

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

Bible Questions and Answers, Part 26

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 1301-X

Well, we want to have a little time in the word tonight, and we cherish these times. They're such great times. So if you have a question, pop right up to a microphone there and we'll do the best we can to answer your...boy oh boy. Wow, this is a loaded deck tonight. Here we go.

QUESTIONER: Hi, my name's...

JOHN: Wait a second. We don't have that mic on. Go ahead.

KELLY: My name is Kelly, and I want to know if the world is going to know when Jesus returns for the saints, if they're going to...if the world's going to see this, and if there's a Scripture that's saying they will or won't?

JOHN: The question basically can be answered this way. Obviously, the world is going to know something happened. It appears as though they're not going to acknowledge what it is that happened. For example, when the rapture occurs, which is what you're asking about and the Lord just catches away the Christians, which is the end of the church age. When that occurs, the world's going to have to know that, because millions of people will instantly disappear. There will be no bodies left, none.

And I've often wondered what would happen to the people in the morgue and the embalming places who are sort of in process when the mortician goes back in and can't find anybody. And they start searching around for the body snatchers that supposedly took these cadavers that would be joined with their spirits and so forth. No, that's going to happen for sure, but the world apparently does not acknowledge that, because there's no great revival following the rapture.

For three and a half...a seven year period called tribulation follows the rapture. The first three and a half years there's no revival of any kind at all. In fact, with the church gone, there's really nobody left to evangelize. And it's kind of like what Jesus said to the rich men in Lazarus, you remember the rich man said let me go back and tell my brothers and warn them and he said that Jesus said if they don't believe the Scriptures, they wouldn't believe that one rose from the dead. And if they don't believe the Scriptures, they ain't going to believe the rapture either. It isn't going to make them believe.

In fact, the very opposite happens and when the two witnesses of Revelation 11 are sent around the world, and I believe they're in the first three and a half years, two witnesses called Olive Branches and Lamp Stands were sent around the world to preach. The world kills them, that's how hostile they

are. Now, people have often asked me well, how can they explain this away.

Let me give you an illustration. Some years ago, there was a young man who came to our church and he was commissioned by the Shermer Music Company, which is probably one of the largest music publishers in the world. They publish an awful lot of church music. But the Shermer's, the people at that time from what he told, who ran the company were into the occult up to their ears. And were contacting mediums and spirits and they had this...this society...I can't think of the name of it any more, but it was down in Santa Monica, they met and they went through these deals with these mediums contacting demon spirits and all this.

And this young man was...was commissioned to write a rock opera, very much like Jesus Christ Superstar, one of those called . And he wrote the whole thing and he said it was all written by demon spirits. In other words, it was automatic writing. He sat down and his hand moved and he just made the notes and he knew he was under the control of demon spirits. He did it very rapidly and all of this kind of thing. And he said he got further involved in this new age society kind of occult thing, Society of the Golden Dawn or something like that, and when he got in it, he learned some very interesting things. They gave him a book and he brought me the book. He brought me this book and in this book was very a interesting section. And the book said that we have our demons located in various planets. We have them located in the United Nations. We have our spirit beings located in the government of all the countries of the world and we're working on this sort of massive plan and all this stuff. And one of the sections of the book was very interesting. It said that some day we're going to remove all the Christians from the earth who are holding back from society from reaching the next level of consciousness.

So the demons have already laid some kind of a strategy and an explanation for the rapture. They're just going to tell the people who are contacted to them, connected to them that they've removed these people so that society can rise to a higher level. And unbelieving people are going to buy that faster than they're going to buy the truth. So I don't think there will be a great revival at that time, no. The great revival comes in the middle of this tribulation when God seals 144,000 Jews and sends them out all over the world to evangelize and then when all hell breaks loose across the earth that's what drives people to the understanding of the salvation that comes in Christ. Okay?

KELLY: Uh-huh, thank you.

BERNIE: Hi, John. My name is Bernie and I've got a question here from the Book of John, you know, first Chapter and I'm starting this book and it kind of struck me here when I'm reading Chapter 1, you know, Verse 12 when Satan is talking to God and telling him...

JOHN: Oh Job?

BERNIE: Job, yes.

JOHN: I thought you said John.

BERNIE: No, Job, excuse me.

JOHN: Okay.

BERNIE: Yeah.

JOHN: Okay.

BERNIE: Okay, and he's saying, you know, he's asking God to put him...you know, give him a test and the Lord said unto Satan, "Behold all that he had is in thy power only upon himself put on for thy hand." "Only upon himself put not forth thine hand." So Satan went forward from the presence of the Lord. And he got the trials, okay. And now in Chapter 2, I read here when the Lord says, and the Lord said unto Satan, "Have thou considered my servant Job? That there is none like him on earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? And still he hold fast his integrity although thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause."

Now, my question is, did Satan...did Satan did these things to Job or did God did the...you know to him?

JOHN: Yeah, that's a good question. And the answer to the question is, Satan did these things to Job, but God allowed him to do them. And God allowed him to do them to prove His point that he had a faithful man. You see, Satan is ever and always the accuser of the brother as it says in Revelation. He's always accusing the brother and before God. And this is one occasion where he says you don't even have one righteous man. He says, "okay, go down there and do anything you want short of taking the life of Job. You can do anything you want to him and he'll stay true to me. To show you there is true faith in the earth." So the answer is that Satan did these things, but God allowed him to do those things.

BERNIE: Yeah.

JOHN: But Satan's...Satan always functions within the allowance of God, never beyond that. God is not intimidated by Satan. He is not forced by Satan into anything. He's simply saying there in verse 3, "you moved me against him." Well, in the sense that God took His protecting hand off.

BERNIE: Okay, okay.

JOHN: Okay.

BERNIE: Yeah, thank you.

JOHN: You're welcome.

