

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

Bible Questions and Answers, Part 21

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 1301-S

JOHN: Well we've given expression to our spirits. That's what music does and it is not that our minds are not involved but it gives great expression to our spirits, to that emotional side of us. And now we want to spend a little time giving expression to that cognitive part of us, our minds and thinking on the things of the word of God. We leave it up to you as to what we talk about. There are three microphones in the aisles and I just want to encourage you to line up behind one that's near you and ask a question. It's really helpful if you just ask a question. Sometimes people want to sort of preach a sermon or something, but within reason, of course, if you have something to share that's fine, but kind of gear it in on a specific question and we'll do our best to use the word of God and to give you some answers to the things that are in your heart. All right? So let's begin right now. If you'll just line up behind those microphones and we'll call on you and move right along. I think we'll start at the right and we just have a sort of a basic policy you have to give your name first. Okay?

BETTY: My name is Betty and I'd like to ask a question from I Corinthians 3:16-17. Do you want me to read it?

JOHN: Well that's fine. You can read it, sure.

BETTY: Oh okay. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. If any man defiles the temple of God him shall God destroy, but the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." I want to know to, oh how can I word, in what way could we defile the temple of God to the point of God destroying that temple or that body?

JOHN: That's a good question. Now as we look at this you might take your Bible and look at it. I want you to notice something of importance in terms of the text itself. It says in verse 16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Now the pronoun there is very important. Ye. He's talking about believers. Many commentators feel that there is a change or a shift in verse 17 from ye to what? If any man, and many commentators feel that, and I tend to agree with this, it is possible that this could mean that a Christian could so defile his body that the Lord could just remove him, right? I Corinthians 11 talks about that. A Christian desecrating the Lord's table by coming there with sin in his life is weak and sick and some of them were dead. I John 5 talks about that where it says there is a sin that you don't need to pray about because it's a sin unto death. In other words there is a sin in a Christian's life, which is the straw that breaks the camel's back and God just takes him home out of the way. But destroy seems a rather strong word for that and if you

notice the shift from ye to "if any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy." Which temple ye are it seems to be that ye are the temple of God but the defiler is somebody outside the temple, you see. So that the real thrust of the text is saying that the temple of God, which temple ye are, right? Are we not a habitation of the Spirit Ephesians 2? If someone comes in to desecrate or defile that temple he is putting himself in a position to be destroyed by God.

So I tend to feel that the text is not particularly talking about the destruction of a Christian because of the distinction he makes between if any man, rather than saying if one you. Now at the same time I say that in that text, I would affirm that there are times in the life of a believer where he could enter into some defilement and forfeit his life. Now as to what sin that is the Bible does not specify a single sin, but if you follow I Corinthians 11, which seems to be the definitive text on that where some came to the Lord's table and ate unworthily that's general enough to assume that it would be any sin, which was continued in and unrepented of. So it doesn't necessarily nail down any one sin.

BETTY: You mean God would take that particular person home early? You mean just take the person's life early if they didn't repent of a sin?

JOHN: Right. You could die before your time in terms of the fact that is you entered into sin as a Christian and continued in that sin the Lord might remove you.

BETTY: For what purpose?

JOHN: Just because you're more trouble than you're worth because you're polluting the assembly. In other words in the Corinthian church it was better to get rid of some of those people. Now in some cases, in I Corinthians 5, they were put out of the church, right? Remember it says take that person because a little leaven, leaven's a whole lump, Chapter 5, and put them out. Turn them over to Satan so they'll learn not to blaspheme because the church cannot really survive the pollution of that kind of thing. That's why we do church discipline. But there are times when, and by God's discretion, this would occur when God himself will remove a person in a disciplinary act.

BETTY: Well then where does that leave that person? Are his works just burned?

JOHN: He takes him to heaven. For him it's a tremendous promotion.

BETTY: I see.

JOHN: For him it's a tremendous act of grace. And even though I Corinthians 5, even though his flesh would be destroyed his spirit will be saved.

BETTY: I see. Okay, thank you very much.

JOHN: You get into another little debate. See some people in I Corinthians 5 don't think that's a believer either. They think that can be an unbeliever polluting the assembly, but I think here in this text, I Corinthians 3, it is talking about an individual who is defiling or polluting the sacred temple, somebody who is outside, it may well be the same kind of person in I Corinthians 5 who is having sex with his father's wife who may not even be a Christian at all, we don't know. But anybody who pollutes the assembly, be he a believer or an unbeliever, is very open to the discipline of God and the ultimate discipline of God could be to take one home. Good question. Yes sir.

KEITH: Hello John. My name is Keith Mayfield. First I've got to ask does it have to deal directly with the Bible or can it be our church too.

JOHN: Sure. You can ask anything you want.

KEITH: It's been on my mind a lot and I have asked a lot of people and I never came up with the answer I really want. A couple of weeks ago a friend of mine asked me to hear him play playing in Long Beach and that night his music he sang and almost 500 people were saved and from what I understand our church does not allow that kind of music in our church. And that is kind of a rock, but his message is _____.

JOHN: Who is this person?

KEITH: Keith Green.

JOHN: Yeah, Keith Green.

KEITH: Plus right now I heard Cliff Prichard's the other night at the Greek Theatre and I've never heard a bigger praise. It was unbelievable. Donna Summers, Earth Wind and Fire, a group called Kansas, one of the heaviest rock and roll bands is now _____ confessionist, her album is just all those people and I just feel that we have the most beautiful musical ministry to people you could possibly have for these people. But I do feel sincerely inside there's so many people that we're not reaching that I think we can reach if we put more out of music that might reach them because some things might not but the music can.

JOHN: Let me suggest something to you because you're asking a broad question. I did a tape on Ephesians 5 on music and the word of God. I think if you can pick that tape up it'll be a help to you. Okay?

KEITH: Ephesians 5?

JOHN: Yeah, Ephesians 5, Speaking to Yourselves in Psalms, Hymns, Spiritual Songs, Singing and Making Melody in your Heart to the Lord. What kind of music honors God? Basically Keith, number one nobody ever got saved through music. People only get saved through the power of the Holy Spirit, right?

KEITH: I agree, you're right.

JOHN: Only through the Holy Spirit. Only through the drawing of the Father.

