

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

Bible Questions and Answers, Part 24b

Selected Scriptures

1301VB

ROBERT: My name is Robert. You're teaching how to study the Bible right now or how to interpret it.

JOHN: In Logos.

ROBERT: In Logos, right.

JOHN: Right.

ROBERT: Yeah, I'm Logos, and...

JOHN: Great.

ROBERT: ...I've got a question here that it comes up from what I've been told about how to study the Bible. I come from a church where...where it's leaders just used a concordance to study, you know, and that's it. And so I started doing some study on how to study the Bible, and the question that came up in my heart was how do you know the way that you're being taught how to study the Bible is the right way? And then what steps can I take to take this information and explain this to the church leaders and what do I...

JOHN: Let me tell you...let me tell you this, Robert, if you don't ever get out of that situation, you may never know whether it's the right way. And if you...if you're never exposed to any alternative. And unfortunately, that happens to a lot of folks. They...they get brought up in a system that tells them some things to be true and because they are not exposed to any alternative thinking, they never know the difference. Now, that isn't necessarily the case always, because it may be that there's a...there's a sense in your heart that there's something more.

That there's another dimension that you're not learning, you're not being told. There may be that the...the Spirit of God generates a dissatisfaction. But let me suggest this to you. If you're going to go back and try to help your church leaders to have a broader picture of interpretation, you'd probably be better off not to do it after you've been away at school a month. Do you know what I'm saying?

ROBERT: Uh-huh.

JOHN: Because they're going to say, you know, get off my back kid. What do you...who are you telling? You know, so I would suggest that the best way, and I think this is a valid thing, the best way to help people to maybe see the light in areas that they don't is to expose them to the best of people

in that area. And if they care about you, and I'm sure they do, you might give to them a tape or a book on the subject of Bible interpretation or some sermons by someone that you believe really interprets the Bible in a God blessed way and then let them interact with that material on your behalf. In other words, say, you know, I'd like you to evaluate this for me and help me to understand is this wrong and if so, why? And force them to think through that.

ROBERT: Okay, okay, that's...all that's happened, but what I want to know is...I mean, it seems like common sense that there would be a way to deal with, you know, ancient manuscripts and stuff and couldn't you just by common sense say you have to do some interpretation?

JOHN: Yeah.

ROBERT: You just can't use...

JOHN: Are they saying that you don't use anything but a concordance?

ROBERT: Well, and the Spirit of God, you know.

JOHN: Well, why use a concordance?

ROBERT: Yeah.

JOHN: If you're going...if you've got the Spirit of God, what do you need a concordance for?

ROBERT: See, it doesn't make any sense.

JOHN: If you've got the Spirit of God, what do you need a Bible for? Yeah, see you don't want to push that too far.

ROBERT: Okay, see...

JOHN: I'll tell you something else that's interesting too, if you push that argument too far you could say to them well, nobody needs to come and hear you either, we'll all just buy our concordance and stay home.

ROBERT: Yeah.

JOHN: Because why should we listen to what you do with it anymore than we should read what somebody else did with it. Yeah, it seems to me a rather narrow, limited view, but if they're entrenched in it...you know, it's difficult when a group has that as their distinctive because then when you fight against them at that level, you're stepping on their oxygen hose. I mean, that may be the only thing that distinguishes them.

ROBERT: Right.

JOHN: So it's hard for them to abandon that.

ROBERT: Okay, but what do you like okay, I've heard them teach a Bible study on how to study the Bible, which was right. One of the guys in the church did. And I went to the church leaders and asked them what they thought about it, and...and they said...well, they know I, you know, listen to you and stuff and they say well, they're saying the same things MacArthur. I mean, what do you if they don't change, if they've been exposed to it and they don't change, what should I do, you know, trying to see...

JOHN: Well, pray for them. Pray for them and just go on about your Christian life and find a place where you can be fed the Word of God.

ROBERT: Okay.

JOHN: You can...you know, you can't right the whole world. You can't sit all the ships right. You just can do what the Spirit of God leads you to do and do the best you can and if it isn't a fertile ground for what you have to share, then move on and let the Spirit of God take up with somebody else perhaps to help.

ROBERT: Okay, thanks.

JOHN: Uh-huh. Where are we? Over...yeah.

QUESTIONER: Hi, Jesus commanded us to go out and preach the gospel. The question I have this, was Jehovah witnesses or Mormons if they come to your door it says in 2 John not to even let them in...

JOHN: Right.