CHARLES: Pastor John, my name is Charles Miller. I have a question relating to the direction that church generally, the Christian church in America's taking, and in particular Grace Church. We are, as Christians, admonished to be salt in a corrupt world. I feel though that many times Christians who are sincere believers are not always terribly well-informed as to the state of the world. The newspapers, some newspapers are quite misleading, television is...has it's devotees among the Christian community, but the television is slanted news. So we're really given a piecemeal diet and it's very difficult for Christians to sort out fact from fiction.

What I have in mind is a proposal and a question at the same time as to the direction that Grace Church proposes to take in teaching it's...it's body of saints certain facts relating to the world around us. We know from...from a salt insert in the bulletin two weeks ago that the Federal Government to the IRS has it's eyes on Christian schools with expectation that if the Christian schools don't balance their racial quotas why the government will remove the church from it's tax exempt status. That's only one...that is only one battlefield. There are others as we know.

Abortion is another, so what I have in mind is a proposal here that...that contains several subjects which I think would be of interest, general interest to the body here, we've...we've just completed a Wednesday night series on occults and Logos has had one course that I know of on stewardship, but I think these are just touching the periphery of the possibilities. For example, let me read from a short that I made up here. Why not inform the...the body of believers about the situation of the government versus God working into the history of this country when it was Christian instead of humanistic.

We need to know more about stewardship, not just money management, but resources. We need to know more about the communism. We need to know something about the sociology of religion. Dr. Francis Schaeffer pointed out that in his book *How Shall We Then Live* that religion is becoming sociological. That is to say that preachers are tailoring their sermons to meet the expediencies of the community. Perhaps we could learn something about the dictatorship of a godless majority and the leveling influence that it has on all of society. You know, a dictatorship abhors another system that has its absolutes. And our absolute is the very God above.

JOHN: Okay, let me stop you at the point so I can react to that. Basically, I think all those things are very helpful things. And let me tell you my response as to a course in that. And you're coming down a track that I think is very important. Some years ago, a very close friend of mine, Dr. John Stead, who

is the Dean at Los Angeles Baptist College out here and has his PhD in Sociology has all his life, as long as I've known him, we played football and baseball and stuff in high school, but he was always politically oriented in his thinking. And all through his life he's tracked these kinds of things.

A few years ago, we ran a special course which he taught on the believer informing him about civil government, giving him a history of political science, a history of forms of government. I had a conversation with him the other day because I was very concerned that some students going to a Christian school in our area were being given George Orwell's book 1984 to read about Totalitarianism. Well, George Orwell's 1984 is not a good book on Totalitarianism. It's fiction.

If they wanted to read a good book on it they should read Arthur Kessler's book Darkness At Noon, which is the...the classic treatment of Russian Totalitarianism of the '30's which was the revolt that put communism into power. But I'm very concerned about those kinds of things. So I would agree with that I think we will in the very near future have a special course on that available to our people, because there are some very current issues.

Secondly, when we sent Sam Erickson to Washington, D.C. and we have supported him, I don't know if you know that, we have supported Sam to the amount of about \$2,000.00 a month as a project of Grace Church as he has developed the Center for Law and Religious Freedom of the Christian Legal Society, which is a lobby group. It's a conservative evangelical group to counter the ACLU. But there is a new lobby group, and they've been extremely effective. They have not only be effective in lobbying for many, many cases in Washington, they have newsletters that are available that can keep us informed and if you'll call my office, we'll give you their address and you can be regularly on the mailing list to get the information from the Christian Legal Society of the Center For Law and Religious Freedom.

CHARLES: Thank you.

JOHN: And then you can become a real catalyst in that area. Secondly, they have been asked on several occasions by the White House to recommend key people that could go into White House staff and right now they have placed two born again evangelical conservative attorneys in the White House staff, which are...who are working personally with the President's Cabinet in these matters. And so they've had a tremendous impact.

I do agree with that. Now, let me say a third thing and then I'll...we'll go on to another question. The third thing I want to say is, it's difficult for me to see myself in that role, because that's not...that's not what God's called me to do. So I want you to understand that I feel the priority to do what the Lord has enabled and called me to do. But while I admit that that's not my emphasis, I do admit also that it's helpful for us to have a sense of that.

CHARLES: Yes.

JOHN: And to understand where our country is going and what freedoms we are...we are perhaps losing because we need to take the means that are put at our disposal to deal with these issues. So I appreciate that.

CHARLES: Yes.

JOHN: That's very helpful, thank you, Charles.

CHARLES: Thank you.

JOHN: Okay, we'll go back onto this side. Ed?

ED: John, I have a question it has basically two parts. First part is more of symmantics and that our DE manual refers to my Lord Jesus Christ as having two natures, the divine nature and the human nature. And in some of our dealing with people, I've run across that this conjures up ideas of psychological problems, split personalities and what. And I'm wondering would you think it would be better to refer to my Lord Jesus Christ as being totally God and totally man or fully God and fully man? And the other part of the question is, the second part is, one of these concepts, in other words the two nature concept versus the fully God and fully man concept, is one of these concepts more apt to lead to heresy?

JOHN: Well, I don't...I don't think one or the other is more apt to lead necessarily to heresy, because you're only talking about symmantics. You know, words can have meaning that varies from person to person. That's why we talk about buzz words. You know, you can say a word that conjures up all kinds of meanings. When you say two natures, Christ has two natures.

The Bible doesn't say that. And so I...I understand why they say that, because they're trying to unscrew the unscruitable. You know, trying to explain the inexplicable. And it's true that Jesus Christ is God and he is man. I would choose myself to say He is fully God and fully man at the same time. And I would rather talk in those terms of apparent paradox because they're more biblical. I mean, he has expressed in the Scripture as fully God. He is also presented as fully man.

When you start using psychological terminology, which is the two nature terminology, I think it's a little confusing. The same thing occurs when we were talking about Romans 7. We do that with Christians. We say they have an old nature and a new nature and again we're sort of compartmentalizing them psychologically which isn't really biblical either. Those aren't terms used in referenced to a Christian. So I always opt out for a biblical term, because I think you protect the content that way. As soon as you a non-biblical term to refer to a biblical idea or a theological truth, then you have to give it

meaning or you have to let the culture as they understand it give it meaning. But if it's in scriptural terms, the Bible is it's context. So I would prefer that.