KEITH: It was a correction that's all.

JOHN: So we're not going to save people through some medium or some media that the Lord couldn't save otherwise; therefore, we want to make sure that whatever means we use fits within the parameters of the definition of holiness and godliness and rightness that the Bible lays out for evangelism and for lifestyle and everything else. So that's a very important issue that you need to think about. And I'll cover that somewhat in that tape. The other thing is when you're dealing with a person who is communicating the gospel and you have this massive response, only God knows how many people were saved.

KEITH: Right.

JOHN: But if there's one thing that we do know it is that if 500 people came forward 500 people were not saved, basically, because even Jesus said there going to be shallow soil, there's going to be weedy soil chocked out and so forth, and plus I wonder sometimes whether or not the gospel, as I've said before, is presented clearly enough for the non elect to reject it. You know what I'm saying?

KEITH: I understand. I have a hard time _____.

JOHN: I feel that if we're going to evangelize we have to evangelize people within the parameters of biblical definitions of evangelism with a clear presentation of the gospel. We have to do it in a way with a method that exalts Jesus Christ, honors Jesus Christ, does not confuse people at all, and I think if you'll listen to what I say in that tape you'll understand why Grace Church does not do things in that vernacular. And I think there are biblical reasons for that. I think we have to be very careful with whom we identify the Christian message.

It's very easy. For example I remember speaking in an elementary school one time and I was talking to 500 kids from grades 1 to 3 and I asked at the end of my deal how many of them wanted to ask Jesus in their heart. All 500 hands went up. Why I thought I had a revival. All I had was basically the fact that I had presented the gospel in such a nice way that all these kids thought it was the greatest thing that ever happened to them. It wasn't that they were all really wanted to get saved at that point,

it was that my presentation was inadequate so that they thought that it was easy enough to do that there was no price to pay. And I think very often when you present Jesus Christ the way He's presented in much of that vernacular the real gospel isn't even there. In some cases it might be, and I don't want to wash everybody out, but in many cases it isn't even there. The gospel isn't even there. In many of those songs you could stick any name you wanted in it and it wouldn't change the lyrics at all. It could be Buddha, it could be Confucius, it could be anybody. So there's a lot involved and I think if you'll listen to that tape it might help. Okay? I really appreciate the fact you'd ask the question.

KEITH: Do you think that they're wrong? That's one thing that really _____ me.

JOHN: Yeah.

KEITH: Okay.

JOHN: I think they might a good and heart motive. I just think they need to have some corrective to their method. There's a lot of shallow presentations. Plus some of those people's lives just don't match up with what they're saying. Now God will sued Balaam's ass if he has the right message in his mouth, but that doesn't necessarily mean we honor the instrument, see. You know the gospel will get through even if it's in the wrong medium many times.

MARY: Hi John, I'm Mary Gordon and I'd like to have Keith write it down because I asked you recently in a letter about that tape and you wrote me the tape number. It's 1940 and I listened to it recently and it's very good.

JOHN: Thank you Mary.

MARY: Well my question ---

JOHN: You can have as many free tapes as you'd like.

MARY: Thanks. I just might take you up on that.

JOHN: That's all right.

MARY: Well the question I wanted to ask you and this has been on my mind a long time but I was talking it over with my husband at dinnertime this evening, and I really would like to know the answer to because two weeks ago you gave a message on assurance of salvation and we got it right away as soon as we could and we've been listening to it over and over. So a question entered my mind. You mentioned once that you knew this man who was a real good Christian and he was a leader and he was one of the men that was on the panel that ordained you. Do you remember saying that?

JOHN: Right.

MARY: And you said that he asked you the toughest questions to make sure that you were towed the line and were going to handle us and you were okay. Then you said that man turned from the faith doctrinally and theologically. Did that man lose his salvation?

JOHN: No I don't think he did and it is hard for me to evaluate that and that ties in with the question that was asked over here. It's possible for a Christian to fall into sin and not and fall into that sin and never really deal with that sin 'til the Lord disciplines. All of us have been disciplined by the Lord, right? And it's just that if you protract that unrepentant spirit the ultimate discipline could come. So it's possible for a Christian say to fall into sin and die before they ever get their act together. And somebody might sit back and say, "Well maybe that person was never saved," and you have every reason to say that. We don't know. A person who says they're a Christian enters into sin, never repents before they're dead, there's no way to know, right, because they're acting like an unbeliever. So, there's no way to know. However, when a person says they're a Christian and then turns to an utter and absolute denial of the faith that is evidence that they never were redeemed and they are apostatizing. They are saying well I John 2:19 is a classification of those people. "They went out from us because they were not of us. If they had been of us they would have remained with us, but they went out from us that it might be made manifest that they never were of us." That's what the Bible says, I John 2:19. But the point is this: someone may fall into sin, I mean a moral sin or whatever, but when someone turns and disavows the faith and ceases to confess Christ and denies God and the word of God and salvation; that is the mark of an apostate. And I see that person as having never been saved, but like so many people wearing the mask hypocritically.

I don't think that man was a Christian and as it turned out, Mary, before he became a philosophy professor and denied the faith overtly, they kicked him out of his church for having sexual relationships with a myriad of women in his office. So wherever there is doctrinal deviation there is always moral deviation sooner or later it will come to the for. Okay?

EILEEN: My name is Eileen Fuentes. My question is about your sermon on how to be a godly mother on I Samuel. You said in that sermon that a woman's duty, the highest duty would be not to leave her child or disrupt her routine in any way like until the child is three. I was just wondering if today's woman you would feel would have to be that way not to leave a child or not to leave it with a babysitter or?

JOHN: I'm so glad you asked.

EILEEN: Also I wondered how your family with your four children and your wife handled this?

JOHN: Well I believe, what's your first name?

EILEEN: Eileen.

JOHN: Eileen. Eileen I believe that God gives us principles that are not subject to change. He didn't give us suggestions. He gave us commandments and he gave us timeless principles for the good of man. And it's like anything the manufacturer knows best how the product operates, right? And since God made women and God made men and God made kids and God made families then we want to listen to what He says about how they ought to operate. And it is very clear in the New Testament in Titus 2 that women are to love their husbands, love their children, and be keepers at home.