QUESTIONER: ...or to bid the God speed. Are we to do this? Are we to send them away with that or are we to witness to them? Where do we draw the line?

JOHN: Well, when 2 John says if you bid the God speed you become a partaker and their evil deeds. The assumption there is if you encourage them along the way in their work. That's...that's what it's really saying. If they come to you and preach another doctrine and another Christ and you encourage them, God speed, you know, have a good day, nice going fellow, you know, whatever, and you sort of scurry them along in the work and encourage them, then you become a partaker in their evil deeds. You're an accomplice to their evil deeds.

QUESTIONER: Then we are to confront them.

JOHN: Yeah, I think that...this is the way I would handle...this is the way I handle those people. If they come to the door. I say, "I'm very happy to talk to you if you'd like to hear what I have to say. I do not care to hear what you have to say."

QUESTIONER: Wow.

JOHN: "Because I know the truth out of the Word of God. But if you'd like to hear what I believe to be the Word of God or if you'd like give me your address I'll send you some tapes and so forth, but I really am not interested in giving you a platform to articulate heresy and lies." It doesn't do you any good. That kind of teaching eats like a gangrene. That kind of thing confuses and creates doubts, and it needs to be confronted.

Boy, I remember one time when a guy in our church got into Mormonism, and there were a couple of Mormon...everybody's a Mormon Bishop of one kind or another I guess, and they were over at his house. And I was so angry at this proselytizing of this guy, that I went over there and I just confronted all of them. And I...I gave them a hell fire damnation message, just to three people. You know, just to...as strongly as I could. I consigned them to eternal damnation for blasphemy. And I mean, they got on their bicycles and you never saw...you don't normally lay rubber on a bicycle, but they were gone out of there. But the thing...the redeeming thing in my own mind is this, and I wasn't trying to be unkind. I was trying to startle them.

And I think that when we give them a platform and we don't confront them with a horror of the lies they propound in a sense, we tacitly send them on their way with the God speed. If we just well, I really am not interested. You haven't done anything. You need to nail them, I think in love, but just in prophetic indignance about the heresy they espouse. That's what I think. And then remember this, if you do it in love, you may find...now in this case because of the seriousness of it, I really burst out, there are times when...when a cult comes along, I'll be sensitive to it, and if I see that they're somewhat vulnerable, if they're the Bishops or one of those kinds of people, I just go after them.

But if it's some poor lay person doing his thing, then you need to begin maybe to probe and say, you know, I'd like to share with you what I believe. And we had a seminar on Mormonism I think at our watch night service last year, we talked a little bit about what kinds of questions you ask relative to who is Jesus Christ and so forth. Do you believe Christ is the Spirit, brother of Lucifer and you can ask them those kinds of questions, but if they're the average run of the mill person, you may sense the Spirit of God leading you to confront them in a positive way with a message of Christ. But if there's some mucky muck in the deal, I find myself just drawn to, you know, be very confrontive on many occasions. And at that point, you have to be sensitive to the Spirit.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

IRIS: John, my name is Iris, and I just had one question, but it just turned into two questions from what you just talked to that gentleman about. If a Mormon, a person in a cult like a Mormon wants to join your Bible study and we don't have any knowledge that he's a uppity up person at all, just a general lay person, what would you say?

JOHN: Well, I'd say you're welcome to join if you want to learn, if you want to learn.

IRIS: And what about kind of when he starts to spout Mormon stuff?

JOHN: Well, if he starts espousing Mormonism, then you've got to stop him, because you can't permit lies to be told about Christ.

IRIS: No, you can't.

JOHN: You can't, but you need to be sensitive if he wants to join your Bible study and you sense there's a hungry heart. You know, the truth can...the truth can overpower the lie. But if he is firmly entrenched and sees as a way to gain territory, then you've got a deal with that. That's a gangrene. That's a leaven.

IRIS: Yeah, it's hard to tell right now. We're going to...I think we're going to have to wait and see, but...

JOHN: Yeah, well, you'll know.

IRIS: ...be able to make the judgment.

JOHN: Yeah.

IRIS: The other question I asked...

JOHN: Watch the subtly of going around to the people building a one on one relationships, you know.

IRIS: Okay.

JOHN: Go ahead.

IRIS: The other question, I'm asking for a friend whose husband is a seminary student up north in Oregon and it pertains to the verse in 1 Timothy 2 that says, "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach nor to serve authority over the men, but to be in silence." I agree with that totally and so does my friend, but her husband has this idea that he's...just he's not dogmatic on, but he's just toying with it, that women shouldn't be allowed to sing solos or sing in the choir because that's teaching. What do you think about that? And how can we explain...I have no answer for him, but...