ED: Thank you.

JOHN: Thank you, Ed.

KEITH: Hi, John, my name is Keith Barrett. I was speaking to a friend at work the other day who is Mormon and I asked him how the Mormon church got so involved in the genealogy aspect that they're involved in. And he brought up the baptism for the dead that the Mormon church does. And he quoted a verse and I can't remember the reference now, but it went something I believe it's one of the books that Paul wrote.

JOHN: 1 Corinthians 14:29.

KEITH: I knew you'd know it. "For if we baptize, we also baptize for the dead," and whatever. And he quoted that verse and then proceeded to tell me more about their very strange baptism for the dead routine. I was wondering if you could briefly explain the real meaning of that verse.

JOHN: Yeah, I can. Just let me first say, the thing that boggles my mind about Mormonism is that the whole goal of Mormonism is to enter into eternal celestial sex and populate your own planet. Now if that's not the weirdest, most perverted...you know all pagan religions have a sexual bent to them. Whether you go back to the prostitutes of Baleor whatever. They all seem to get twisted and that's Mormonism. It's...the real goal of Mormonism is to get your own planet and your own spirit wife and engage in eternal celestial sex and populate your own planet. So it's bizarre.

Now look at 1 Corinthians 14:29, and I'll try my best to explain it to you. And let me say at the very beginning that I really don't know what it means, but I don't feel bad, because no one else does either. And the reason is because the passage is so limited and obscure and there isn't a lot of data given to us. It's like that lady asked about on Sunday night when she said why do people disagree. Well, this is one of the things they disagree on. For example, there are 35 different views of this one verse that I myself went through when I was doing a paper in seminary.

KEITH: John, I think that's 15:29.

JOHN: I'm sorry, 15...yes, 15. What did I say, 14? Yeah, 15:29. "Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead if the dead rise not at all why are they then baptized for the dead." Now, I think what Paul is doing here, he's trying to show that there must be resurrection. And he's trying to show how obvious that is.

And one of the...one of the ways which he demonstrates that is to play off of some contemporary religious belief that was in existence at that time. And he is simply saying there are people who baptize for the dead. If there's no resurrection from the dead, why do they do that? In other words, he's dealing with first century Mormonism. And in trying to show the universality of a concept of life after death, he plays off of an existing cult that believed that you could be baptized for the dead, which means they believe that people lived after death, right? So I think that's all he's doing.

I don't think it means that you can get baptized and get somebody out of purgatory or out of charterist or out of hell or out of punishment into glory. I don't think it means that people are being baptized to fill up the ranks of Christians who've died. That's another very prominent view that Christians die and others have to be baptized to take the place of the dead and in the army of the Lord to carry on the work.

I think he's simply saying even your own pagan religions affirm the resurrection as a concept. Why else would people be being baptized for dead people if it wasn't the heart of man to believe in the resurrection. Okay, so he is...he is just playing off what would have been a contemporary Mormon view in those days.

KEITH: Thank you.

JOHN: Yes?

QUESTIONER: Hi, John, the question I'd like to ask is that when a person dies anywhere from a child to an adult, assuming that they are Christians, and they enter into the presence of the Lord, are they the same age as far as their earthly age goes when you enter into heaven?

JOHN: Well, there's no age in eternity. There's no age.

QUESTIONER: Same size?

JOHN: Well, you their body wouldn't...their body wouldn't even go to be with the Lord yet until the rapture of the church. You say well, they'll rapture the body at that time, it'll be the same as it was when it's dead. I don't know. It says we'll be like Christ. I don't think that means we're all going to look exactly like Christ, be the same height, same width, the same features and the same, you know, physical traits.

I just know we'll know as we are known, therefore will enter into full maturity of mind and consciousness. We will be fully developed as human beings in the body because we'll have the eternally glorified body. There won't be any limitations and a child will be limited by strength. The child would be limited by stamina. But when it enters into an eternal body, everything changes. I mean, you

have a celestial body.

It's not like an earthly body, it's completely different from an earthly body. It's a moot point how old we'll be, because we'll be in eternal perfection. And yet that perfection will be distinct for each one of us. We're not going to all, all of a sudden, come out like cookie cutter, you know, units. We'll be unique. But we'll be mature in every sense.

QUESTIONER: Okay, thanks.

JOHN: Okay.

LINDA: My name is Linda. And I want you to explain speaking in tongues, because I don't understand it all.

JOHN: Oh. Well, speaking in tongues. Somebody said speaking in tongues is the guy who said bought a Honda should have bought a Yamaha. If you listened carefully, you'll get what I said. I'll say it again. Bought a Honda should have bought a Yamaha. That sounds to me like that's Bought a Honda should have bought a Yamaha. But it sounds like that to me. No, I'm being facetious. Let me explain it to you. It went by fast didn't it?

Okay, the best thing I can do, Linda, to help you understand that is to just simply say this in the Apostolic age in the book of Acts when the church was born, God gave to His people on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 the ability to speak many languages which they had not learned. It was a miracle. And as all miracles, it was intended to get their attention to demonstrate that God was there. In other words, when you see a miracle, you know God is present, right?

And so when that miracle happened, it collected these people and they were amazed, because here were all these uneducated Galileans talking all the languages of people gathered in Jerusalem for the time of the Pentecost feast. And so they spoke in all these languages, the wonderful works of God and people came together as a crowd. And having attracted them with the fact that God must be there because of these miraculous languages.

In other words, they were not gibberish, they were actual languages spoken by these people. And everyone heard in their own language what they were saying the amazing works...the amazing and wonderful works of God. That drew the crowd and they said boy, this is a divine miracle. And it was at that moment, the moment that out of the group of people speaking stepped Peter and preached to them the gospel.