Now you have to understand that that was said in a society that was basically contemporary with our society today because they were having a women's lib movement at the very same time. In fact there has always been a women's lib movement. Ever since the fall women have been trying to be liberated, so the battle's been on for a long time. But in those days women were seeking liberation from the marriage responsibility and so forth. You can go all the way back into the day of Malachi where God says He hates divorce and so forth and you'll find even in that day that people were seeking to be liberated from the God-ordained pattern for the home. So I don't think there's any justification for changing that.

Now Hannah becomes to us a model of the biblical standard, that is that the man is the breadwinner and the woman is the one who commits herself to the husband, to the home, to care for the widows, to show hospitality to strangers, to wash the saints feet, and on and on as I Timothy says. Hannah becomes a perfect illustration of that because she would not go with her husband until you remember the child had reached the age where he was weaned. She saw this as her responsibility. I really feel that it is the obvious intention of God that mothers nurse babies. I mean I don't think you have to be Phi Beta Kappa to figure that out. I mean when a mother has a baby she gets milk to feed that baby. I mean that's just basic. I mean when you have a baby you don't all of a sudden deliver 48 bottles of Similac or whatever. You get milk in the place God intended that milk to be delivered and that I believe is God's plan.

Now there are some medical or physical reasons where that can't happen, but it is the proximity of that child to that mother in those early years that is very profound in effect on the life of that child. And I think that's a very obvious thing and I think Hannah provides a great model for us. I think a mother today who has a baby sticks the baby as soon as she can get over the trauma of birth into some other deal and splits to go to work forfeits the God-given responsibility. She is saved in childbearing, that is she is delivered from a second-class consideration in the fact that she has the greatest impact and influence on that life in its most formative time. So I really believe that God's standard is for any time, even today.

EILEEN: What I wondered was even, like I stay home with my child, I'm just wondering like to leave it with a babysitter for a few hours.

JOHN: Yeah, within reason.

EILEEN: Like once a week or?

JOHN: Sure.

EILEEN: I was just wondering if God says absolutely never. You're responsible for that child. Always stay with it.

JOHN: No. I think within reason, sure there's no problem with that. In the Old Testament you'll note many occasions, too where people had servants and they had folks within the house. There is in the New Testament the word *pit degas*, which is a moral guardian in the Roman society and the Bible even honors this because Paul says you may have ten thousand *pit degas*, but you have one spiritual *Pater*, one Father, so there is an honoring of the person who was a moral guardian, a person attached to the young child to help develop that child's moral comprehension to guide them in the things of life. So I'm assuming there was also that aid to the mother. There were nurses. There were midwives. There were all kinds of people who would come in a very close-knit family society that would give that mother the freedom to do some things. Sure, I don't see a problem with that.

With our kids, all four of them, my wife's priority was and still is to be with the children. That is her absolute commitment. And, in fact, I may say to her, "Honey, go with me over here to do this. I have to go there and do this," and she'll say, "I don't think I should go because I was away from the children once already this week and I don't feel I want to be away from them again, and they're 18, 16, 14, and 9. And sometimes I say to her, "But they're old now." And she says, "But that's what God has called me to do, is to be there with them." And so you need to have that perspective and you'll have a sense of freedom. You'll know when it's time maybe to step away and get a little rest and refreshment somewhere else and allow someone else the privilege to care for that child.

EILEEN: Thank you.

JOHN: Yeah, that's good. See which way are we going? Over here.

LYNN: Hi John, my name is Lynn Perick and myself and two other women were talking about Sunday night's message and it was really great. We were talking about if the Jews thought that circumcision saved and made himself perfect before God what did the women, how did they base their salvation by keeping the whole law?

JOHN: Yeah, you see it's a very interesting thing. Jewish tradition grew up in the Mishnah and Gamarrah and all the rest of that stuff almost ignoring women. I mean the Pharisee's daily prayer was, "I thank God that I'm not a Gentile or a woman." They just never really gave much thought to that. A woman was sort of in the covenant by virtue of birth to a man, to a Jewish man and woman. You know what I'm saying? The fact that she was the prodigy of a Jewish male, she was born and conceived by a Jewish male and female and so forth, so she came into the covenant that way and of course didn't have the privilege of having that mark. That's why you see, that's another thing I didn't really get into, but that's what makes circumcision for salvation so silly. That's the right question to ask because women can't get saved then that way, but they accommodate that by saying they get saved by keeping the law. But they really never specify much about women. In fact the Talmud, all the Talmud does, most of the time, is depreciate women. The Old Testament doesn't do that, but the Talmud does.

It was interesting to me that Dr. Ganot who was here in the morning saw that I was going to speak at night on the faith of Abraham and he's the Jewish, very imminent man. I mean the guy is the advisor to Golda Maier and Vegan and all these people and he said to me at lunch he said, "Now what are you going to say?" "What are you going to say, you're going to talk about circumcision.?" He said, "I want you to tell me what circumcision does mean." He says, "The Talmud is so confusing about it." So he said, "What does circumcision mean?" So, I pre-preached my sermon giving him the basic idea and you know when I was all done with that he said, "You know that makes sense. That makes sense. I can see that." So even in Judaism there was confusion about the significance of those things.

LYNN: Thank you.

ART: John this is Art, Art Gamp. The reason why, what I wanted to ask you was as far as purgatory is concerned, when you preached on about the Catholics I know they have a real problem with that. My parents are Catholics and they're always talking about the fact that they sort of balance salvation on a justice scale and if you have more good works than bad works then you will go to heaven and if they are sort of even then you go to purgatory for a while.

JOHN: Right.

ART: I don't have the verses in Scripture, but I was wondering if you have Scripture. I know they use certain Scripture for that.

JOHN: Well you see the burden of proof is on them. You see there's no Scripture about purgatory. There's none at all. They teach that if you have more good works than bad works you could get to heaven, but very few people go directly to heaven. I mean that's very unusual I think in the Catholic

system. Most people go to purgatory and there are levels of purgatory. You get out of purgatory by having people who are here on earth lighting candles, praying prayers, or by the treasury of merit, which is somebody who is really super good has got more than he needs so some of his extras can be put to your account.

