa Claus wasn't kneeling at the manger. I mean that's absurd. That is the typical marriage of the pagan with the Christian. So we...we don't...there's no Santa Claus in our Christmas, either, but we have Christmas, because that's a good time to remember Christ's birth and focus on Him. So I would be for an alternative. We would not have our children involved in that. Okay?

QUESTIONER: I've got a friend who goes to school with me, and she says she became a Christian at...at camp when I went with her; but we were talking, and she says she doesn't want to like tell people she's a Christian. She says if someone comes up and asks her, she'll tell 'em, you know, we're, you know, _____ told me, now my parents have always taught me to stick out in a crowd. You know, show 'em that we're Christians, let Christ shine through us. But she says, you know, she doesn't wanna do this. She doesn't have to; and, also, she like...she doesn't wanna come to church. She has no desire to be with Christians or there's no really...she says she can study the Bible by herself. And, you know, I don't know what to do. I mean I can't really talk to her right now, because she'll deny everything I say.

JOHN: I think...I think one of two things. She...she may be a Christian who's under the influence of somebody who's very negative on the church, and who's very, you know, backward in their witness.

QUESTIONER: Yeah, she's had a very hard life at home. Her dad's been divorced twice and--

JOHN: Yeah, on the other hand, she may not be a Christian at all. I think the best thing you can do for her is to love her and be gracious to her and live the Christian life in front of her and take every opportunity you can to expose her to scriptural truth. Just be a friend, because, you know, it's likely, you know, just venturing a guess, that she's really not a Christian. That maybe she understands and wants that superficially, but there'd have to be some evidence, I think. You know, I've never known

someone who became a Christian in the true sense who didn't have almost an immediate response. It's later that we get kinda carnal, right? So, you know, it's hard for me to know; but I think the best thing you can do is love her and be available to her and be a friend to her and, yet, constantly live the Christ life in front of her, and feed in all the Biblical input you can.

QUESTIONER: Well, and I'm wondering, I mean I keep inviting her to church, but like she doesn't wanna come. I don't know if I should just...because sometimes she says I'm pushing her or, you know, I don't want her to get to the point where she's just--

JOHN: No, don't hesitate to do that. She's gotta know that's in love; and the reason she's resisting is because of her own problem. She knows. She reads you right, even though she might react. She knows you care.

QUESTIONER: Okay, thank you.

JOHN: Father, thank You for our fellowship. We're so thankful for these dear people and the wonderful time we've shared in Your Word. Bless each one in Christ's name, and everyone said Amen.

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