So that the tongues was a way for God to get their attention. To get their attention. Now, this continued in the early church, this speaking in tongues. In fact, when the next group of Christians

after the Jews which would be in Acts Chapter 8, the Samaritans were saved, they too had the same phenomena. Why? Because Jews already looked down on Samaritans and God wanted to be sure that the Samaritans received the same miraculous sign when they entered into the church that the Jews had received. So there wouldn't be any second class citizen rate, right?

You go further into in Chapter 10, and you have the Gentiles. We've gone from Jews, to Samaritans to Gentiles. When the Gentiles received the gospel and believed, they too spoke in those tongues. And God was saying it's all one church. Nobody's a second class citizen. Nobody at all. And so those are very important events.

Now, when you go into 1 Corinthians 14, the Apostle Paul says tongues are for a sign. Not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. What are they a sign of? They're a sign that God is present and about to speak for one thing. And secondly, in 1 Corinthians 14, it says, "they are a sign to Israel." What are they a sign? Well, you go back to Isaiah. And Isaiah says you don't listen to me when I speak your language, so some day I'm going to speak a language you don't understand.

And so tongues were a two-fold sign. One they attracted the attention of people to show that God was there. Two, they said to the Jews, you haven't heard when God spoke in your language and now he's going to speak a language you can't hear. So it was a judicial sign of judgment on Israel.

After that era, I believe tongues ceased, and that's 1 Corinthians 13. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." And I believe they ceased. Now today people have started up speaking in tongues again. And it's been since 1900 or a little after that it started up again. And the question is if it ceased, for 1,800 years how could it start again?

Well, they try to back to Joel and get a verse that says the former reign and the latter reign and this is the latter reign and God's bringing it back, but that's very unfair to the text. So I believe what we have today could basically be explained as demonic, counterfeit and by the way, I don't know if you know this, Tibetan monks speak in tongues. Eskimos speak in tongues. Many of their tribes, so do Mormons who don't even believe the gospel. So it could be satanic.

Secondly, and probably the most common thing, it is...it is learned behavior. Somebody started it and there was a euphoria about it and so you...you sort of get into the swing and you learn how to do it. There is some ecstasy. To Lutherans by the name of Kildahland Kalbindid a survey and study of this thing and their primary result was that it's learned behavior. And you have a certain person who's predisposed to that kind of thing emotionally and he learns how to do it and falls into that. Just like there are hypnotizable and non-hypnotizable people. There are certain psychological types of people who fall easier prey to that kind of phenomena. But there's no need for us as Christians to seek that. I think it's a wrong thing to seek.

Now, I wrote a book called the Charismatics. And if you can get it in the bookstore, it has a whole section on tongues. Okay? Coming up in January, we're going to do the whole 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14 on the radio. Now, we've not done that. We've been on the radio over five, six years now. And we've not done that, but it needs to be done. And we filled we've built a solid enough audience out there, we're going to get it when we do it I know. We're going to get some flack, but we need to make it clear. And at that time, we will have the tape album on 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 available and also a study book, which will go detail by detail through 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14, explaining the whole passage on tongues. Okay?

LINDA: Okay, well, if someone told me that she was a born again Christian and that she speaks in tongues...

JOHN: Very possible.

LINDA: It is?

JOHN: Sure, I've said this before. I'm not worried about them getting to heaven. I'm worried about them going right on by. You know, they get to flying and they may just miss it. They...they may love the Lord. They really may love the Lord. And they're just misguided on this.

You see what they're doing is they're looking for a spiritual experience. And instance spirituality. See the group says this if you want to be spiritual speak in tongues. That's tremendous pressure. That is tremendous pressure. I get letters from people all the time who come out of that after years of living under this bondage of pressure and falsifying an experience so they can say they belong.

But I've never spoken in tongues. I had a case and it was kind of an interesting thing. I think I may have told you about it, some time back. I was invited to speak to the Full Gospel Business Men's...did I tell you that? Full Gospel Business Men International Luncheon. I don't know what they were doing inviting me. Somebody goofed on their committee. They had heard that I was open to this and so they asked me to speak on what I thought about charismatics.

And I did, I really did. And I was very gracious to them, but very straightforward about things and I went right down the line on true spirituality and all these kinds of things. And I was...I was just...and these guys were aghast. I mean, they were dumbfounded. They were just who brought this turkey in here? What is...and finally I was...I wasn't even done and this guy pulled me down into my chair and said, "well, thank you brother," and stepped right up and I was there right in my seat, you know.

And he said, "we're going to all pray that some night in the middle of the night you're going to get the baptism." And so I got up and sort of asked if I could have another word or two and said a few things,

but afterwards, this is an interesting side light, three or four or five people came by and talked to me.

And said, "you know, I've been in this for years and years and I do this and I do this." And I asked them to explain to me the gospel. One guy said, "well, you see it's like this, there's this big staircase, and there's this guy named Jesus at the top, and you do your best to get up the stairs and if you can get all the way to the top, He'll let you in." I said, "my friend you're not saved. You don't even know the gospel." So here's a guy nine years with an experience and doesn't even know the gospel. So it's an experience...some people a lot of stock in it. They think it makes them happier. They think they've never been a great of witness as they been since they did that. Boy they have joy in their life. Sure, you know why? Because the pressure is on them that if you're going to be spiritual, you've got to do this, and boy once you've done it, you're apart of the in group. And there's a certain release and euphoria about having arrived spiritually by those standards, right?

So...and people who come out of that...at the end of my book I have a letter from a guy name L.C., his name is Lou Castle in our church, and he was converted out of that. And he explains what it was like to be released from that bondage. But you can get that book, and then later on we'll have that little study book on tongues too. Okay?

LINDA: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Hello, John, I have some non-Christian friends and I was wondering they're trying to seek God, but they're afraid to take a stand for Jesus, and I was wondering if you could give me some advice on that?