JOHN: No, I...I don't think it says sing in the choir in that verse does it?

IRIS: No.

JOHN: Or sing anything. What it does say is, you have to go into 1 Timothy. Let me...let me show you something there. There is a...there's the definition of the purpose of the book in 1 Timothy 3:15, but it helps us I think to see the thrust of this whole Epistle. "But if I tarry long," he says these things right on to you, verse 14. "I'm writing you for this purpose that you may know how you ought to behave in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." This is how to behave in the church. When the church comes together, this is how to behave.

And I believe what he's saying is when the church comes together, a woman should not take the place of authority over the man and be the teacher. If you make any more out of that, I mean, there's

no end to what you could do. You want to say that a woman can't sing in the congregation either because that's teaching.

IRIS: Uh-huh.

JOHN: You know, I think that's really pressing the point. You know, I...if somebody is offended by a woman singing a solo I...you know, that would be a personal preference. I don't really see a biblical mandate at that point. I don't see...I don't see any limitation placed biblically on that. I do see, because that in effect is not teaching. I mean, that's praise or worship. I mean, we encourage every person to go out and preach the gospel, articulate Christ. But when a woman takes the duly constituted place of authority and teaches, that's a whole different thing.

IRIS: And that's different than just singing.

JOHN: Well, of course.

IRIS: Good. Thank you, I'm going to send him this tape. Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Hi, I was talking to a friend of mine and...well, my question is sort of like the one she asked. We had gotten to the subject about women preaching in front of men and I always accepted what the church said, I never really doubted it. And she came up with this that aren't women as full of God or as full of the Holy Spirit as men are and why can't they preach what the Word says since God's speaking through them?

JOHN: Yeah, well, they can. They're only limited as to their audience. And the one place they can't do that is in the coming together of the church, because that's what it says in 1 Timothy. There's no limitation on their spiritual life. For in Christ there's neither male nor female, Jew or Greek or bond or free, we're all one, right? There's no limitations. There are no less spiritual. There are no less gifted. It's just that when the church comes together it is to be that men teach women, plain and simple, 1 Timothy says that. The reason for that is because that's the way God designed it. Adam was first formed and then Eve. And not only that Eve fell into sin because she stepped out from under the protection of Adam and independently acted.

And a woman needs to be under the protection of men. When she violated that she fell into a sin that ultimately corrupted the whole race. So women were made for being underneath the control or the authority of men. It doesn't make them any less...it doesn't make them any different in terms of any inferiority anymore than Christ being submissive to the Father is less than the Father essentially. He's not. You see, you're back to this whole thing, why is it that...why is that we inevitably and always want to overturn the God ordained patterns? It is because we are rebels. We are sinful.

And when I see that kind of thing, all it is is a manifestation of the curse of sin. There's nothing wrong with a woman being a woman. You can't compare a woman to a man. There's no comparison. They aren't two...they shouldn't be fighting to do the same thing. You know, it's like the idiocy of people who say well, why should women stay home with the children. Let the women go to work and the men can stay home. I mean, that wagers on absolute stupidity. No man in the world was ever made to nurse a baby. That's absolutely moronic. I mean, what do you think God made women for. So that kind of thinking...but that's, you know, when you start rebelling against God, there's no limits to what

you're going to do. So you know, God has given tremendous dimensions of ministry to women, but the one limitation He puts, just like in the Garden.

He puts a limitation and He says, "Let men have authority in the church, and let the women be in submission." And that's the way the church is to be, and that's the way God has designed it. And that...that's the one area where God has really confined. You know, even more than the home because in the home the woman submits to the man, but the man also submits to the woman by loving and nourishing care and so on and so on. There's a sort of a mutual submission in the home, but in the church, you have this sort of unique kind of authority.

That's the one place as if God has preserved a very clear line of authority and believe me it'll be the one place where the revolution will happen, because it is the nature of sinfulness that it fights against God ordained patterns. I mean, I turn on the television and I watch some woman preacher the other night ranting and raving around for about an hour, in complete defiance of everything in the Scripture. And one half hour of what she said was a justification of what she was doing. She continually tried to justify what she was doing. And her statements were this, "why some people would say we don't have the Holy Spirit because we're women. What do you think of that?" And all these people would say, ah, and they'd clap. I mean, they don't have a clue, right? But it was just self-justifying...just self justifying self.