Now the point with this dealing with purgatory is when anybody comes to me in the Catholic faith and says, "Well we believe in purgatory," the only question you want to ask them is, "Look, here's my Bible would you show me where that is?" And then you will open the big can of worms because the big can of worms is that it is not in the Bible. But the big issue with them is it doesn't matter if it's in the Bible, because tradition is equivalent to Scripture. You see they believe the Council of Trent or anything the Pope says ex cathedra or anything determined by any other council is as binding as holy writ. If the Pope is the Vicar of Christ, and if Christ mediates His truth through the councils then tradition is the equivalent of Scripture. So in effect they are in the same, that's why I used them as a parallel to the Jews, they are in the very same bag with the Jews.

In the book I wrote on the charismatics I find too that the basic issue in the charismatic movement is very similar to that. They also have developed a mass of tradition in addition to the Bible. I've had them say to me, for example, if you are not slain in the Spirit at least once every few days you'll never know the power of God in your life. My answer to that is where does it say you're to be slain in the Spirit? Where? It isn't in the Bible, but it's grown up as a tradition and if you keep having revelations and so forth and so on you're going to have that. So the only way you can deal with that is to try to show a Catholic person that the Bible is the beginning and end of God's revelation.

ART: Yeah it's sort of sad because my father and mother are both Catholics and he goes to church every day and as far as the Bible is concerned the Bible has no part at all in their beliefs.

JOHN: You see it's what I'm going to talk about this Sunday morning; it's ceremonial religion. It's just what I was saying last Sunday morning remember? And Sunday night too. Circumcision gets you in; that's a ceremony. That's a religious routine. Or in the morning we were talking about washing your hands a certain way, rinsing your hands a certain way, that's the same kind of deal. You go to church, you light a candle, you kneel down, you stand up, you say your beads, you do your deal, that's tragic.

ART: One thing too, when did the Catholic church officially begin? I mean what date, in like historically?

JOHN: You'd probably have to go back to about 325 with Constantine. Constantine really postulated the Holy Roman Empire when he came to rule the empire and make Christianity the religion of the state and sat out to persecute anyone who was not a Christian. And so he sort of made Christianity into a political issue and from 325 on the Holy Roman kind of empire, in other words a sort of quasi Christianity got linked in with the Roman empire or at least Constantine empire at that point and it just

kept developing and developing through the Dark Ages and finally it was shattered and all the while, while it existed, there were dissident groups right? There were groups who had the truth. There was a true remnant outside the system. But it finally blew sky high under Martin Luther. But basically you go back to 325 to find the real roots of the system. You could even find some of it earlier in what is known as the Nicene and Post Nicene fathers, oh no that would be about the same time, so that's about the right time. Let's go back over here.

Mike: Hi my name is Mike Future and as a Jewish believer I would like to know according to the reform view of Scripture the nation Israel is no longer important in this New Testament age. Now my question is exactly what is reformed theology, how do they base their position biblically and where in the Bible does it support that God is not through with the nation Israel?

JOHN: You mean that God is through with the nation Israel. Where does it support that? Well nowhere. God is not through with Israel. You're right. God is not through with Israel. You see, reformed theology, that's a name, that's a title, capitol R as opposed to dispensational theology. Reformed theology says there is no millennium. Now Reformed theology has a lot of good points that are really strong. Reformed theology is basically that which came out of the Reformation, right? Strong on the doctrine of salvation, the just shall live by faith, strong on the doctrine of sanctification, strong on the doctrine of the deity of Christ, strong on the holiness of God, strong on the deity of the Holy Spirit and the word of the Spirit, very strong on the life of progressive sanctification, the walk of the believer, very strong on the eternal state of hell, the eternal state of heaven, right on target biblically. But the doctrines that they seem not to develop were two: ecclesiology, that is the doctrines related to the life of the church. Luther never understood that and the reformed tradition has sort of had difficulty tearing itself loose from sort of, I hate to say this because some reformed people might get a little upset at it, but sort of a quasi Catholic ecclesiology, that is the doctrine of the church. That is they hold on to infant baptism and they hold on to sacramentalism to some degree or another. So, when it comes to the doctrine of the church basically reformed churches don't engage very much at all in say body life, interaction, discipleship, accountability, one another ministries, spiritual gift ministries. You know what I'm saying? They're pretty much preaching centers where those things that they are strong on are sort of held forth.

And the other area where they're weak is in eschatology from the Greek word *eschatos* or last the end things. And I think, too, this may have come because that never really got defined out of their heritage. And what they basically have said is this: that the church is the new Israel and they get it out of Galatians 6, a misinterpretation that we are the Israel of God and they say that the church is the new Israel; therefore, God is finished with the nation. He set them aside permanently, not only of all the sin throughout the old economy, but of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. When they did that, zap they were cut off.

Now there's some problems with that. They say that in effect to say then that we are the new Israel. We are the Israel of God. There is no nation Israel anymore. I mean it may exist politically, it may exist sociologically, it may exist in terms of anthropology, but it does not exist in terms of spiritual promise. The only way that Israel gets in on anything is to become a Christian and then get into the covenant that way.

Therefore, what they're saying is this: and here I think is the Achilles heel in the whole system, they are saying all of the literal promises of the Old Testament for the blessedness of the nation Israel were not literal, right? I mean if God literally promised that he would bring the nation back into the land, that he would bring them Messiah to reign over them in the land, that he would sit on the throne of David, the city of Jerusalem, that they would rule in their own land, that the desert would blossom like a rose, and it would flourish, and so forth and so on, and God would regather Israel from all over the world, that He would bring them together like in the dry bones vision of Ezekiel and He would breathe life into them and they would rise up a great nation and they would rule and reign in His kingdom as the duly constituted nation of Israel, if that is not the truth literally and we are that new Israel, then those were figurative promises, right?