JOHN: Well, I mean, that's the whole issue. How...they're seeking God again on their own terms, you know. Jesus said in John 10...I mean in Matthew 10, "If any man..." "If you confess me before men, I'll confess you before my Father." Right? "If you deny before men, him will I deny." Let me find that verse specifically. I'm just sort of rambling about it. Let me sure.

Yeah, 32, 10:32. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who's in heaven. Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who's in heaven."

In other words, Jesus forces them to pay the price. I remember one time I was preaching down in the...in a rescue mission, I was just a young guy. And I was just...boy I was just pouring my heart giving the gospel to these guys and half of them were zonked out, you know, stoned beyond belief, and just flopped over, you know. And I was just pouring out my heart. Some of them were listening and I said is there anybody in here...and I had gone through the whole crucifixion and how Jesus walked down the middle of the street and people spit on him bleeding, naked, carrying a cross, bore all the shame, the embarrassment, the ridicule, the mockery, the whole deal, I said, "is there one man

here who has the courage to stand for Jesus Christ who stood for him...who died for him? Anybody here, is there one man here? And nobody moved, nobody moved.

And I...I didn't realize it at the time, but they had a P.A. system outside and it was blaring it onto Fourth Street down in L.A., and all of a sudden the backdoor opened and this guy came right in the backdoor and walked right down to the front. He said, "I'll be that man." And I had the privilege of leading him to Christ.

If a person isn't willing to stand with Jesus Christ who, you know, was willing to take what he took for them, then there's a lack of honesty in the seeking. So you need to confront them with that. You see you don't want to let people feel good about stopping short. Ah, you're doing great boy, you're coming right along. No, no, you want to force them to realize that no decision is a decision against Christ. Very important to do that?

QUESTIONER: How could you like talk to them and say you've got to do it this way full born or nothing. How would you do that in a nice way, you know?

JOHN: Well, I think if you care about them it'll come out in a nice way, sure. Just take them to Matthew 10. Take them to Matthew 16. Later in Matthew 10 he says, "If you're not willing to deny yourself, take up your cross, follow me, you're not worthy to be my disciple." Take them to Matthew 8 where he says, "I'll be happy to follow you Lord, I've just got to home and bury my, you know, deal." Well, I'm unhappy, I've got to go home and, you know, take care of a few things and kiss my family good-bye and the Lord says, forget it. You know any man that puts his hand to plow and looks back isn't worthy. You plow straight forward while looking backwards.

So just use the Scripture. The Scripture has great power. Find the verses and you know, maybe write them a letter. Share them with the guy. Say here's something I want you to read.

QUESTIONER: Also, if you have parents who tend to believe evolution, how would you come to approach them?

JOHN: Well, you've got to expose them to authority and it's hard for you to do that. I mean, you're not great scientist, right?

QUESTIONER: Right.

JOHN: Neither am I. I can't go in and say I'm going to tell all these great scientific truths, but what you can do is say and this is the way I would approach and I approach this this way with people. Do you want to know about origins? Do you really want to know? Because if you really honestly want to know, then you need to consider very interesting available information. And try to expose them to the

information that is available.

I start with people on this basis. Now, if you believe in evolution, this is what you believe. Nobody times nothing equals everything, okay, that's what you believe. Now, we've established that. Let's think about that. Nobody times nothing equals everything. Man that takes great faith. And not only faith in nothing and nobody. I mean, that's not very far from idiocy. So you start there by the absurdity of it, I think. And then say now, all we believe is that there's a cause, which is the only sensible thing you could ever believe. Now we want to determine who that cause is. And then there are so many good books on this in the bookstore, excellent stuff available. Put that in their hand and challenge them read it.

And you know, if they really care about you say, "hey, I'm concerned about this. This is something I'm really working through. I'd like you to read this and we can talk about it." And confront it that way.

QUESTIONER: Okay.

JOHN: Okay.

QUESTIONER: Thank you very much.

JOHN: You're welcome.

SALIM: Hi, John. My name is Salim. There's a Scripture in Matthew 27:9 about Matthew had quoted a Scripture from the Old Testament and had credited it to Jeremiah instead. But it's actually from...it's actually from Zechariah. I was asked this question before and I really don't know how to answer that.

JOHN: Very interesting that you asked that. It says, "That was fulfilled which was spoken by Jeremiah." Let me tell you what I think is the best explanation of that. He says...he quotes the thing that's spoken by Jeremiah and then it's a quote that comes from Zechariah. And there are two reasons for that.

Reason number one is the message here contained is from Jeremiah. Okay? The exact words are taken from Zechariah. But Jeremiah was a prophet of greater priority. So he refers it to Jeremiah. And there's a second reason, very, very important. In the Talmudic order of prophets which the Jews listed in the Talmud, Jeremiah was the lead name in the role of the prophets. Therefore, a reference to Jeremiah could be a reference to the whole role of the prophets. So it's very possible that he's just seeing the priority of Jeremiah as the lead prophet. Either one of those or both. Okay?

SALIM: Okay, I just want to make a comment about the lady who was before me on the subject of tongues. I have a friend of mine who's a medical doctor from the country in which I came from. He's a Christian and he has witnessed to quite a few people up there. And using tongues and healings and

miracles and he has spoken different tongues and because of that many of come to Christ. So I kindly understand why you would say that tongues have ceased when he has done that miracle.

JOHN: Let me ask this question. Is the...is the proof of tongues the experience of your friend or the testimony of Scripture?

SALIM: It's the testimony.

JOHN: So I'm not...I don't need to answer the experience of your friend. He needs to see where that fits with Scripture. Okay. I don't want to sit in judgment on his experience, but I know this, I'm not convinced that something is true because somebody experienced it. I mean, drunks think they see pink elephants, but they don't. So...they're...I mean, if the guy preaches the gospel, the gospel is so powerful people will get saved. I'm not sure that we can say that because this was added to the gospel, this was the reason. And I'm not denying that God is a God of miracles. And I'm not denying that there may be a time and occasion when God might give a person the ability to speak a language to someone to reach them with the message of Jesus Christ in a language they otherwise wouldn't know.