I don't...as I said so often, I don't have anything against women at all. I mean, I married one and I mean, it wasn't even a choice. You know, it was a woman or that was it. I mean, God has uniquely designed them and they have a marvelous ministry, but I don't believe it's in the place of leading the church and that it is simply because that's what the Bible says. That's God's design. That's the way He's prepared and designed His church to be. And it has nothing to do with whether or not they have the Spirit of God. They do. They are as much still to the Spirit. They may know the Bible as much or better. They may be stronger believers. That isn't the issue either.

The issue is simply that in the order of church, God has designed the man to take the place. And the reason is because that's the way He made it in the creation and that's the way He affirmed it when woman fell into sin by stepping out from under the authority of her husband. Now, the balance to this whole thing and I've pointed this often in 1 Timothy, it says the woman is saved in child-bearing. Men have the authority, but the women have the influence.

If the woman really wanted to make an impression on the world, she'd go home and take care of her children, because she'd be pouring into them the influence. We fathers, you know, we have authority in the family. We get to say a few things now and then about what happens. And ultimately we're the strength of the family supposedly and we're the family priests and so we're to...but the influence comes from mom. And I...I mean, my kids respect me, but there's a dimension of intimacy that have with their mother that they don't have with me. And that was nurtured through the years of care and love, and that's the balance. They are shaped as much by her as they are by me. And if people don't understand that, they missed the whole point of God's marvelous plan.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

JOHN: Uh-huh.

ROBIN: Hi, John, I'm Robin.

JOHN: We'll finish with these questions, all right. Time's all gone.

ROBIN: Okay, this is about legalism and it's kind of a different one. It's a two-parter. My wife works with a gal, a Hispanic gal, who is a Christian and who fellowships at a church here in the Los Angeles area. And this gal, I guess, fairly recently got engaged, but the pastor of her church has a sort of a procedure that seems to be a little be different.

Now, we all know that biblical...the biblical outline for abstinence from any kind of fornication outside of marriage or prior to marriage. But she and her fianc  are scared to death, because in the past, I guess, few months or year, there was a couple that was going through sort of pre-marital counseling with the pastor prior to being married. And the pastor had discovered that some time prior, they had been involved in some sexual activity. And even though this sexual activity had ceased some months prior, the pastor had the couple go up to the front of the church during a service and publicly confess this in front of the entire congregation, which seemed a bit bizarre.

And these people, this particular couple actually themselves were also involved in some...some sexual activity, which had since ceased some months prior to now. But they're concerned that when they go into that inevitable meeting with the pastor that they might be called upon to do that thing, you know, that kind of confession also. Which is not exactly something one would look forward to do...to doing.

And then the most recent sort of news that came out of this situation is that my wife had another sort of sharing time with this gal recently, and discovered that the pastor of this church actually...this may sound sort of strange, but he actually, if he determines that the people have even been kissing, within say a month...let's see kissing within the time that they have this meeting or so, they've been involved in an activity, he requires that they abstain from kissing for a month or so or two before they're able to actually get back together and you know, he takes some kind of hard line with the Scripture about in the Sermon on the Mount about if a man looks at woman with lust in her heart, he's committed adultery with her and so forth and takes a very, very stiff line on that, and I just kind of like to find out your reaction to that.

JOHN: Well, I don't want to sit in judgment on the situation. It seems to me very often that people who are overly pre-occupied with that often have a problem. You listen to what a man's message is and you'll find out what's in his heart. And people who talk a lot about one thing or the other and make a major issue out of one thing or another are very often are struggling with that.

And I don't want to sit in judgment. I...that's just a warning, that very often, I can think back and occasions where a certain pastor harangued about that and when the truth was finally known, they were fighting those very battles and maybe losing them themselves. So, I'm not sitting in judgment on that, but I...those kinds of things make me very nervous, and yet there's a...there's an element in truth in that. There is, however, no biblical virtue at all in going up in front of an entire church and parading your sins.

In fact, in Ephesians it says, it's a shame to speak of things done in secret. There's no value in that at all. And it says confess your sins one to another, not one to the whole church. Unless the sin is a

discipline sin and unrepented of and the person was put out of the church and wanted to come back for restitution and then there could be a confession and should be a confession that the person be restored after ultimate discipline was carried out. But in the case of just something that you did and you've confessed and you repented and your life is right, there's no virtue in parading that in front of the whole church.