Now the basic problem with that is all of the curses, which are given in many of the same texts, came to pass literally so what we're saying is what Dr. Fineberg said one time in Jerusalem just after a speech by one of the reformed theologians who had denounced to Israel that none of the promises were for them anymore, he said, "You mean we are to say that all of the curses of the Old Testament are literal and all the promises can be spiritualized." You see what you've done then is you issued what we call a dual hermeneutic, *hermeneutic* the Greek word means to interpret or to translate. You're interpreting this part of the verse this way and this part the other way and that's arbitrary. If the curses on Israel were literal you tell me, where they? Were they scattered? Were they devastated all over the world? Were they thrown out of their land? Were they taken into captivity? Were they judged and are they still being judged and is life still miserable for them, and are they still, as it were, tugging and fighting against the Arabs, the Ishmaelite, the Esauites? Sure! And if all that is literal then what gives us the right to take all the rest of it and spiritualize it?

But the biggest argument of all is if you ask, and this is the one that you inevitably will ask a reformed person is what is Israel doing these days? I mean what are they around for? In fact John Stott was asked that question in Luzon. They said, "What is the significance of the rebirth of the nation Israel biblically?" He said, "It has no significance at all." Well how can you say that? The question I always ask is, "Have you ever met a Perrizite, a Hivite, a Jebusite, an Amorite, a Hittite, or any other ite? No. Have you met an Israelite? Yes. Why? What are they doing around?"

My grandfather wrote a track many years ago called *Why You Can't Rub Out the Jew*. And the reason you can't rub out the Jew is because God is not finished with them and if you have any more question about that read Romans 9, 10, and 11. You'll find that many reformed commentators who write

commentaries on Romans skip those three chapters. That's true because it's very difficult for them to deal with them because it says that ultimately that original branch is going to be grafted back in. And it says, "Has God cast off His people Israel whom He foreknew?" Then it says, "No, no no," *maginata* the most strong negative in the Greek language. No, no, no, so I believe that God is not finished with Israel. I believe there's coming a day when He's going to re-gather Israel, He's going to put Israel together as a nation, He's going to send the Messiah back. In His return there'll be a literal kingdom on the earth in which Jesus Christ will reign and I have to be consistent in my hermeneutics, I can't say everything is literal up until there's something I don't want to accept and then this chuck the literal hermeneutic and make it figurative.

For example, I heard that Dr. Clowney, from Westminster, speak on the subject of Isaiah 9:6. He preached on the government shall be upon His shoulders and his message was Is the Government of your Life on the Shoulders of Christ? That's not talking about the government of your life, that's talking about the government of the world. And it will be on His shoulders. He will come and reign as king of kings and lord of lords and they go into the book of Revelation and it says He'll come and reign for a thousand years and they say, "Well that doesn't mean a thousand years," so they spiritualize that. And if you start doing that, I mean, it's sort of hard to know where to quit. So I feel that, does that help you to see where the difference comes from?

MIKE: Oh yeah.

JOHN: Okay.

MIKE: Thank you very much.

JOHN: You're welcome.

THERESA: My names is Theresa and I have a friend who is 20 and he's worried about the draft and all that kind of stuff.

JOHN: Tell him to close the window, right?

THERESA: Yeah. Anyway what he was wondering was and I'm interested too in if we're Christians and we're not supposed to murder well what does the Bible have to say?

JOHN: Yeah what does the Bible say about war?

THERESA: Yeah.

JOHN: It says a lot really. I'll tell you basically. While you want to give room for an individual's conscience, Paul says, "Don't defy your conscience," Romans 14, right? Because if you start to defile

your conscience, you start to react against your conscience and deny what your conscience tells you to do ultimately what's going to happen is you're going to sear your conscience and then you're not going to be able to hear it when it talks. Don't train yourself not to listen to your conscience. So, if a person really has a problem with that the military always provides that a person going into the military can find a non-combat assignment.

THERESA: Okay, that's what we were wondering about.

JOHN: All right. And still be responsible to be subject to the powers that be for they are ordained of God. Now God; therefore, has ordained governments and He's ordained police and so forth. You can take it from Romans 13 that God has ordained the police and it says there, "They bear not the sword in vain." What is the sword supposed to do?

THERESA: Kill.

JOHN: Kill people. And if in a government situation police are permitted to bear the sword. Why? For the protection of the good and the punishment of the evil doers. If you can see that on a national basis you can see it on an international basis. And I'll put it this way. If the United States of America went into a war to protect its people of an invasion of a godless aggressor I wouldn't have any problem bearing the sword to protect the innocent and punish the evildoer. It's little different to me than police action. If, for example, the United States went into Vietnam to protect the Vietnamese people from the encroachment of communism I would have no problem in fighting that war to win that war. I have a problem in fighting it the way we fought it, but I've no problem in defending innocent people against a godless, murderous, aggressor.

If, on the other hand, and that's what's so sad about America's shift and we listened to the wrong people during those years, if, on the other hand, I was in Russia and they unscripted me to go into the Russian army to attack those innocent people I couldn't do that. Does that help you to understand the distinction?

THERESA: Yeah a lot. Thank you.

JOHN: Okay. Let's see over here? Over there. Okay.

JOHN: Good evening John. My name is John. I recently received your series of 12 tapes on the second coming. I haven't been able to make it past the first tape yet. The question that I have is you state in the tapes that there are 333 various prophecies on the coming of the Messiah. 109 verses predict the first coming and 224 prophecies refer to the second coming.

JOHN: You want me to name them right?

JOHN: No, I have them right here.

JOHN: Oh, okay.

JOHN: My question is that when you refer to each of these particular verses in the Bible you indicate that, lost my train of thought there, that the reason that all the predictions weren't fulfilled by Christ's coming was that He's coming a second time and the problem I have with that is I can understand why it would have been difficult for the Jew not to accept Christ because He didn't fulfill all the prophecies. Could you clarify that up for me?

JOHN: Well, what you're saying is you're saying maybe it's excusable for the Jews to reject Christ because He only fulfilled part of the prophecy. Is that what you're asking?

JOHN: Yes.

JOHN: Can we excuse them for not believing since He only fulfilled part of the prophecy? I think not because there's no reason to assume that He was to fulfill all of those prophecies even if He only came once at the same time. In other words, if he only came initially and fulfilled 109 prophecies it isn't to say that the 224 wouldn't have been fulfilled later during his first coming. You understand what I'm saying? I mean that's no excuse at all. In fact the fact is they weren't acute enough in the knowledge of the Bible to figure it out that He'd fulfilled the first 109 let alone the other ones. They never used that as an excuse. Jesus said if you just looked at the Scriptures you'd know who I was. "Search the Scriptures," it said in John 7, "for there they would speak of me." There was so much there they weren't, it wasn't so much the fact that His appearing was unconvincing, I put it that way, it was that their hearts was hardened. That was the issue. There was plenty of proof, myriads of proof. And another thing the 224 prophecies that remain to be predicted of Him are not necessarily 224 different events. They might be only 4 different things repeated 224 times. Okay? All right. Good.