SALIM: Right.

JOHN: But that's different than the gift of tongues, which was a sign gift to Israel. Now, whether God is doing that in some isolated situations, I'm not going to put God in a box at that point. But I do know that we do not qualify truth on the basis of anyone's experience. But that person's experience has to stand the test of the Word of God.

SALIM: Right, that's what he was doing. He was not really speaking in tongues for praying like it says in Corinthians. He was speaking in tongues just because he could speak in another language.

JOHN: Yeah, and I...you know, and I don't want to deny that. I'm skeptical obviously, because I...I hear things like that a lot and I question because I haven't had first hand experience, you know. But I don't want to second guess him.

SALIM: Okay, thank you.

JOHN: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: John, in light of the fact that Christ said is finished before he died physically and because addressed God the Father in the vakkaFather again instead of My God, My God, isn't that in fact...isn't that more or less proof that the fellowship of Christ with the Father had been restored before his physical death. And that the atonement was accomplished through his spiritual death, rather than his physical death.

JOHN: Well, I'm not sure that I...I necessarily follow that logic, that reasoning. What he called the Father...what he called God doesn't necessarily carry in it evidence to support that particular view point.

QUESTIONER: Well, He was being judged at that time and...

JOHN: Yes, I think he could have said Father, Father why has thou forsaken me. But he said, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me," as a direct quote out of Psalm 22. And if you understand the Old Testament you will understand that in the Old Testament there are no references that I can think of to God as the Father of an individual. He appears in the Old Testament as the Father of a nation, not of an individual. So it would have been uncommon if the Psalmist had said, Father, Father why hasth thou forsaken me? It would have been more consistent to say My God, My God why has thou forsaken me?

Because the Father concept isn't really fully developed until the Savior develops that concept in the New Testament time. So I think that...I think Christ on the cross bore sins penalty, both physically and spiritually. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Can I respond to that for a second?

JOHN: Uh-huh.

QUESTIONER: Wasn't there a great deal of physical agony experience by Christ prior to the...

JOHN: Sure.

QUESTIONER: ...the cross?

JOHN: Sure.

QUESTIONER: Discouraging and a lot of blood shed prior to the cross...

JOHN: Oh you mean sweating as it were great drops of blood in the gardens?

QUESTIONER: No, I mean, discouraging from the...from the Romans.

JOHN: Yes.

QUESTIONER: And it also says that he was physically...

JOHN: Sure, sure.

QUESTIONER: ...physically marred before he even went to the cross.

JOHN: Sure.

QUESTIONER: And heard him cried out physical pain, but it was the spiritual at noon, darkness covered the face of the earth.

JOHN: That's right.

QUESTIONER: Now some say that between 9:00 and 12:00...I mean, between 9:00 and 3:00 he was on the cross, but when that thick darkness covered the place of the atonement that was when he was bearing the sins of the world and when he was crying out "My God, My God, My God why have you forsaken me?"

JOHN: See we...it's so mysterious that we really can't know. Again, trying to compartmentalize all these things is very difficult. Trying to find two rigid categories for them. I believe that Christ...you see you can't...where do you draw the line between the Savior's suffering in anticipation of sin bearing and suffering bearing sin?

In other words, in the garden is He suffering and sweating as it were great drops of blood? Is his whole physical system collapsing so that He begins to hemorrhage all over His body in anxiety or anticipation of what He is about to undergo. Because if anyone in the world knew what it was going to be He knew because He knew everything. So He could...the pain of sin bearing could have been as great before it happened as it was when it happened in a since physically, right?

QUESTIONER: I don't know.

JOHN: Well, that's...let's assume that He knows everything. So He knows what it would be like to bear the weight of sin. It could be great enough to crush Him in the garden. He had not yet drank the cup, because He says, "let this cup pass from me." You know, so, but I do believe that Christ bore the weight of sin physically. But I think as you've said the greater weight of sin, the greater death was the spiritual separation from God.

Now, what you're asking is was there restoration before He actually, physically died. I don't know. Obviously when he said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." There was a great sense of rest in His heart. And you maybe right, it maybe that by that time the sin bearing was over. And as He was dying at that instant, He knew it was over. And I believe that when He said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit at that split second, He died.

Now whether He said that knowing in a split second the sin bearing would be over or sensing that it was already over...

QUESTIONER: Well, He also, I believe He refused thy wine...

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: ...before those nine hours...before the six hours were finished and then when He was speaking to God in the vakkaof my Father, he accepted the wine.

JOHN: Well, the first thing He refused was a sedative, because He wanted to undergo the full weight of the sin bearing. Yeah, that's a good thought. Appreciate it.

QUESTIONER: John, my question is based on Matthew Chapter 11, verse 21.

JOHN: Okay, we'll just finish up with these that are here and then we'll try to do it real fast. Matthew what?

QUESTIONER: Matthew Chapter 11, verse 21.

JOHN: Okay.

QUESTIONER: Jesus said, "Woe to you, Korazin. Woe to you, Bethsaida."

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: "For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon, which occurred in you they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you."

Now, how can it be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, when in the book of Revelation Chapter 20, verse 15, it simply says, "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." It doesn't seem it would make any difference.

JOHN: There are degrees of punishment. Now, they're all bad, but the key verse you want to look at is Hebrews 10:26. Can you read it there, Hebrews 10:26?

QUESTIONER: Sure.

JOHN: I think that's the one.

QUESTIONER: "For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins."

JOHN: Okay, read the verse in front of it.

QUESTIONER: "Not forsaking our own assembling to together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the Day drawing nearer."

JOHN: Okay, read the one after it.

QUESTIONER: You mean 26? Again?

JOHN: 29, just read 29.

QUESTIONER: Okay. "How much severe punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot, the Son of God and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which He was sanctified and was insulted...and has insulted the Spirit of Grace."

JOHN: Okay, what are the first few words of that verse?