ROBIN: Yeah, this is one of those situations where, you know, the guy is going into meet with the pastor and he's, you know, doesn't want to lie about it and say that, no, we weren't involved in this activity, but in fact, the sin's been taken care of.

JOHN: Well, my approach would be to go in do whatever you need to do to the pastor and then I would sit...I would try to point out to the pastor, if he says this is what needs to be done, then I'd ask him to justify that biblically and work through some of that to see if you couldn't help him to see that that's not valuable. In fact, that's the very opposite of valuable. That kind of stuff.

If you handle those kinds of things in an indiscreet way, you will create more adultery in the mind than you will eliminate. Those kinds of things don't help, because, you know, when you get up and parade that kind of thing that's not virtuous.

ROBIN: And the matter of pre-marital kissing? It's true or I wouldn't say it.

JOHN: Yeah, I mean, let me...let me just say this. There are all different kinds of kisses, right. And I mean, I'm not going to stand here like all time expert on this subject. But you could, if engaged to someone, I think there's something to keep in mind and that is what Ann Landers said, a lemon that's been squeezed too many times is garbage. And I think...I think there's a sense in which you want to be careful who you allow the privilege of any intimacy with. And you better be sure that this is a person who can handle that intimacy, because there is a genuine love there. I mean, you don't give those things away.

ROBIN: I guess he makes the connection that..

JOHN: But...but let me suggest this, there are...there are those kisses that are kisses of tenderness and genuine love that have no lust at all. And then there are people who are filled with the lust and can't get anybody to kiss. That isn't the issue. But if you entertain the kiss long enough, it'll stop being a kiss of loving affection and it will start being a kiss of lust. And you have to know where that line is.

And the spirit of God works in those...for example, it's the law of diminishing returns. You kiss once and it's kind of exciting. You kiss again, and it's less exciting and it's just...and so you continue the pace. You know, it's like when you become an adult, you no longer care to ride a tricycle. You'd just assume have a Honda 450, because that stuff is old hat. And the same thing is true.

The sooner in your life you begin to kiss people and the more of them you begin to kiss people and the more of them you begin to kiss the law of diminishing returns begins to work and pretty soon that kind of thing isn't satisfying to you and you're off the deep end. So my word of wisdom is that those kinds of things are reserved for two people who, in the covenant of God, believe they're for each other and can...and can enjoy that only in the sense that it is an expression of true loving affection

and not beyond that.

ROBIN: Right, thanks.

JOHN: Okay.

JULIE: Hi, John. I'm Julie. My question is about Genesis Chapter 2, verse 18 it says, "Then the Lord God said it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him." My question is about the word helper and how it's used here. Is he talking about male-female marriage relationship or what about a young woman like me who chooses to not be married. Can I just have a Christian friend that I pray with, that I read the gospel, that I share with or is he talking about marriage?

JOHN: Yeah, he's talking about marriage there.

JULIE: Marriage.

JOHN: Yeah, because he took that woman from the side of man and joined them and made them one flesh. And there was no question that it was the covenant of marriage. But that is not to say...that is to say that there is a woman given to a man to be a lifetime helper. That is not to say that other people can't also have a helper. But if, in fact, it's a member of the opposite sex, it'd probably be best if you were going to have a lifetime helper from the opposite sex to just go ahead and get married, right?

JULIE: Right.

JOHN: But that doesn't obviate in any sense the wonderful covenant that can be made between two friends.

JULIE: Okay, thank you.

JOHN: Right, good. Right over here.

QUESTIONER: Hello, I'd like to thank you first of all for your faithful study and sound teaching. And I'd like to know what kind of prayer could we pray for you each day?

JOHN: Well, that's sweet of you to ask that. You know, you could pray for wisdom that God would help me to understand His Word and rightly divide His Word. That's the greatest passion of my...of my heart is to do it right. And then you could pray for the wisdom to know what I should do and shouldn't do. You know, I'm literally drowned continually in a sea of things that could be done. And I...we struggle.

Jay Letty works with me and Fred Barshaw and Norm and Lynn Crawley and we all get together every week and we talk about should we do this, should we do this, should we do this and Nick May he's there. How do we know what to do? Should we go to New Zealand? Should we go to South Africa? We just got a letter from Germany, they want us to come to West Germany and go through

all the bases of the American Armed Services over there and present the Word of God. How do you know what to do? So many things. You could be gone all the time. How do you...and then you have people call. They want to talk to you. They want to...and there's only so much time and so many limitations. So I feel tremendously the pressure there relative to those pressures and...and then that Lord would keep me sensitive to the needs of the people here. Because you know, you can lose the individuals in the mass and to be sensitive to the hearts of the people so that I...I truly shepherd. Those are things that are personally in my mind and my heart.