JOHN: Thank you.

LAURIE: Hi my name is Laurie and I'm hoping you can answer one question by telling me a tape number. I have one---

JOHN: I don't know any tape numbers.

LAURIE: Okay, the name of the tape. I didn't know which one to go to so I'm hoping you can. And I have one for my mom. She was in here to ask but she had to go back to Texas about a week ago so.

JOHN: Okay.

LAURIE: The one I had for her was in Genesis 9, I think it is, where it talks about Shem, Ham, and Japheth when they go in and Ham looks at his dad, looks at Noah and he is naked any everything and goes out and tells his brothers. Why was it a sin and why was he cursed? Why was Canaan, why were Canaan's children curses just because of that?

JOHN: Let me answer that on and then you can ask the other one, okay? There's nothing specific there to tell us why. The implication is that he did something in there that was perverse, that was not right, sinful. That's all we really need to know. The details, of which God didn't chose to tell us. He looked upon his father's nakedness. It may have been lustful, it may have been leering, it may have been a mocking of his father, it may have been several other things that we don't really need to go into, but we don't know specifically. But the indication of the text by virtue of God's response in cursing him is that whatever he did was in fact very sinful and it sets in motion, as all of Genesis does, the fact that God will bless righteousness and God will punish wickedness. And out of that, of course, God cursed Canaan and we know that those who descended from him came the servile peoples and then Japheth was enlarged. Most biblical anthropologists, I know Oliver Buswell III says that he feels that that became the colonizing people that ultimately colonized Europe. They enlarge, they are the colonizers and Shem became the Schematic people through Abraham loins the Arabs and the Jews. So it became at that point the division of God's plan for the populating of the world. But it is clear no matter what the sin was that it definitely was sin and God punished him for it.

LAURIE: Okay, thanks. The other one was about in Acts 19 where it talks about, where Paul talks about John's baptism being of repentance it's like the third through the seventh verse, he asked the people, I guess of Ephesus there, the disciples says, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit? They said, 'No we never heard there was one.'" Well this girl I was talking with the other day at work was telling me that she received the baptism of the Holy Spirit like I guess about three or four days after she was saved and I'd heard a lot about that. I was taught back and forth when I first became a Christian and I'm not real sure she showed me this section of Scripture and I didn't know how to answer her to say it wasn't all at one time.

JOHN: This passage proves the very opposite and I'll show you why. First, "while it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper border came to Ephesus and finding certain disciples." Now the word disciple, *mathetase*, means a learner. We don't know who they were learning from. We don't know who they were disciples of in verse one. We just know they were learners. They were seekers of truth. They were followers of somebody. "He said unto them, 'Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?' They said, 'We haven't even so much as heard there is a Holy Spirit.' And He said unto them, 'Under what then were you baptized?'" I mean he's shocked. He is in effect saying, "Whatever your baptism was it certainly wasn't the normal baptism; it wasn't Christ that you believed in or you would have heard and know of the Holy Spirit."

So the question is it's a shock to him that there is somebody that says they are a disciple and a follower who doesn't know that the baptism of the Spirit has come. So they said, "Unto John's baptism." Well who's John? John the Baptist. These are Old Testament sayings. See they haven't even entered into the new covenant. So they're not even saved yet. They are only in the sense of the Old Testament. So what does he do? "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance." Now what is the baptism of repentance?

John's baptism was a preparatory baptism. In other words he was making a people ready for the Messiah. It was a ceremonial washing. It was very much the Old Testament thing where you come and you are symbolizing the cleansing of your heart by the washing of the outer body and the baptism so that you are demonstrating that you are readying your heart to receive the Messiah. It was a preparatory. Turning from your sin, turning away from the past and washing yourself on the inside and demonstrating on the outside. It was a preparation saying unto the people that they should believe on Him that should come after, that is, Christ Jesus. So John was getting people to repent of their sin, have their hearts cleansed by confession and repentance for God, symbolizing their baptism to get ready for the coming of the Messiah. Well who does he preach to them? Does he say to them now look let me tell you how to get the baptism of the Spirit? Let me tell you how to do this. No, he doesn't say that. He talks to them, not about the Holy Spirit, not about the baptism of the Holy Spirit; he talks to them about whom? Christ Jesus because that's what they have to hear, and so he tells them about Christ Jesus and when they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Now they become new covenant believers and when Paul laid his hands on them the Holy Spirit came to them immediately on the spot and at that point they spoke with tongues and prophesied. So, this passage does not teach what is called the charismatic doctrine of subsequence. Now it is unique in the sense they received the Holy Spirit differently than we do, but there's a reason for that. On the day of Pentecost the people received the Holy Spirit in a marvelous way the first time He came, true? And it had to start somewhere, right? So, the Spirit comes on them subsequent obviously to their believing because they had to wait and pray and wait until the Spirit came. Now when you come into Chapter 8 the gospel was taken to the Samaritans. Now if there were any animosity in the world it was between the Jews and the Samaritans, right? So whatever God had done when he began the church among the Jews He'd better repeat when He begins it among the Samaritans or the Jews are going to think they are second-class.

So, when they believe the apostles were also present and also the Spirit of God came and baptized them and I believe they spoke in tongues, in languages because that's what happened at Pentecost. It wasn't that languages were so necessary to that event; they were a necessary connection to that first event.

Then in Chapter 10 when Peter preached to Cornelius, who was not a Samaritan, you go from the pure Jew to the half-breed Samaritan to the pure Gentile. When he preached to the Gentiles and they believed the same thing happened. The apostles laid their hands on them, the Spirit came, and they spoke in tongues, not that it was important then, but it was important that they had the same thing that the Jews had so that the people see church as one. So when those initial comings of the Spirit, the Jewish, the Samaritan, and the Gentile situation there was a reenactment of the same things. And Peter goes right back to the Council at Jerusalem, or the people rather in Jerusalem, and he says you're never going to believe this. The same thing happened to the Gentiles that happened to us. You know what that means? We've got to accept them on our level.