QUESTIONER: "How much severe."

JOHN: See there are degrees of punishment, some more severe than others. Depending on how much knowledge of Christ you had. And the greater judgment is rendered on Korazin and Bethsaida, because they had Jesus Christ right there. Tyre and Sidon didn't. So there are degrees of punishment. There must be degrees of punishment. We don't understand what that means any more than we understand the degrees of reward, because how much more can you have in perfection? But that's what Scripture says. Okay? Yes?

QUESTIONER: Yes, John, I've had this answered before, but I wanted to hear it from you. My brother and his wife are both Christians and they went to Biola. My brother taught at Biola and the last three years he started teaching at a Catholic High School. And he feels that I'm really narrow-minded about Catholics and in particular he feels that many of the priests that he knows at this high school actually have salvation. My question is can a Catholic priest actually be saved and remain a Catholic priest?

JOHN: Not if he believes the Catholic system. If he doesn't...if he doesn't accept their baggage. If he believes his salvation is provided only through grace by faith in Jesus Christ he could be saved. But if he accepts the full sweep of Catholic dogma, there's no way. He has cluttered the simplicity of salvation with a works righteousness system.

QUESTIONER: Okay...

JOHN: But there are priests in the system, as you know, Catholicism tolerates its dissidence. It absorbs them and therefore perpetuates its system. It doesn't expel them. That's why it lasts so long. And there are within the system those priests who have come to an understanding. Do you know Martin Luther never left the Roman Catholic church, never? He stayed in the system, but he rejected the corruption of the doctrine of salvation.

QUESTIONER: Okay, now they started to going to a reformed church in Paramount. Do you know anything about the reformed church? Is it offshoot of Dutch reform?

JOHN: You mean, he's teaching in a Catholic school and going to a reformed church?

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: He's going to really be schizoid, because the reform people are death on the Roman Catholic church.

QUESTIONER: Really?

JOHN: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Well, is it...is it like Dutch reform, reform church?

JOHN: Well, yes, a reform church basically finds its in the reformation. And it traditionally goes back to John Calvin. There can be a lot of different kinds of reform church. Unfortunately, many reformed churches are dead. Many of them believe a sort of a covenantal salvation, believing in infant baptism it brings their children into the family of the redeemed and it depends on what reform church it is. It depends on whether you mean reformed in the sense that they adhere to a reformed doctrine of theology or whether reformed in the traditional denominational sense, which probably is rather dead and without an understanding of really the spirit controlled life and the things that we know to be basic in Christian faith. They would...they would deny a place for Israel. They would...they would affirm that there's no millennial kingdom. All the promises to Israel are resolved in the church and so forth.

QUESTIONER: Well, he likes the church because the guy where's a robe and...

JOHN: Sounds to me like he's rebelling. It sounds to me like he's going through a time of rebelling against his roots. There was something in his early experience in Christianity that was unfulfilling to him and disillusioning to me. He was unwilling to accept. I don't know where he's at, but very often when people react against the freedom of an evangelical kind of Bible church orientation such as

what Biola would be, they go to a more high church experience. I don't know why, but I hope if it's a reform church that they exalt Christ. Most would and that they have a straight doctrine of salvation.

QUESTIONER: He feels that Grace doesn't know what worship. That...I've sent him your book on worship by the way, because I read it and...

JOHN: Has he reacted to it?

QUESTIONER: Well, he got in the mail and he put aside. I read the book and I told him that it's a book that I need to read like at least twice a year.

JOHN: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: And so I don't know, but...

JOHN: Well, you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink, right? So if you give him what you want...what you think he needs that's a good start.

QUESTIONER: Okay, thanks.

JOHN: Thanks.

QUESTIONER: Good morning, John.

JOHN: Hi, how you feeling?

QUESTIONER: A little bit better.

JOHN: Good.

QUESTIONER: But still not completely.

JOHN: Good.

QUESTIONER: I have a question in terms of on how you're following the ruler or the king or the president of a particular country in terms of military stand or a war. I heard you were answering a question once and you were saying that...that being a Christian and citizen of the United States you have to follow its leader if it's a war against whatever. But if you would be a Cuban and you were also a Christian and citizen and you would see that it's not a right cause. You would not go in it.

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: In...into this war. Now, how do you know what the right cause or wrong cause and being...

JOHN: It's simple as this. If you're a defender or an aggressor.

QUESTIONER: Well, not always being Soviet citizen, I never knew whether we were defendants were aggressors, but yet being...

JOHN: You were aggressors.

QUESTIONER: Okay.

JOHN: Just to make the point.

QUESTIONER: I...I agree with you, right. That's right, we were. We still...I mean they still are, but..

JOHN: Yeah, I mean, you don't...

QUESTIONER: But...

JOHN: You don't go into Afghanistan and massacre millions of people and say that's a just war. What are the Afghan people, you know, doing against the Soviet Union. You know, just...

QUESTIONER: But that's now how thing gets presented. I've never...

JOHN: No, I understand that.

QUESTIONER: ...been _____(53:17) and when I came to the United States, even though I came here because of jeans and chewing gum, when I came to this country I still thought that America was aggressor and I just did mind aggressor for the jeans and chewing gum, but...but I still thought...

JOHN: You thought we were the bad guys.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

JOHN: Of course.

QUESTIONER: I couldn't believe...now, being now a question...I've been a Christian and living in the Soviet Union and being a citizen of that country, not aware what is happening and you are called to go to the war, by the way the German war, nobody knew what happened really...

JOHN: Yeah, yeah.

QUESTIONER: ...the Germans, and they accidentally just stepped on their smaller country than Russia, so you could figure it out well, it's probably not fair war. In fact, a lot of Christian people probably opened the door for them to walk, but when they saw the disaster they follow. In other words, how do you follow the ruler when the first call you think about it and then...