QUESTIONER: Okay, I'd like to know, God says not to owe any man anything and in trying to get out of debt from pre-Christian things, I'd like to know the priorities of tithing and beyond trusting in God to provide for our needs and reading the Bible and having faith that He'll take care of everything.

JOHN: Let me suggest that you get a little book I wrote. Just a little thin one at the bookstore, called Giving God's Way. It's really inexpensive little deal. But read it, because it'll help you with that. The priorities are these, if you're in debt, get out of debt. And what that means is, if you owe some people, make sure you make the payments. It doesn't mean that you can't owe somebody something in the sense that you buy a home and you pay a mortgage or you borrow money for a business and you have to pay it back as your business makes money.

You want to be careful that you're borrowing money for increasing investments. You hurt yourself when you borrow money for a decreasing commodity. In other words, when you borrow money to buy a car, you lose in the end a lot. Now, you may have to because necessity dictates. But if you owe a payment or anything, you need to pay it. That's what it means, pay your debts, pay your debts. Now, if you're in debt and you're wondering should I give it to the Lord to pay your debt, pay your debt.

QUESTIONER: How do you fit tithing in there and could you talk a little bit about the 10% and how the...

JOHN: Well, yeah, I can give you a quick answer on that. Don't worry about 10%. Drop that, because that's no biblical giving. You see in the Old Testament, the Jews gave 10% of everything they had to pay the Levites who were the priests. They gave another 10% to fund the national feast festivals and holy days, that's 20%. Every third year, they gave another 10% to the poor and the needy and the orphan and the widow and the stranger, so that's makes 23 1/3%.

They couldn't harvest the corner of their fields, so they had to leave that for the poor, that was a profit sharing plan, so they lost something there. If they dropped a bushel off their cart, they couldn't pick it up, it was for the poor. They had to pay a third shekel temple tax every year. You start piling that stuff up and you're looking at 25% of their income every year went to the temple. But that was like taxation, because theirs was a theocracy ruled by God and that's how they paid their taxes. So the tithe was never freewill giving. It was taxes. Then the Lord also said to them, give whatever you want out of the first fruits of your substance. So the principle of giving is this, pay your taxes and give God what you want, but know this, 2 Corinthians 9, "you sow sparingly, you'll reap sparingly. You sow bountifully, you'll reap bountifully." So remember this, whatever you give you're going to get a return on. You give a little, you get a little return. You give a lot, you get a big return.

Also know this, that God wants you to give not of necessity, but what, cheerfully, cheerfully and

liberally. The Macedonians out of their deep poverty gave liberally. So that's all in the Giving God's Way little book, okay? And that'll help you, all right.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

JOHN: Good, let me take the little fellow behind you here, he's been waiting a long time, and then we'll move right to these folks and be done. That a boy.

QUESTIONER: I've got a question about age.

JOHN: Sure.

QUESTIONER: Because when back in Adam and Eve...back in Adam and Eve's time, people lived a lot longer.

JOHN: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: But then after Noah, then people started living shorter. Why is that?

JOHN: Boy that's a good question. You know why that is? Because before the flood, that's when Noah was, the whole earth was covered with like...like a sheet of vapor water. And when the sun came down towards the earth, it's ultraviolet rays which cause decay were filtered out. And so that's when you have dinosaurs that live hundreds and hundreds of years and people lived over 900 years, but those were the 969. Adam lived what, 930 years.

All these people living a long time because the earth was enveloped in a cloud canopy, a film of water. Now when God brought the flood, He sent all that water crashing to the earth. And so there was nothing to stop the sun's rays from hitting us and we get old fast because the sun deteriorates us. That's why you people that go out and lay in the sun are messing around with the other end of your life, because it's going to get your soon enough anyway, but do you understand?

QUESTIONER: Okay.

JOHN: Okay, thanks. Okay, three more folks.

QUESTIONER: I've been a Catholic all my life until just recently.

JOHN: Now, let me stop you. You haven't been a Catholic all your life because you're not dead yet. Okay.

QUESTIONER: As long as I've been here, until this summer and I've decided I want to begin again as a Christian. There is a question that has bothered me for a long time as a Catholic and keeps bothering me and that is one of permanent birth control or sterilization. And I just wonder is there anything in Scripture that would say that Jesus Christ would favor that? I don't...it just seems like there's so many answers in Scripture that I'm finding, that I can't find an answer.