Now you've only got one loose end and this is these drifters who are Old Testaments saints, disciples of John, and I believe they're included in that same one-body concept by repeating the very same phenomena that you can trace all the way back to the book of Acts. Okay?

LAURIE: Repeating the signs?

JOHN: The laying of the hands of the Apostles, the baptism, the tongues.

LAURIE: Oh okay.

JOHN: Not that it was so necessary at that point, but it reenacts that initial coming so that there's not sense of anything but one body of those who believe. And after that point it ceases.

LAURIE: Okay the Samaritans were in Chapter 10 you said?

JOHN: Chapter 8. The Gentiles were in Chapter 10, and the Old Testament hangovers were in Chapter 19.

LAURIE: Okay great. Thanks a bunch.

JOHN: You're welcome.

EDDIE: Hi John, my name is Eddie and I have a question here on---

JOHN: By the way I think we have enough people to finish up with so. Go ahead Eddie.

EDDIE: Sure. I have a question on Romans 14. Actually it's for my wife. She couldn't be here tonight and she wanted me to ask you. It says here is it possible for a Christian to experience a guilty conscience apart from conviction of the Holy Spirit, not in matters of sin, but over gray areas and if so should it be ignored and if so how?

JOHN: Yeah. It is possible for a Christian to be struck in conscience apart from the Holy Spirit, sure. For example, you may have been raised to think that beans were evil and if you've been taught that all your life, beans are going to bother your conscience. Right? Sure they are. Well look at the Jews. The problem he's dealing with in Romans 14 is the church was starting, it was Jews and Gentiles and the Gentiles would invite the Jews over to dinner and have ham sandwiches. There's no problem for them and it's no problem biblically, right? Don't call unclean what God has cleansed, there's no more dietary laws, but a Jew would gag on the thing. He couldn't handle it.

Now it wasn't biblical and it wasn't the Holy Spirit, it was just a hangover from his conscience. So Romans 14 says, look when you find somebody who's got that kind of a thing in his conscience, don't push things off on him. Don't use your liberty to make him stumble for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink. Set that stuff aside. It's righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. So there is no question about that. But the other side of the question is if your conscience does that to you don't ignore your conscience because what you're doing when you ignore your conscience is training yourself to ignore your conscience and then when God's Holy Spirit does want to use it, it isn't going to be a good instrument.

And I'll tell you another thing. If you ignore your conscience and violate it it'll heap all kinds of guilt on you. So that's what the church has to do. You see you may say well so and so doesn't believe in this and they don't believe in that, what a narrow-minded person. They don't even watch TV. They don't even listen to the radio and there are people like that, right? Sure I've met a whole bunch of the people in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in the Amish community think it's a sin to listen to the radio. Some of them have radios hidden in the barn and they listen to our radio program, but they can't let the community know. And they say, "What should we do?" I say, "Well don't offend people by that and don't violate conscience by that because you're training your conscience to do a bad thing.

But at the same time, little by little, if you can teach them you can begin to free up the conscience. But if you just start right away to violate that conscience you're going to train yourself not to listen to what's said and it's better that you should be sensitive.

EDDIE: Like in a writing ministry how would you sort of like deal with that with someone on a personal level not really have a long relationship with that person?

JOHN: I think just sit down and take them through Romans 14 and help them to see what it is that they're doing. In other words, we all have gray areas of our lives. You know for example, in my case, I can't play cards. You give me a deck of regular cards and I can't handle that. Now you might say, "Well they're certainly not sinful. I've seen guys preach the gospel using cards." Yeah, well I don't think cards are sinful anyway, right. To the pure all things are pure. To those who are impure everything's impure. But it's hard for me to handle cards because all my life I was told that cards were

a sin. Any of you in that same deal? Yeah, many of you. Some of you still believe it's biblical, you just haven't found the verse. But the best thing you can do with someone like that is just to try and work with them and let them understand their liberty and so forth. But even though I understand my liberty I still choose not to do that because it bothers me. So you don't want to mess with your conscience. Why would you want to bring guilt upon yourself? Don't fight it. And the thing you don't want to do is if you're married to somebody or your close to somebody who has those kind of things, don't push your liberty off on them because all you're going to do is make them miserable in the violation of that thing which they don't want to do. And that's what Christian love is all about. Okay?

EDDIE: Thank you.

BRUNO: Hello. My name is Bruno and I know that after I ask this I'm going to have to ask forgiveness from one of the pastors because I sat through two hours of him teaching me this, but I still didn't get it.

JOHN: And I know it wasn't his fault.

BRUNO: But it's a tough thing to understand.

JOHN: Okay.

BRUNO: John, what's the passage where it says that, I forgot this particular passage where I says that God wishes that no one should perish?

JOHN: II Peter 3. "God is not willing that anyone should perish but that all should come to repentance."

BRUNO: Right. I'm assuming that it's regarding salvation, right?

JOHN: Right.

BRUNO: Okay. The problem that I for me because I can't answer the people who ask me is that Ephesians 1:4 talks about the fact that we are chosen before the foundation of the world. Matthew 7:12-14 also talks about the fact that many will enter that place and a few ones will be with Jesus.

JOHN: Right.

BRUNO: The question that was brought to me was what kind of a God is a God that chooses people before the foundation of the world at the same time wishes that no one should perish and only brings a few with Him?

JOHN: Right. That's a good question.

BRUNO: It's very God, I confusing.

JOHN: Yeah. To see God, no matter how you want to define Him, is confusing. You understand that?

BRUNO: Yeah I understand.

JOHN: Because we have this little tiny brain and God is so much more vast. Now the best way I can explain this and it isn't very good, but it's the best that I can explain. You've got to understand, see what you do is you got to understand the character of God. You're in the same boat that Habakkuk was in. He said, "Oh God," in Habakkuk's prophecy he cries out to God, he says, "Oh God, oh God, bring a revival, God bring a renewal, God bring a revival, revive your people, save your people," and all this stuff and God says, "I'm going to come to my people, only I'm not going to save them, I'm going to wipe them out." And his reaction is, "What kind of a God does that? These are the people of Your covenant." And then he says, "Not only that I'm going to use the Chaldeans," who were worse than the people. So now he's not only wondering why doesn't God bring a revival, two, why is God going to punish the people of His love, three, why is he going to use a worse people to be the executioner." And there's no answer, so finally he just steps back off the quicksand of his dilemma unto the rock of the confidence of God's character and he says, "God thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil cannot look upon iniquity."