JOHN: Well, a lot of good Lutheran boys went out and murdered Jews too in Germany when they were called to fight. You know, Germany, Nazi, Germany was a Lutheran country in many, many ways. You have to deal with what you know. And if you're under a system and you don't understand that, then you can only deal with the data you understand. And I think the Lord knows that. I don't think...I don't think maybe in those kind of countries obviously where there's a...look at the Chinese people. You know, they...they have to filter that and seek the mind of the Lord.

I think if you were a Christian in Russia, you can't...you can't think like a Christian if you're not one, right? So you're looking back to the time before you were saved.

QUESTIONER: That's right.

JOHN: Okay, if you were like George Evins or these other people who are Christians in Russia, there's a fellowship of believers that exists where you get counter information. So that would help you make that decision.

QUESTIONER: Right, okay. That's...now, I see. So you support the right cause of...in like...obey the ruler in the Lord anyway.

JOHN: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Yeah, obey the ruler in the Lord.

JOHN: That's right. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Okay, now, I understand.

JOHN: See, now, I look at our own country and people would ask me the question well should the United States be Lebanon? Well, I don't have any problem with us being in Lebanon. I think, you know, what...I think Israel even entering into Lebanon in spite of all of the antagonism towards them

was freeing an oppressed people when they went in there. Of course, they couldn't ultimately keep the PLO out, because they just come in like, you know, like grains of sand through a sieve. And of course, it's going to just keep going and going and going until Jesus comes.

But people say should we be in Lebanon? What is America doing there? America is doing there what they've always done. America sees an oppressed people and endeavors to keep peace. They blow us up, we don't blow them up. People say well, what about Grenada? Well, I see it as the same thing. You can either let the whole Caribbean fall to an oppressive Totalitarianism or you can try to stand for what is right and just and fair. A little island of Grenada, which has I don't know if you know, a wonderful Christian contingent on that island. My...my dear friend John Perkins from Mississippi whom I ministered with for over six years went down there constantly and evangelized that little island of Grenada.

Well, those...those people on that little island didn't arm themselves to teeth to fight the whole Caribbean. When they went in there and found all those weapons, you knew that it was a base for something much bigger than that. And either you...you know, it's the old story where do you stop the enemy? What do you do to protect the innocent people?

And so again I...I think as a Christian, as a person in this country, I could have stood in those kinds of situations and done the best for my country, because I knew I was standing against an evil aggressor, a murderous intent. But in a situation where I didn't have that information, I have to trust the Lord and pray and seek His face, but there would surely be a network of believers who would have a perspective that would help me understand that. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Okay, I'm looking at Psalm 145 and verse 17. It says there, "The Lord is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His deeds." Okay? And then in verse 20 it says, "The wicked He will destroy."

JOHN: Uh-huh.

QUESTIONER: Does this mean that the destruction of the wicked is an act of kindness?

JOHN: It means that the destruction of the wicked, which is an act of God's wrath is in perfect harmony and perfect balance with His kindness.

When you have any discussion of the attributes of God, doesn't mean that all the attributes are co-mingled, it doesn't mean they're in perfect balance with each other. I don't know how else to explain it.

You might even be so brash as to say it's very kind to send them to hell because that's where they choose to go since they don't choose God. Why sentence them to an eternity with One they have no desire to be with?

You know, there is a certain kindness even in that. But I think that's pushing the point. I think when it says God is kind in one verse and God is...you know, read Malacahi 1 or Nahum 1, rather. And in Nahum 1 it's the same thing. He goes and talks about the Lord being furious and so forth and slows down and He's slow to anger and He's gentle and those. And you ask yourself, well, how is this so?

Well, those attributes while not co-mingled are in perfect balance, perfect balance. God never does anything unkind, unloving, unwise. But at the same time He judges men. So if, in fact, He sends men to hell, it's still consistent with His kindness. Because His kindness has to be consistent with His holiness and His holiness therefore is manifested His justice. So they're all connected, but not co-mingled. Does that help? Again, it's mystery. Anytime you start talking about God, it's character. That's the best we can do with it. All right?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

JOHN: Okay, one more.

QUESTIONER: My question is that and is not...it is not for me, it is for my friend. He says that in the antique Greek manuscripts they do not use the term cross they use...and also in that time that they used either like a T cross or a Hex cross and that the antique manuscripts never use the term cross only tree. And because of this, he says that our Bible or the modern day Bible is not complete. Could you explain how the transition from tree to cross came about or is that true? I don't know.

JOHN: No, biblical manuscript does refer to the cross. And the biblical...I mean the biblical text does refer to the cross. I mean, in many places. So I'm thinking of Colossians 2:14, "Nailing it to His cross." And that is the word for cross. Now, as you go back into antiquity, you find that there were many different kinds of crosses and shapes of crosses and so forth. We don't really have any way to affirm that Christ was put on a cross that looked like that. I mean, that's...that's the best we can do archeologically, but there were Hex crosses, there were T crosses. And you can...you know, the study of the cross, you've looked through church history perhaps or seen books where it takes different shapes as it moves through history and so forth. But the Bible definitely uses the word cross. I don't...I don't even understand why that's a problem.

Galatians 3 says...uses the term tree. Tree is euphemism for cross because it's made out of wood.

QUESTIONER: The problem arises as to the validity of every word and that is the discussion that we were having.

JOHN: Yeah, well, you should look at an original Greek text and see if Colossians 2:14, 2:11 to 14 and see what the word is there. 2:10 and following and see if you see the word cross there. See what the original Greek text says. And I think you'll see that it's the word cross. Okay?

Great, well very interesting questions tonight. I hope they were as interesting to you as they were to me. That's great. We'll have a word of prayer and let you go. Okay?

Thank you Father for the fellowship we've enjoyed tonight. Thank you for the wonderful privilege of being in Your Word, and we're so grateful for what You're doing in our midst and our fellowship. Thank you for the love of Your Word that we see in the hearts of Your people. Help us Lord to understand the things we can't understand and to trust You for the things that are beyond our understanding. And we pray that You do Your work in every heart. We thank you in Christ's name. Amen.

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