JOHN: Let me tell you something, the Bible says nothing about birth control.

QUESTIONER: The priests do.

JOHN: The priests say a lot about it, but I mean, how else are you going to build a Catholic church, just keep having those Catholic babies. I mean, that's...you know, the Mormons said the same thing when they want to get Mormonism off the ground. But I think we have to realize the Bible doesn't say anything about birth control. It doesn't say yes or no. It simply says, "children are a heritage from the Lord and blessed is the...they're like arrows, blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them." There's a blessing in having children.

They're an...they're an inheritance from the Lord. It does not tell us how many to have or any of that. It doesn't...it doesn't give us any information at all about that. Now, where they get their information is that they say that we were called to replenish the earth to procreate. And historically the Catholic church defines the sexual relationship as a procreative act period, that's it. That is a too narrow a definition. The sexual involvement between a man and a woman is more than a procreative act. It is...and you can show biblically how much more than that it is.

For example, it says in Hebrews 13, "the bed is undefiled." In other words that is to say that two married people in a bed can't do something that's defiling. In other words, there's complete freedom for the enjoyment of one another. In the Old Testament we read where I think it was Jacob was sporting with his wife. Now, that's interesting. It doesn't say he was procreating with his wife. It says basically he was messing around with his wife. I don't know how to say it in contemporary English, but he was sporting, maybe that's a fair way to say it. Somebody looked through the window and saw that. So unfortunately for him.

But the point is, I see it as beyond that. I think, for example, you read the Song of Solomon and you will find that one of the...Song of Solomon is the absolute epitome, read it, it's the absolute epitome of the expression of the dimensions of human love between a man and a woman. And there's no procreation there. That's not the celebration, it's the celebration of the intimacy and the celebration of love and the celebration of satisfaction. And that has a wonderful place in Scripture.

So we want to understand, first of all then, that the physical involvement of a man and a woman is more than just a procreative thing. It is that...to look at it physiologically, the Lord wouldn't have an attendant with so much joy if all it was was for making children. I mean, then the other side of the thing is this, there's nothing in the Bible that says how many children you're to have, but God has given us the choice. And I understand that in these terms. When God cycled a woman's capacity to have children, He placed in the control of that couple the choice. If God wanted sex only for the sake of procreation, then He could have created women so that it was just non-stop children. But the fact that God has given to women a cycling potential for pro-creation is to say that He has given them the choice.

QUESTIONER: What about permanent, you know, sterilization?

JOHN: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Where you actually alter the body?

JOHN: I think permanent...permanent sterilization is simply a way to extend the choice. I don't see it as a problem. If you're going to make the choice every time that way any way, it's the choice you choose to make. I don't see that it's at all ignored in the Scripture or forbidden in the Scripture. That's a choice that you make.

You can make it every time or you can make it permanently and it's your choice and you should...but before you do anything like that you should be sure that the Spirit of God is prompting your heart. You've really thought it through, you know where you are because there are a lot of folks who would like to be able, and even tried to undo those kinds of things. Okay?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

JOHN: Good. And then we'll get over here.

QUESTIONER: Okay, I'm a Christian now, but before I was Roman Catholic and my question is I'm doing a...trying to do a more of a study on the Roman Catholic Church and...because all I learned is when I went to, you know, you're growing up, you're going...

JOHN: Sure.

QUESTIONER: ...through the classes as a child. My question is, after Peter, you know in the...have you...have you looked at the Roman Catholic Encyclopedia? Have you ever...

JOHN: Well, I'm familiar with Roman Catholic theology.

QUESTIONER: Okay, how did they like from Peters U and then goes from Pope II all the way up to now, how did they get that? That's my question because I saw that and I thought...

JOHN: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: ...you know, it was kind of confusing.

JOHN: Well, it's artificial. In the first place, they can't even prove that Peter ever went to Rome and they spent a lot of time trying to prove and they can't. There's not connection. They can't prove the connections of Apostolic succession. They tried very early to stick Popes in there that they said were in the line of Apostolic succession. Historically it doesn't hold water. So, but they try to do it, but they can't...they can't verify that Peter was in Rome. They can throw a lot of stuff out that makes people think so, but it's not really legitimate.

QUESTIONER: Okay, thank you.

JOHN: All right.