In other words, God you're too holy to make mistakes. You have to react against sin. Then he calls him the covenant-keeping God. He calls Him the mighty God. In other words you're bigger than history, you're bigger than any event, you never break your promises and he goes through this huge recitation of the nature of God and the sum of it is the just shall live by what? Faith. There's no answer to that except to trust God. Just trust God that God is a God of love, and God is a God of justice, and God is a God of grace, and God is a God of kindness and mercy, and God is not willing that any should perish. The Old Testament says, "God said I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." God didn't even create hell for men. Hell was created for the devil and his angels.

Now the question comes down then to the same old question of predestination and human choice. Don't call it free will because man doesn't have free will. His will is bound by sin. And you only can understand that if you understand this: and I'll put it as simply as I can. It is a paradox and it is irreconcilable. It is not reconcilable. For example, and I've used this illustration, who wrote Romans? Who wrote Romans.

EDDIE: Paul.

JOHN: Paul.

EDDIE: Paul.

JOHN: It's a human book written by Paul; his opinions on things, right? Who wrote Romans? God.

EDDIE: Yeah, the Holy Spirit.

JOHN: Did they alternate verses? Who wrote Romans? Is it all God's word? Is it all Paul? How can it be? You have the same problem, don't you? Let me ask you another question. Who lives your Christian life? Who lives it? The Lord. You just sit back and say, "Go Lord." Who lives it? You beat your body to bring it into subjection. Do you obey? Are you responsible for your obedience? "And yet nevertheless I live," what's the rest of the verse? "Yet not I." Same paradox. Who was Jesus Christ God or man? Yes. He's 100% God, 100% man. You can't be 200% of something, but He is. It's a paradox. Every major doctrine in holy Scripture has that same apparent paradox because you cannot reduce the inconceivable realities of the mind of God and push them into the human brain. It's impossible.

So when the Bible says we're chosen unto Him before the foundation of the world, elect, to be saved, I believe it with all my heart. When the Bible says, "You will not come unto me that you might have life. Whosoever will may come and if you don't come it's your fault." I believe that that with all my heart as well and the fact that I can't resolve them proves that I'm not God and that's comforting. And that's all it proves. It doesn't prove anything about God. It only proves stuff about me. You understand that? It doesn't impugn the character of God at all. It only shows that I am limited in my understanding of His character.

So rather than try to figure out what I do not have the capacity to figure out, I step back on what I do know and what I do know is the Bible does say God is not willing that any should perish. The same question could be asked if you asked it this way: if the people who are going to go to heaven are elect why go and evangelize? Have you ever wondered that? What's the answer? 'Cause he told you to. Your job is not to figure out the mind of God. Your job is to do what He says. So you only resolve these things in the character of God. Okay one more.

BETSY: Hi John, Betsy. Are you familiar with an article in this Saturday's Times in the calendar section? The title is Spices of Life at the Erotic Film Awards.

JOHN: No.

BETSY: Did you happen to see it?

JOHN: No.

BETSY: The beginning paragraphs, the writer is Lee Grant. I don't know anything about him, but he was writing about Christians standing outside this awards ceremony. Some of them yelling, "Repent perverts." Another one calling himself Jeremiah---

JOHN: They were saying the right thing.

BETSY: Okay. He was calling himself Jeremiah Christian. He was yelling, "Repent, adulterer, fornicator, etc." They quote a lady that is part of the festival as saying, "Those people outside shouldn't judge me. I don't judge them. I'm sensitive. They seem so tormented and condemning. Lot of bitterness when you throw stones at others, etc." Okay, my question is do you, this is just an opinion _____.

JOHN: Sure.

BETSY: Are you supportive of that type of evangelism? Do you think it's effective or detrimental?

JOHN: I think if the guy is speaking the truth, boy that's about the best place I can think of to be saying it. I mean I know people are going to write you off as a fanatic, but that's exactly what they did with the prophets and Jesus. They stoned them and killed them and then they crucified the Son of God. I think we're not in the marketplace enough. I mean I think if you want to go down to where they are and do that I mean you've got to be willing to risk whatever's going to happen, but I think that is the right message given to the right people, at the right time and the right place.

Now obviously somebody could be so bizarre or fanatical that they'd be thought of as some kind of maniac, raving maniac. Within reason and within biblical accuracy, the prophets did more wild things than that. They did object lessons rolling

Around on the ground laying on one side for days and then flipping on the other side for days. All kinds, you read Jeremiah and see how crazy, the people thought he was out of his mind and they finally threw him in a pit ____ had it with you and shipped him to Egypt. So there's not enough of that in our sophisticated society, that kind of confrontation. I mean I'm not saying you're going to have a great revival and everybody's going to repent but it is the right message to those people. So go to it! Wouldn't that be exciting?

I used to preach on the street corners. And I mean it's tough. I used to go to the bus depots and preach on repent and all that. And people would go by and say, "Poor kid, he's young and he's so demented." But I don't think we're confrontive enough. Bless their hearts. I'm excited that people have the courage to do things like that. I sometimes think that some of them are misrepresent the truth

because their message is kind of clouded up with some kind of aberration, but if it's really on target it's good.

Well we've gone longer than we're supposed to and I've said more than I know. So, it's good isn't it to share in the word and to give expression to our questions. God bless all of you. Why don't we have a word of prayer and then you can go back to fellowshiping with one another, okay? Let's bow together. Father with grateful hearts we express our deep thanks for your word. What a great great resource it is. All these questions only represent thousands and thousands of questions that fill the hearts of the people. How marvelous that all of them find their resolution ultimately in your word. We thank you for this treasure. May we cherish it, not as a fetish, but as a source of truth and blessedness. That all we do may be to Your glory. In Christ's name. And everyone said, "Amen." See you Sunday.

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