STEVE: Steve Miller from Florida. My question has to do with...actually I have two questions on the subject Lordship, Salvationism or whatever it is quote unquote.

JOHN: Sure.

STEVE: I've heard what you've had to say about it and recently I read a book by prominent evangelical who stated, was refuting the arguments on...on Lordship salvation and so forth. He claims that you can be saved without confessing Jesus Christ as Lord. And one of them was when it came to the word Lord, for instance, he said like in Acts, he said there are many ways that you can take...

JOHN: Kurios.

STEVE: ...Lord and the Greek...

JOHN: Kurios.

STEVE: ...such as, yeah, I guess that was the Greek work. Anyway, he said that you could take it as Master or...or God and he said in those particular instances that you can take it as God.

JOHN: Yeah.

STEVE: I guess my question is I kind of know where you stand...

JOHN: Yeah.

STEVE: ...but...

JOHN: Let me tell you, I know who you're talking about and I know is view is that Kurios when it appears in the Scripture only means God...

STEVE: Yeah.

JOHN: ...and Lord does not mean...it only means God, not Lord. That is it doesn't have to do with his sovereign control of our life. It just means deity. That's the way he says it.

STEVE: Right.

JOHN: It means deity. So when I was with him, I said, I said okay, let's assume that you're right that Kurios only means deity, what does that mean? What does it mean if you say you're deity? You haven't changed anything, 'cause if you're God, you are in charge. So I see that has a moot point. I'm getting ready to write a book on Lordship salvation, because it's such a tremendously volatile subject. And I'm not even going to interact with that argument. Because when you've postulated that it means deity, you've said everything you could possibly say. I mean, if I am...if I'm confessing that Jesus is the God of the universe, am I not saying who's in charge? Sure.

STEVE: The last question has to do with the parable of the sowers. The seed that fell on the stony ground and the seed that fell on thorns, were they saved?

JOHN: No.

STEVE: So in other words, to be saved you have to bear the fruit.

JOHN: That's right, that's the whole point.

STEVE: So the harvest is...is the point of salvation.

JOHN: Well, yeah, he said some brought forth fruit. You have three soils that had no fruit and you have three that had fruit, 30 fold, 60 fold, 100 fold. But where there was no fruit, you an emotional response, you had the...you see in the first case it fell...it fell on a solid ground. It didn't even penetrate nothing. That's the hard heart. And then it fell on stony, which means that underneath this shallow service of soil was a rock bed and the roots couldn't find anything. It sprung up, you had an outward expression, it looked good on the outside, everything was...nothing under there, couldn't get to the water and it died and the third one is weedy or thorny. It feel with the weeds and when it tried to grow in there it got choked out by the world. In other words, the person never came on the terms of really committing to the Lord. They still held onto the things of the world and choked it all out, but apart from those three that didn't bear, there was the good soil and three kinds of good soil, 30 fold, 60 fold, 100 fold, fruit is always the measure, always.

STEVE: I think it's very important that the point on Lordships Salvationism because that...a lot of that has to do with how you would witness to another individual, you know, if...

JOHN: Well...

STEVE: ...if you leave out the Lordship of Christ...

JOHN: Yeah, you're talking about a crew...if we don't get the gospel right, we're really in trouble. I mean, we could mess up down the line, but we can't mess up the salvation message. And you know the...the best argument for Lordship salvation is just study the Bible. Don't argue about theology. Just study the text. I mean, I've been going through Matthew now for five years and it's in every page. I mean, I...it's just, it comes like machine guns stuff. And you go through Romans, it's the same thing. The people who are standing away from the text arguing about theological logic, they're not going to see it, because they choose to argue on that level, but once you try to go into the text, you're stuck, it's all over. So what I'm going to do in the book is just hit it one chapter after another, which is going to cover one text of the Scripture after another explaining why it's unanswerable.

So you can pray about the project too. Well, I've kept you too long and I'm going to go too, because they're going to throw us out. It's quarter til nine, boy. We had a great time didn't we? It's wonderful to be able to dig into the Word. Let's have prayer and then we'll let you go. All right? Thank you Father for our time tonight for these dear precious people and their faithfulness and hunger for your truth. Thank you for giving us a wonderful time around Your Word and especially for those folks that asked

the questions and we thank you for the hungry hearts and those who are eager to know what You have to say. And we're reminded of the words of our brother earlier, Mike who suggested that we wanted to go beyond just knowing about God and want to really know him and experience the fullness of his presence in our lives. That is our goal and we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

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